

Holton, KS



Nelda Frances Hetzel White, 86, of Holton, KS died Thursday, October 24, 2019 in Holton. Frances was born June 11, 1933 in Hill City, KS to Francis Ivan (Bud) and Ruth Pauline (Knouf) Hetzel. She walked and rode horses to rural schools until the family moved to Salina, graduating from Salina High School in 1952. After raising her family, she returned to school and graduated from Stormont-Vail School of Nursing in Topeka, KS with her RN Degree in 1973.

Frances married her high school sweetheart, and love of her life, Marlin A. White on April 2, 1955 in Papillion, Nebraska, and they enjoyed 52 wonderful years. The couple barely had enough money to pay the Justice of the Peace and spent their evenings delivering vanilla for a dime a bottle so that they could buy groceries. Frances never lost her frugal ways.

Before moving to Holton with her husband in 1963 where Marlin started White Law Office, Frances worked as a long-distance telephone operator for Southwestern Bell Telephone Co in Salina, KS and Northwestern Bell Telephone Company in Omaha, NE. Upon receiving her nursing degree, Frances spent nine years working at Veterans Hospital in Topeka and then helped open the first oncology unit at Stormont-Vail hospital in Topeka. Later, Frances worked at Holton Hospital where she got to experience many different jobs from the emergency room to delivering a baby. Frances also worked at Golden Acres in Onaga, Holton Manor and Jackson Co. Nursing Home. Frances retired from nursing in 2006, but always kept her nursing license current in case she might need it.

Frances was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Holton where she served as president and secretary of the woman's church circle. She was a member of Phi Alpha Delta Law Wives, the Kansas State Nurses Association, was a life member of Stormont-Vail School of Nursing Alumni Association and the Jackson County Historical Society. She was a member of the Holton Country Club and served as secretary treasurer of the women's board, and the Democrat organization of Jackson Co. where she served as prescient committee woman for the first ward of Holton for twenty years. Frances was a member for the Jackson Co unit of the American Cancer Society and was the facilitator for the "I Can Cope" group. She was honored with the Facilitator Award for her service with this group. Frances was also a 4-H and Cub Scout leader.

Frances and Marlin hosted numerous exchange students over the years, hoping to enlighten their children and offer Midwestern values to their guests. A little fireball from Australia, Helen (Moore) Long, became a part of the family, providing many humorous moments over the years, and that, but for the Statute of Limitations being tolled when one is out of the country, would be relayed here.

Frances loved hosting Hetzel family reunions to the joy of many relatives who would plan their family vacation to come back to Kansas.

The family farm outside of Circleville was the meeting place for these and many other events over the years. Frances and Marlin put together the farm, refurbished the old farm house, made walking trails, and otherwise created a place that is close to the heart of all that have visited.

Frances loved helping other people, but her greatest love was spending time with her family, enjoying the great outdoors, and traveling the world. There were very few places that she and Marlin didn't visit, having explored all but one continent. After Marlin's passing in 2006, she and her daughter, Denise, continued to travel extensively, usually escaping Kansas' brutal winters in Florida.

Frances is preceded in death by her husband, her parents, brother Doyle Hetzel, sister-in-law, Carolyn Hetzel, sister, Della Evenson, and son-in-law, Keith Slayton.

She is survived by her son Dennis (Joni) White of Holton, three daughters: Kathy Slayton, Marshall, TX; Denise White, Holton; Cathy (David) Marten, Onaga, KS. Two sisters: Ruth (Oliver) McGuire, Mulkilteo, WA; Robie (Jim) Harries, WaKeeney, KS. Sister-in-law Marlene (Alan) Zimmerman, Wichita, KS. Eight grandchildren: Roddy Muncey, Tina (Scott) Mathos, David (Danielle) Marten II, Nanci (Jacob) Kennedy, Kennedy White, Annie Marten and Joey Marten. Six great grandchildren: Allie and Aaron Mathos, Mya Marten, Stella, Violet and Mabel Kennedy. Frances is also survived by many nieces, nephews and friends.

Funeral Services will be 3:00 p.m. Sunday, October 27, 2019 at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Holton, KS. Interment will follow at the Holton Cemetery. The family will greet friends beginning at 2:00 p.m. Sunday at the church. Frances will lie in state Saturday and until noon on Sunday at the Mercer Funeral Home in Holton. Memorials may be given to the Jackson County Historical Society c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436. To leave a special message for the family, visit www.mercerfuneralhomes.com