



Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris

August 29, 1928 - November 3, 2012

Virginia (Ginger) Etta Merritt Harris passed away at Central Wyoming Hospice in Casper on Saturday, November 3rd, 2012 surrounded by her family. Funeral services will be on Friday, November 9th at 11:00 a.m. at St. Rose Catholic Church and interment will follow immediately at Valley View Cemetery in Torrington. The Rosary will be recited at St. Rose on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Viewing will be on Thursday at Colyer Funeral Home from 2:00 to 4:00pm. Fr. Robert Fox, Fr. Carl Beavers, and Fr. Raymond Moss will officiate. Following interment, a reception will be held at the Cottonwood Country Club. Memorials may be made to St. Joseph's Children's Home and St Rose Catholic Church in Torrington as well as the Wyoming Cowboy Joe Club in care of Colyer Funeral Home. Friends may send condolences to the family at www.colyerfuneralhome.com

Ginger was born on August 29th, 1928 at the family ranch on Lodgepole Creek northwest of Cheyenne, Wyoming. She was the fifth of six children born to King and Marie (Smith) Merritt. Ranching, rodeo, and the western way of life were woven into the fabric of her life from the beginning. Her toughness and sense of adventure were developed on the ranch and rodeoing where she competed in team roping, was a race horse jockey, and performed trick riding. Ginger attended elementary school on the ranch with her siblings and then graduated from St. Mary's Catholic High School in Cheyenne. She went on to the University of Wyoming in Laramie where she met her husband, Dale

Harris of Jay Em, WY. Both were on the UW college rodeo team and Ginger also represented the University as the rodeo queen.

Dale and Ginger were married on September 9th, 1948 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Cheyenne. They made their home at the Wolf Place on the Harris Ranch at Jay Em, Wyoming. In 1961 they moved to a farm north of Torrington and continued to operate the ranch in Jay Em. Dale and Ginger were blessed with seven children Mark, Daletta, Mantha, Andrea, Shanna, Merritt, and Bryan. As a ranch wife with a family of 9, Ginger's work was never done but her smile and quick wit could make almost any chore fun. She was a devoted mother and enjoyed her children's, grandchildren's, and great-grandchildren's activities. She was active in Goshen County Cowbells and the St. Rose Catholic Church Alter and Rosary Society. She liked to golf, was an excellent seamstress, an avid bridge player, a great cook, and a wonderful hostess. Ginger had a great sense of humor and loved practical jokes. She enjoyed Wyoming Cowboy football and had season tickets for over 40 years. She moved to Casper in 2005 to be closer to her family and became a member of Our Lady of Fatima Church.

Ginger's toughness was never more evident than in November, 1971 when she survived a debilitating brain aneurysm. Through her strong will, she overcame all odds and was able to resume her active life. When many would have asked for help, Ginger figured out a way to be independent and help others. Ginger was an authentic cowgirl with true grit and an unwavering spirit. Given her challenging circumstances, her contributions to her family, friends, church, and ranching community were nothing short of extraordinary.

Survivors include her seven children: Mark Harris of Torrington; Daletta Harris, Mantha Phillips and Shanna Harris of Casper; Andrea (Dick) Phillips of Story; Merritt (Kathi) Harris of Douglas; and Bryan Harris of Cheyenne.

Grandchildren: Mark Harris of Colorado Springs, CO; Kodi (Troy) Peterson of

Sheridan; Olivia (Mike) Gallegos of Lincoln, NE; Jonee (JR) Crozier, Nate Laible, John Laible, Jake Phillips, Patrick Harris and Van Harris of Casper; Jaime (James) Tarver of Gillette; JW (Stevie) Phillips of Story; Ryan Harris of Denver, CO; and Rebecca Harris of Torrington. She is also survived by her two sisters, Orlene Mills of Phoenix, AZ and Ramona (John) Niland of Cheyenne; sister-in-law Betty Harris of Lyman, NE; twelve great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, parents and three brothers Sonny, Hyde, and Cotton.

Cemetery Details

Valley View Cemetery

30th Avenue
Torrington, WY 82240

Previous Events

Service

NOV 9. 11:00 AM (MT)

St. Rose Catholic Church
605 E. 22nd Avenue
Torrington, WY 82240
(307) 532-5556

Tribute Wall

GN

“ *Garold W. And Theresa L. Newton lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris*



Garold W. And Theresa L. Newton - December 28, 2012 at 01:09 AM

DH

“ *Doug And Julie Haught lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris*



Doug and Julie Haught - November 14, 2012 at 11:01 AM

SB

“ *I was so sorry to hear about Ginger. I have such great memories of your Mom and Dad and the Harris family while growing up. Ginger was a wonderful lady and she will be missed. I am sorry that time and distance has separated us over the years. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you.*

*Scott Barnette
Denver, CO*

Scott Barnette - November 11, 2012 at 10:03 PM

WT

“ I was saddened to hear of Ginger's death. I was a nurse in the ICU in cheyenne when she suffered the aneurysm that Dr. Sapiro repaired. She was an inspiration to all of us that took care of her & I often thought of her over the years. I still work in ICU but have never seen another with the same grit & detirmination...she was one of a kind! I'll say a rosary for her & your loving family. Winnie Talkington,R. N.

winnie talkington - November 09, 2012 at 01:29 AM

RT

“ Mantha, I am sorry for the loss of your Mother. Glen and I send our thoughts and prayers to you and your family at this very difficult time. Take care, Renee and Glen Taylor.

Renee Taylor - November 08, 2012 at 06:31 PM

BF

“ Bobbi Kay Feagler lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris



Bobbi Kay Feagler - November 08, 2012 at 10:41 AM

GF

“ Greg Federer lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris



Greg Federer - November 08, 2012 at 10:09 AM

BB

“ *Buzz Buckles lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris*



Buzz Buckles - November 07, 2012 at 04:05 PM

DW

“ *I was fortunate growing up "just down the road from the Harris family" and spent a lot of time at their home. My father also farmed some of the Harris property so our family's had a long standing friendship. Yes indeed Ginger loved her practical jokes and loved to target my dad just to keep him on his toes. My mom and I often referred to Ginger as "Our Hero", because her spirit stayed so positive and strong throughout all her health ups and down. The Welsch's loved, respected and enjoyed knowing Ginger and we will miss her dearly. dee Welsch*



dee Welsch - November 07, 2012 at 12:16 AM

NM

“ *Nancy Martin lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginger" Etta Merritt Harris*



Nancy Martin - November 06, 2012 at 07:18 PM



So sorry for your loss - what a wonderful tribute to your Mom/Grandmother! She sounded like a super 'cowgirl'!! Her love remains in your hearts! Lead your lives in the way she would approve to honor her! Lexann Littau

Lexann Littau - November 07, 2012 at 08:11 AM