

Westbrook

Society Presents



Jeannie Graham

Eunice "Jeannie" Graham was born on a farm between Carson and Treynor, Iowa. She was the second of four children born to Bud and Evelyn Gleaves. She had one brother and two sisters. When she was ten years old, her family moved from the farm to the zinc mining town of Picher, OK. Jeannie says it was quite a shock. They arrived in Picher after dark and she remembers thinking, "Wow!" because of all the bright lights on the chat piles.

Being a tomboy, Jeannie enjoyed climbing the chat piles, swimming in the mill pond and even went down into the zinc mines. When she was fourteen, she went to the "Devil's Promenade" about twenty miles from Picher and danced with the Cherokee Indians. Jeannie liked school especially history. She would help her mom with the cooking and cleaning. She graduated from Picher High School.

While in high school, she met James Grant at the skating rink and it was love at first sight. He even told her he was going to marry her. Less than a year later, in 1949, he did. They worked at his mom's café in Commerce, OK, for a few months. Then they moved to Neosho, MO, and opened their own café. Unfortunately, a year and a half later, they sold the café and divorced.

Jeannie relocated to Independence, MO, to live with her girlfriend. She went to work in a drug store as a soda jerk for a couple of months. She got a job at the munitions plant in Lake City but was laid off. Her girlfriend introduced her to Russell Graham at the local dance hall. He drove her home that night and after a few short months, they married in 1953. Russell had a daughter, Linda, who visited them quite a bit, but lived with her grandmother. In 1955, their son, Gale, was born. They bought a house in Independence, MO, in 1958. When Gale started school, Jeannie went to work for Western Electric. Gale quit school in the eleventh grade. Jeannie made him get his GED though.

Russell was a truck driver for Napa. They enjoyed spending time with friends dancing or playing Rummy. Russell had emphysema and retired several years before Jeannie. She worked for Western Electric almost thirty years and retired in 1988. Russell and Jeannie raised their granddaughter, Renee. She now lives in Kearney and is married with three kids that keep her very busy.

Russell and Jeannie didn't travel much because of his health. He did take her to Niagara Falls though. It was beautiful. Her mother was with them and couldn't believe the amount of water going over the cliffs. They even charged them a nickel for a glass of water.

Russell passed away in 1995 and Jeannie continued to live in their home. She traveled extensively with her sister. They went to Mexico and Canada as well as throughout the US. Her favorite trips were to Nova Scotia and along the border of the US and Canada. She would travel to Wichita to visit her sisters a lot.

Jeannie broke her hip in January of 2011 and moved to Westbrook in February of 2011. She enjoys watching old Westerns and reading. Besides her son and stepdaughter, she has a step son-in-law, three grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Because she has a habit of falling, her mantra is "Stay on your feet." Jeannie thinks the best thing about living at Westbrook is the friendly people and all their old stories. She thinks that today's children should hear them.



Westbrook
Care Center/Villas
Residential Care Facility
Independent Living Apartments
401 Platte Clay Way • Kearney, MO
816.628.2222
www.westbrookcarecenter.com