

Sandra Dee Burnett, age 79, of Spirit Lake, Iowa, died peacefully in her sleep on Monday, December 6, 2021 at the Accura Health Care Center in Spirit Lake. She was dearly loved and will be missed by many.



Sandra Dee Brown was born to Martin and Anita Brown on May 30, 1942, in Sioux Rapids, Iowa. She was baptized and confirmed at First Lutheran Church in Sioux Rapids and went on to graduate from Sioux Rapids High School. Sandy was a basketball player and a cheerleader during high school. She was a member of the 4-H Club showing cattle, as well as her horse "Trixie" at the Clay County Fair. She was also a tap dancer having her costumes made by her Grandma Nat.

After graduating school, Sandy married Jack Sylvester of Webb, Iowa in 1960. They lived on a farm acreage just outside

of Webb and were blessed with three children: Janey, Jill and Tim. They later divorced in 1976. Sandra eventually met and married Jack Burnett of Gowrie, Iowa in 1989. They lived on a farm near Gowrie and enjoyed traveling to their beautiful lake home on West Lake Okoboji whenever they could. They loved boat rides cruising along the shoreline and spent a lot of time pulling kids around on skis or other floating toys. Eventually, they traded in the ski boat for a pontoon boat and kept cruising until it became too difficult to get Sandy down the slope to the dock. When Jack eventually retired from farming, they decided to make Okoboji their permanent home.

Early in 1994 at the age of 51, Sandy suffered a devastating brain aneurysm at their home in Gowrie. She was life flighted to Des Moines for emergency brain surgery and miraculously survived it. Hospitalized for quite some time after having lost many important neurological connections, she had to re-learn vocabulary and sentence structure, finding a slightly new and different way to communicate with her family and friends. Jack was by her side the entire time. With the help of many therapists, both physical and cognitive, Sandy battled through it all and returned to her life. Ten years later, on a cold winter day, she and Jack walked out of their lake house door, she slipped, fell backward and hit her head. Jack immediately noticed she was confused and her words were slurred and called for help. That fall resulted in a second brain surgery leaving Sandy hospitalized again and without the ability to speak or effectively communicate, with partial weakness on one side. She eventually regained her mobility, albeit slow and unsteady, and left the hospital to return to their home in Okoboji. Jack cared for her 24/7 attending to all her needs for the rest of his days until he passed away in 2013. Over the years, they enjoyed a very quiet life of playing cards and board games, watching shows together, outings to lunch or dinner in the area, fishing on the lake, playing mini golf, seeing family/friends and having their kids and grandchildren over whenever and as often as possible.

After Jack's death, Sandy was moved to Riverview Terrace Assisted Living Center in Spencer. She did her best to participate in activities and always greeted you with a big smile, maybe even some happy tears for the visit. When it became necessary for her to receive more supportive care, she moved to Accura Health Center in Spirit Lake so she could be closer to her daughter Janey, who lovingly managed her care until she died.

Sandra was preceded in death by her husband, Jack Burnett; her mother and father, Anita & Martin Brown.

Those left to cherish her memory include daughters: Janey Goodlaxson (Tom) of Spirit Lake, Jill Hamilton of San Diego; son: Tim Sylvester (Mindy) of Webb; grandchildren: Jack, Christian, Myles, Regan, Greta, Avery and Madison; brother: Ronnie Brown (Gloria); nieces: Jody (Scott) Scheiber, Jeannette (Andrew) Hasley; nephew: Jason (Tammy) Brown; extended family and friends.

May she be sharing her beautiful smile and life stories in heaven...walking and talking up a storm, watching over everyone she loves. We will dearly miss her.



In Loving Memory



Sandra Dee Burnett

1942 — 2021



*"For God so loved the world
that he gave his one
and only Son,
that whoever believes in him
shall not perish
but have eternal life."
John 3:16*



IN MEMORY OF Sandra Dee Burnett

May 30, 1942 — December 6, 2021

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Tuesday, December 21, 2021

LOCATION

First Lutheran Church
Sioux Rapids, Iowa

TIME

11:00 a.m.

CLERGY

Pastor Tonna Parsons

EULOGY

Jeanette Hasley
Greta Goodlaxson
Avery Hamilton

MUSICAL REFLECTIONS

"Scars in Heaven"
"The Other Side"
"I Can Only Imagine"

INTERMENT

At a later date

We wish to express our sincere gratitude for the many kindnesses evidenced in thought and deed, and for your attendance at this service. You are invited to join us for lunch and a time of fellowship at the church immediately following the service.

— The Family of Sandra Dee Burnett

Arrangements by
SLIEFERT FUNERAL HOMES

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