

Mary R. Stephens

1931-2020

By [Messenger Staff](#) / Published on January 29, 2020

Decatur ~ Mary R. Rutherford Stephens, 88, went to be with our Lord Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2020, in Decatur.

Graveside service is 11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 30, at Greenwood Cemetery.

Mary was born Aug. 17, 1931, to Harley Zeling and Ethyl (Richardson) Rutherford in Childress. She was married to Gerald Gilbert Stephens Aug. 23, 1951. She was a dairyman and rancher and a faithful member of Greenwood Baptist Church.

Mary lived her entire life in Greenwood. She enjoyed gardening and could grow anything. Mary had roses in every color but especially loved her wisteria. She couldn't wait for it to bloom each year.

Mary loved watching her animals from her back porch. She just had to go out her front door rattling her feed bucket for her horses to come running for her to feed them out of her hand. She loved watching her goats run everywhere and was excited when they had babies. Her cattle roamed from pasture to pasture. When one of her donkeys had a baby, she called everyone she knew to stop by and see the newest addition.

Mary and Gerald worked hard dairying and farming. When most kids were enjoying the summer, the Stephens family was in the hay field. Mary said she could never get caught up because there was so much to do, but she loved it. She said it was like having a zoo with so many animals.

When Gerald died in 1980, Mary continued to dairy and farm. Each of her children participated in different ways to keep the farm going. Mary said looking at her green pasture full of her cows was like looking at heaven.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; two sons, Gerald Glen Stephens and Michael Craig Stephens; and her brother, Hardy Rutherford.

Those left behind to cherish her memory are two daughters, Cheryl Barekman and husband, Joe, of Euless and Melanie Jones and husband, Mark, of Decatur; nine grandchildren, Mary Mika Hilton of San Antonio, Clay Stephens of Alvord, Michael Stephens Jr. of Fort Worth, Clint Stephens of Greenwood, Gerald Wade Jones of Decatur, J.C. Jones Davies of Austin, Jaime Stephens of Fort Worth, Cannon Stephens of Austin and Ray-Ann Truesdell of San Antonio; eight great-grandchildren; her sister, Velita Rutherford of Cleburne; brother Benny Rutherford of Greenwood; and numerous nieces, nephews and a host of friends.

Hawkins Funeral Home

Decatur

940-627-5959 hawkinsfuneralhome.com