



Sharon Ann Smith

September 13, 1935 - July 2, 2025

In Loving Memory of Sharon Smith

Sharon Smith died peacefully at home in Leesburg, Florida on July 2, 2025, after recently being diagnosed with late-stage pancreatic cancer. Surviving to the age of 89 (just a couple of months shy of her 90th birthday), she will be remembered as a beloved wife, mother, friend, volunteer and aunt.

Born on the Paulsen family farm near Oak, Nebraska on September 13, 1935, Sharon learned both the value of hard work and the importance of treating others with kindness and empathy. She was a star student at Nelson High School where she met the love of her life, David Smith, and the two were married on May 29, 1955. The high school sweethearts remained blissfully married, recently celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary.

After earning her teaching degree from Fairbury Junior College in 1953, Sharon taught school in one-room country schoolhouses in Oak and Norfolk, Nebraska, where she instructed grades 1-6 of adoring farm children. She worked at several jobs in Nebraska and Georgia before she and David adopted their only son in 1969. She balanced part-time work at Bell Systems/AT&T while being a full-time Mother, finding time to volunteer with scouting, drama and school organizations. Once their son completed college, Sharon and David retired to the Plantation at Leesburg, where she enjoyed

golf, bridge, darts and time with great friends. The couple's travels took them all over the world before they opted for the comforts of home and blessings of friendship in their special Leesburg community.

Her family wishes to express their gratitude to the compassionate caregivers at Cornerstone Hospice; the hospice-at-home model is truly a godsend, and Sharon was able to die with dignity at home, feeling the presence and love of family and friends before she crossed over. Her devoted husband, David, never left her side and held her hand when she took her last breath, and their son, Donald, is grateful to God to also have been at her side during her last moments. Many friends were able to visit and share their love with Sharon in her final days as well – she felt their presence and received their love.

She was preceded in death by her parents Richard and Leona Paulsen (of Oak, Nebraska), Harold and Helen Smith (her parents-in-law of Nelson, Nebraska) and sister Dorothy Paulsen Schott (of Superior, Nebraska). In addition to her husband, David Smith (of Leesburg, Florida), and son, John Donald Smith (of Irving, Texas), she is survived by her sister Carolyn Paulsen Matthie (of Central City, Nebraska), son-in-law Johnny Lin (of Irving, Texas) as well as many wonderful nieces, nephews and other family members. Her authentic kindness and passion for life touched so many individuals over the years, and her spirit will live on in the hearts of her family and friends.