



Catherine Estaline Starr

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Catherine E. Starr, age 98, passed away on October 18, 2008 at Flagler Hospital. Born in Guymon, OK in Cherokee Indian territory, to Carl & Alice Jane Bell, Catherine began life on the prairie in March of 1910. Her father disappeared while on a cattle drive, and Alice later married Leonard Carpenter. They chose to homestead in Cheyenne, WY for a number of years. Following the cattle trail, they returned to St. Joseph, MO. Catherine attended Kirschner Elementary and Benton High Schools. While in Wyoming, she and Frances were home schooled by their mother, living in a three room cabin and she survived a bout with Yellow Fever during the Flu Epidemic of 1919. Hard lessons learned during the Great Depression ensured that nary a thing was wasted, and Catherine's strong ethics live within her children and grandchildren today. She loved to bowl (and win). She loved to play cards till the wee hours of the morning. Everything was homemade never from a box!!! She saved rubber bands. She canned her own vegetables, made her own pickles, played the piano, sewed beautifully, crocheted and knitted, drove a Volkswagen bug, threw horseshoes, was never bored, did crosswords every day, watched Jeopardy, faithfully (and knew the answers)!....when age-related health issues presented obstacles to her fun, she found a new hobby and took it on , full speed ahead! Famous for her dry wit, when recently asked about her secret for beautiful skin, Catherine responded that cream was the answer.

"Oh? Do you apply it every day?" "No," was the answer. "I drink it!" She married Phene Leonard Henson and together they had two children, Gene Leonard of St Joseph and Carole Frances of Florida. After Phene passed away in 1969, Catherine married Stephen Starr of St. Joseph, who died in 1985. Catherine was a fiercely independent woman who was far advanced in both thinking and doing. She co-owned and operated a beauty salon with her sister for over 22 years, while simultaneously co-managing a 100 acre farm in Easton, MO with her husband, Phene, from 1950-1977. Additionally, she was Secretary/Treasurer for several local bowling leagues, Past Worthy Matron of Eastern Star, Past Noble Grand of the Rebecca's, pianist and Deacon in the Presbyterian Church, member of the Buchanan Country Extension Clubs, and served as staff member of the Democratic Party during elections. Due to ill health, she lived with her daughter and son in law, Carole and Tom Prior in St. Augustine, Florida. Survivors who love her so dearly include: a son, Gene (Frances) Henson of St Joseph, MO. and his children, Bruce Henson of Delaware, Stacey Henson and Natalie Henson of St Joseph, MO.; a daughter, Carole (Tom) Prior of St Augustine, FL and her children Julee (Bill) Derbins of Miami, FL., Kerri (Greg) Teisan of St. Augustine, FL, Dawn (Alan) Powers of Middleburg, FL. and Ryan Hughes of St Augustine, FL., nephews, Harry E. (Janice) Brown and Eddy (Sandra) Brown, both of Agency, MO. She was preceded in death by her beloved sister, Frances Brown and her loving parents. She also leaves to mourn her; two great-nieces, two great-nephews, nine great grandchildren and a multitude of friends and distant family members, all of whom are celebrating 98 wondrous years. A graveside service will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 2, 2008 at King Hill Cemetery in St. Joseph, Mo. with Dr. Richard Hughes officiating. A visitation will held on the day of the service from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at Rupp Funeral Home in St. Joseph. St. Johns Family Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.