



## Roberta Jean Riddle

September 4, 1938 - March 13, 2023

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Some parents grace their children with self-composed obituaries. Ours did not, hence; you have a third party account, albeit loving, of our mother's life. Roberta Jean Reed was born in Coker Creek, Tennessee on September 4th, 1938. Our grandmother, Pauline Reed, along with her devoted sisters and brother provided Jean a loving, but non-traditional childhood. Mom was preceded in death by siblings Carolyn Reed, Rita (Sam) Coulter and Stephen (Josephine) Duncan. She is survived by several cousins, nieces and nephews.

Mom had a tough shell, an inner strength and tenacity born from poverty and challenging events. Her determination, service to others and creativity was demonstrated throughout her 84 years. The world was made better through her life.

In 1956, as her high school salutatorian, Jean gave the commencement speech. In attendance was an Army recruiter and his brother, Hack, on leave from the military. The recruiter, Robert, had an "almost signed" commitment supporting mom's career plan. Two weeks later, on July 2nd, Hack and Jean embarked on a 52 year "wild ride" marriage. Mom always said, "Must have been a helluva speech!"

Twenty five years later, Jean actually returned the favor by introducing her

now brother-in-law Robert (d) to mom's best friend Jackie. They enjoyed 34 years of marriage!

Three days after their wedding, Daddy reported to Airborne School in Fort Benning, Georgia. It took mom 24 hours before saying..."oh...hell, NO!" Her 17 year old self journeyed on a Greyhound Bus intent on joining her husband. Sergeant Haskel Riddle was informed of her presence and, with the exception of three wartime tours, mama was never left behind again.

Ten and a half months later, Susan Gayle was born in her home state of California. In 1960, they welcomed and completed their family with Keith Richard, born in Germany. He is a World traveler. Mom would often take responsibility for and comment about each of us being migratory.

As a devoted military wife and a dedicated mother, no matter where we landed, she made a wonderful home for our family. The countless domestic and foreign travels never prevented her from being present for us and her community. We remember the year she decorated the same Christmas tree... in three different homes!

After our dad retired from the Army, they toured different towns. While "cruisin' Main," mom began to cry. Daddy, insensitively demanded, "What the heck is wrong with you?" Mom's sense of homecoming was immediate as she declared, "This is where I want to live." She'd often say, "I've traveled the World, but my favorite place is Princeton." Fifty years later, she luxuriated in her own home...within her beloved hometown.

Mom's wish to "die in her own bed" (but not too soon) was made possible through the herculean efforts of Dawn Jackson. We are truly thankful, beyond these words, for your loyalty, love and care. Your interaction went beyond the level of a job, for you gave mom your laughter, your heart and many, many trips to Dairy Queen! Mom loved Dawn...as a daughter, a friend and "more than sugar." "She's good to me. We don't fight or nothin', if we did, I'd stay on the same side she was on - we'd beat the scheisen out of someone!"

For the last year, our family was lovingly supported by the amazing staff at Pennyroyal Hospice. Thank you to the many wonderful individuals who have

enriched, encouraged and embraced us. You blessed our lives in countless ways and will always remain in our prayers.

Mom's final newspaper interview was on her 82nd birthday. She was tearfully elated to see her friends, the Caldwell County Sheriff and Police departments, even participating strangers in her very own drive-by parade celebration. As moved as she was, her palatable glee was in talking to the reporter.

Throughout her life, she never shied away from a camera, microphone or any public spotlight. Historically, she was in our local newspaper several times a week, always promoting a worthy cause or event. Her tenure of 16 years as the state chairman for "Kentucky Girls State," five years as President of the Board of Directors for Pennyroyal Industries and with that, constant American Legion and VFW events, poppy sales, cake walks, fund raising and feeding anyone in need. She volunteered at all the local nursing homes, providing entertainment and love to residents and staff. Thanks to her, countless animals found homes from the Animal Shelter, many under our roof! Until physical limitations prevented, she was Jingles the Clown at birthday parties, parades, class reunions, or anytime she was requested. Seasonally, she exhausted herself in countless venues, as the proverbial ever-ready Easter Bunny.

Jean was a voracious reader and writer. She was compelled to address issues of injustice or publicly applaud many positive aspects of local life. Mom initiated the recognition of Princeton as a Purple Heart City. Seeing a small article in "The Army Times" was all it took for her to research and address the city council. The Purple Heart signs, honoring our veterans, are a tangible example of mom's service.

Mom was a proud member of Saint Paul's Catholic Church. As with everything, she participated and encouraged others in every possible aspect of parish life. In 2003, she humbly received the Sophia Award for her outstanding contributions and as a Catholic faith role model. Every Sunday was spent visiting homebound members as a Eucharistic Minister. She

brought food, love and the Lord to many, but always declared the honor and privilege was hers. For so many years, our faithful friend and mom's "adopted" son, Deacon Paul Bachi, returned the blessing of Communion and fellowship. Oftentimes, he was also enlisted for household repairs. God provided on so many levels!

Mom's greatest joy was being Mammy to five granddaughters: Jeanine (David) Wainscott of Seattle, Erica (Andreas) Staerr, Kathryn Glaser (Josh Mitchell), both of Long Beach, CA, Emily (Christian) Feil and Erin Glaser, both of Reno. Thanks to mom's namesake, Jeanine, her cherished great grandchildren are Mason, Cecilia Jean and Abbie.

All the "children" have such wonderful Princeton memories...Black Patch, catching fireflies, rides in the country, cake walks, Kentucky rain, fundraising with Mammy, 4th of July and homecoming parades, Patti's, Newsom's, Finkel's Fair Store, concerts in the park, Adsmore, Easter Egg hunts and Christmas parties at the American Legion. All this considered, most precious of all, is the memory of Mammy preparing her fried chicken.

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Visitation 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Rosary 11:30 am

Funeral Mass 12:00 Noon

Interment Monday, March 27, 2023

12:00 Noon

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to mom's favorite charities:

Pennyroyal Industries

C/O Sarah Martin

P.O. Box 421

Princeton, KY 42445

Caldwell County Animal Shelter

C/O Jamie Whalen

489 Baker Hill Road

Princeton, KY 42445

# Cemetery Details

## Veterans Cemetery West

US Hwy 41A South  
Hopkinsville, KY

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 25. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

St. Paul's Catholic Church  
813 S. Jefferson St.  
Princeton, KY 42445

## Rosary Service

MAR 25. 11:30 AM (ET)

St. Paul's Catholic Church  
813 S. Jefferson St.  
Princeton, KY 42445

## Mass

MAR 25. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul's Catholic Church  
813 S. Jefferson St.  
Princeton, KY 42445



# Tribute Wall



“ I worked with Jean for several years at Finkels and she was a wonderful lady. I am so sorry.

Arlene Delawson - March 28, 2023 at 07:17 PM



“ Ms. Jean was a sweet lady with a big heart. She will be missed.

Alexis Darnell - March 27, 2023 at 02:13 PM



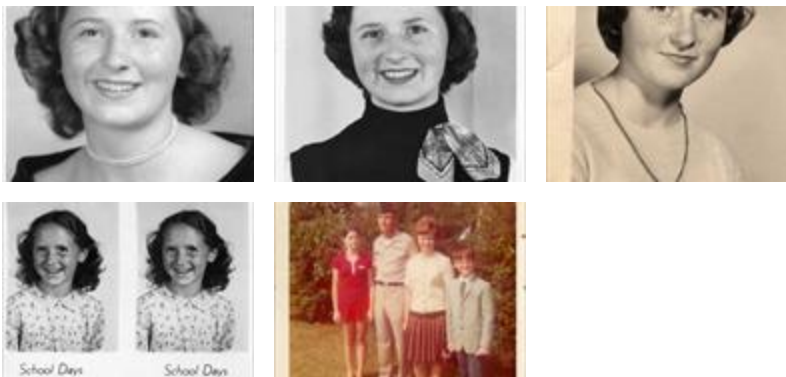
“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Roberta Jean Riddle.



March 23, 2023 at 03:09 PM



“ 5 files added to the album Jean



James Taylor - March 23, 2023 at 10:04 AM