

Jean Morgan Thomas

December 2, 1938 ~ October 10, 2021

Jean started her journey into the unknown on the beautiful, light-filled, fall afternoon of October 10, 2021, attended by cat Kim and her family. Jean was born December 2,1938 in rural Decatur, Nebraska to Eva Newill and Jack Morgan. She was the ninth of eleven children born to Eva and Jack on their farm. The farm and her family were anchors in her life.

As a young child Jean contracted whooping cough which left her with significant hearing loss throughout her life. She was a proponent for vaccines and knew that they prevented death or the debilitating side effects of diseases, such as the hearing loss she experienced. Because of her hearing loss she tended to enjoy things on the loud side. Noisy clocks, toys and music were some of her favorite things. In later years when she had grandchildren, she gifted them with toys that were extremely noisy. Though her grandchildren delighted in these noisy gifts, their parents weren't as enthused.

Jean attended country school and was educated at the McCauley School. After leaving school, Jean felt restless and adventurous. As a teenager she rode a train from Nebraska to southern California. In her metal suitcase were her prized 45 records, that she so enjoyed listening to. When Jean arrived in California she fell in love with the citrus orchards and their smells and the grape vineyards and their beauty. She marveled at the post World War II growth boom and the construction of tract homes. She went to work at Rohr Aircraft. She met her husband Jerold T. Odenbach and fell in love and married. A great sadness of her life was the death of Jerold due to a malignant brain tumor.

She married her second husband, Keith Thomas who brought daughter Yvonne to the marriage. Jean and Keith had three more children, Michael (deceased), Brian and Sonya.

In 2006 Jean retired from the Kroger Company and decided to move back to Nebraska to be by her siblings. She loved being close to them, sharing meals, stories, and their history. She also fell in love with Nebraska again. She loved the rural landscapes and the people of northeast Nebraska. Golden Oaks, senior center in Oakland Nebraska was an important part of Jean's life. The friends, coffee time, potlucks, bingo, and music Jam sessions lent a richness to her life.

Jean's passions were her grandchildren, animals, a good cup of coffee, horse racing, music, babies, making zucchini bread and family reunions. She loved Elvis! Her love of music has been an important legacy to her children and grandchildren.

The family is grateful for the tender, attentive and professional care provided by the Valeo Hospice team, Nurse Angie, Nurse Debbie, Home Aid, Hannah and Social Worker, Kelly and Nurse Becky. They were here when we needed them.

Jean is survived by her faithful feline, Kim; sister Verna Vogt of California; sister-in-law, Ima Morgan of Iowa; Brother Jary (Jean) Morgan, Nebraska; sister-in-law, Betty Morgan of Iowa and sister, Elva Barnett of Iowa. Children, Yvonne (Darrell) Eskelson, Utah; Brian (Tauna) Thomas, Utah; Sonya (Terrel) Van Leeuwen, Utah, and daughter-in-law Wendy (Paul) Pantoja, Utah. She is also survived by her grandchildren, great grand-children, nieces, and nephews.

Jean will be cremated, and interment will be at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 E. Dimple Dell Rd. (10600 S.), Sandy, Utah. Graveside service will be held November 26, 2021 at 1:00 PM. Per Jean’s wishes she will also be returned from whence she came. Part of her ashes will be scattered on the family farm completing her circle on this earth.