

Sylvia Jean (Oliva) Girmus

Sylvia Jean (Oliva) Girmus, daughter of Anna (Beranek) Oliva and Vaclav Oliva, was born on December 29, 1921 at the family home in Tobias, Nebraska and passed away at the Tabitha Nursing Center of Crete, Long Term Care, on August 25, 2007, at the age of 85 years 7 months and 27 days following a lengthy illness. She was one of a family of 11 children.

Sylvia attended Tobias Public School and graduated from there with the Class of 1940.

On October 18, 1944, she was united in marriage to William (Bill/Willie) Girmus. They had one son, Robert, who they loved dearly. She and her husband lived on a farm near Ohiowa, Nebraska for 5 years. They then moved to a farm 4 1/2 miles east of Milligan for 34 years. After her husband's death, she and her son continued to live and farm on the family farm 4 miles east and 3 1/2 miles south of Milligan for another 18 years. In August of 2001, she and Robert moved to their dream home in Wilber, Nebraska. Sylvia never did get over the loss of her son, Robert, and her health started to decline. In August 2006 she moved to the Tabitha Care Center in Crete, Nebraska.

Sylvia was very talented. Following in the foot steps of her father, she did significant amounts of remodeling work on two of her farm homes. She also wrote many short stories and poems and even received credit for having one poem published. Sylvia worked hard on their farms and raised countless numbers of chickens and picked their eggs to supplement their income. Many nieces and nephews enjoyed going with Aunt Sylvia to pick the eggs and were amazed how she could shoo away the chickens without getting pecked. She also raised a large garden and as rumor has it, made the best lye soap which made her white laundry sparkle.

Great nephew Logan Gregory read her poem "What a Changing World It's Beginning to Be." It appears she had written this several years ago and was just recently found in some of her papers.

Sylvia was featured in the Lincoln Journal newspaper on December 31, 1984 and also in the Crete News for collecting souvenirs of an era. Sylvia had collected farm sale bills for machinery sales of Southeast Nebraska farmers and machinery dealers who had gone out of business in 1984 - 379 of them in fact. From this feature she received 68 telephone calls in just three days! You can just imagine Sylvia talking to these people and providing her views!

Sylvia loved children visiting her and doted over them when they came to visit. She loved visits from her sisters and brothers, and especially from her nieces, nephews, great nieces/nephews. First they were greeted by "Peak-a-Boo" and then by the dancing Elvis. Sylvia had special neighbors, whom she called her "angels" who helped her out and watched over her. They were Dennis and Ann Tenipor and their sons, Matthew and Andrew.

Sylvia was preceded in death by her husband Willie (Bill / William) on October 27, 1982; son Robert, on June 17, 2003. Also her parents Vaclav and Anna Oliva; five brothers,--Joseph, James, Jon, Edward and Frankie Oliva, and two sisters, Anne (Oliva) Vavra and Bessie Oliva.

She leaves to mourn her special sisters Marie (Oliva) Havel of Milligan,

Dorothy (Oliva) Erwin of Morristown, Tennessee, and brother and sister-in-law Milo and Gloria Oliva of Shawnee, Oklahoma; also nieces, nephews, cousins, great nieces and nephews, and great-great nieces and nephews, and many special friends. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Funeral services were conducted at the Tobias Community Church on Saturday, September 9, 2007, at 10:30 a.m. The Chaplain Raymond Nance of Crete officiated.

Chaplain Nance also was a special friend of Sylvia's who visited her at Tabitha. She looked forward to his visits and discussing going to heaven. He also brought her religious and polka music to listen to.

Judy Rada played and sang the following songs at the service: "Going Home," and "How Great Thou Art." Kuncl Funeral Home provided Czech music.

The poem she requested as it was read at Robert's funeral, "To Those I Love" author unknown was read by Charlie Gregory.

Internment was in the Tobias Cemetery with Kuncl Funeral Home in charge. A luncheon was hosted by Debbie Gregory and Rod Havel after the interment at the Tobias Community Church.

Pallbearers were: Rodney Havel, Rodger Gutzmer, Logan Gregory, Charlie Gregory, Richard Oliva, Alan Krupicka and Dennis Tenipor. Honorary pallbearers were Christopher Havel, Megan Havel Merritt Smith, Wyatt Smith, James Oliva and Grant Gregory, who carried 15 red roses one for each one of Sylvia's brothers and sisters' nieces and nephews and one white rose for her son, Robert.

Memorials may be directed to the Wilber Rescue Unit or to the family.