



Wanda Gillen

March 20, 1925 - June 6, 2014

Wanda McLain Gillen, 89, of Blooming Grove passed away Friday, June 6, 2014 at Baylor Hospital in Dallas.

Service will be 2:00 pm Wednesday, June 11th at Central Baptist Church, in Blooming Grove, Texas. Visitation will be 6-8 pm Tuesday, June 10th at Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home. Burial will follow at Rose Hill cemetery. Pallbearers will be grandsons and great-grandsons.

Wanda was born March 20, 1925 in Mertens, Texas to Earl and Lucille McLain. She attended school in Mertens and was the Valedictorian of the Class of 1942. She attended the University of North Texas for one year and was then asked to teach business classes at Blooming Grove High School. She continued her education in the summers and graduated from UNT in August 1949. She received her M.S. in Education from Baylor University. While teaching at Blooming Grove, Wanda met the love of her life and married Billy Gillen on July 30, 1945. He told her that he was going to marry her on their first date, and until his death in 1982 they were inseparable.

She had a great love for teaching. She taught business for 24 years at Blooming Grove. She also sponsored pep squad, cheerleaders, drill team and anything else she was asked to do including becoming the counselor. In 1968, she became a counselor at Navarro until her retirement in 1988. She loved the students at Blooming Grove and Navarro, and often said she gave advice that no one listened to. However, they did because she was stopped almost every day and told by someone how much she had affected their lives. After

retirement, she was elected to serve on the board of Navarro from 1989 until 2002. The highlight was a trip to Russia in 1998 to a college that had students also attending Navarro. Overall, she served the young people of Navarro County and their educational needs for over 60 years. She was always proud of her “kids” as she called them.

Wanda was an active member of the Blooming Grove Central Baptist Church where she had served as a Sunday school teacher and pianist. She was a former member of Delta Kappa Gamma, retired Teacher and other clubs in Navarro County.

She and her husband loved to travel. She continued this by taking her grandchildren to Europe for graduation and then continued to travel with friends and family often.

Wanda was preceded in death by her husband, Billy Gillen, Sr., her parents, brother and sister-in-law, Travis and Beverly King McLain, and son-in-law, Bill Hill.

Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law, Bill and Karen Jarvis Gillen of Corpus Christie, daughter, Gale Hill of Blooming Grove; grandchildren, David Hill, Dustin Hill, Stephanie Wigington and husband, Daron, Shane Gillen, and Jason Gillen and wife, Natalie; great grandchildren Forrest, Wesley, and Katelyn Wigington, and Wyatt, Garrett and Riley Gillen; brother and sister-in-law, Del and Wynell McLain of Rockport; sister-in-laws, Maxine Brown, Doris Gillen, and Carolyn Gillen.

Cemetery Details

Rose Hill Cemetery

300 Rose Hill Road
Blooming Grove, TX 76626

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 10. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home, Corsicana
1530 N. 45th Street
Corsicana, TX 75110
(903) 874-4774
info@griffin-roughton.com

Service

JUN 11. 2:00 PM (CT)

Central Baptist Church
221 South Fordyce Street
Blooming Grove, TX 76626
(903) 695-2271

Tribute Wall



“ *Wanda Gillen*

October 08, 2023 at 12:04 PM



“ *Billy, Gail and Family: Wanda was one of the most caring persons I've ever known. Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this most difficult time. For myself personally, Wanda was the most dedicated and influential persons in my life. Wanda, rest in the arms of God.*

Macel Crawford Whitfield Class of 1957

Macel Crawford Whitfield - June 11, 2014 at 09:49 AM



“ *To all the family members of Mrs. Wanda Gillen, I pray for peace and comfort in your hearts from God who can heal all hurts and losses. Have to say that Mrs. Gillen was one of the most wonderful and understanding teachers plus the most influential woman in my life. I just wish I'd have listened to her advice more. I loved that lady.*

Macel Crawford Whitfield - Class of 1957 BGHS

Macel Crawford Whitfield - June 10, 2014 at 12:41 PM



“ *Ronny & Cammie Mayrant & family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Wanda Gillen.*



Ronny & Cammie Mayrant & family - June 10, 2014 at 09:29 AM

AF

“ I was so very sorry to hear about Mrs. Gillen.
"[May] the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, ...
guard [each of] your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." —
Philippians 4:7

Ailsa Flynn Anderson

AFA - June 10, 2014 at 12:31 AM

DB

“ Wanda, was one of the most wonderful and gracious ladies I have ever met. When I first moved to Corsicana as an aspiring counselor at Navarro in 1980, Wanda took me under her guidance and became one of my most important mentors. I learned much from Wanda, but most importantly, I gained a friend for life. Her influence on my life during those early years of my career had a lasting ripple effect on me. That can also be said for all of those thousands of students she touched during her 60 years in education. No one else could compare to her... truly, an education giant. ~ Dr. David Del Bosque, Superintendent, Avalon ISD

Dr. David Del Bosque - June 09, 2014 at 05:58 PM

BG

“ Gail, my thoughts and prayers are with you. I always enjoyed seeing you and your mom at the youth expo. She was lucky to have you help her out.

brenda gist - June 09, 2014 at 05:52 PM

LB

“ Prayers of peace and comfort for the family as you reflect on Wanda's life together. No one could sing the Lord's Prayer like she could. She was one of my favorite teachers at BGHS.

LaVon DeRusha Baker - June 09, 2014 at 09:11 AM

CP

“ *Your mother was such a wonderful lady, great teacher and friend. Her excellent example was appreciated. May the Lord comfort you as only He can.*

Our prayers and sympathy,

Genell Rhodes Ponder & Cynthia Ponder Pope

Cynthia Ponder Pope - June 09, 2014 at 09:01 AM

LB

“ *Bill & Gail,
So sorry to hear about your Mom. She was a very sweet lady and a great teacher. Prayers are with you and your family.*

Linda Reid- Barber

Linda Reid- Barber - June 08, 2014 at 02:04 PM

BD

“ *What a lady! She ranks right up there with my mother and grandmother as being one of the most influential ladies in my life. She taught me many life skills, career skills and how to enjoy life along the way. She encouraged many of us during her years at BGHS to strive to reach our potential. Then, later at Navarro College she touched many more lives, and I had the privilege of working with her there.*

Family, I can only imagine your hurt at the moment, but what special loving memories you all share. May God grant you peace.

Brenda Duncan - June 08, 2014 at 07:15 AM