



Gerri Vanover

September 11, 1931 - July 16, 2019

Geraldine Mae Vanover, 87, of Topeka, Kansas, passed away peacefully Tuesday, July 16, 2019. She was born September 11, 1931, to Jack and Zelda Dick in Perry, Kansas. In 1952, she married the love of her life, Donald “Van” Vanover.

Gerri is survived by five children: Kathi Obendorfer (Michael), Lori McNish (Kenny Katz), Pam Schmidt (Charlie), Shelly Mackey (Mark), and Alan Vanover. She is also survived by thirteen grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren; and her brother, Max Dick. Gerri was preceded in death by her beloved Van in 1987 and her twin siblings, Cliff Dick and Cleo Tillery.

Gerri blessed the community with her incredible music and fun filled energy for over seventy years. As a young woman, her music was heard by thousands of people live on the radio and at venues, often with her father Jack, who was a local saxophonist. She continued her entertainment career in Salina, Kansas and surrounding areas with the “Gerri Van Trio”. She created an album, which was a crowning moment in her career. Later on, she opened a night club/piano bar called “Gerri V’s”. It held a special place in her heart, as hundreds of musicians, including herself, sat and played there. Gerri’s children and grandchildren were her pride and joy. She adored her friends so much and never met a stranger. We will all miss her terribly and remember Gerri for her infectious smile, bold heart, and passion for life!

Geri's visitation will be Tuesday, July 23, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614. Her funeral service will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday at Grace Episcopal Cathedral, 701 SW 8th Ave, Topeka KS 66603. Burial will follow at Memorial Park Cemetery.

Please, in lieu of flowers, the family is requesting donations be made to the "Washburn University Foundation" for the Geri Van Music Scholarship (on the memo line), sent in care of the funeral home.

Cemetery Details

Memorial Park Cemetery

3616 SW 6th Street
Topeka, KS 66606

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 23. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home
2801 SW Urish Road
Topeka, KS 66614
(785) 272-7888
info@kevinbrennanfamily.com

Funeral Service

JUL 24. 10:00 AM (CT)

Grace Episcopal Cathedral
701 SW 8th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66603

Tribute Wall



“ *Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Geri Vanover*



Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home - July 23, 2019 at 03:56 PM

MR

Great video. Glad that Don her dearest love was part of her life and music too.

Millie and Jack Robinson - July 23, 2019 at 04:21 PM



“ *Geri Vanover*

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM

AL

“ I see you everywhere and I feel you in my heart but more than anything, I miss talking to you every day the most. You are the greatest Mother I could have. I love you more 🌸🕊️



Alan - July 31, 2019 at 08:02 AM

JL

“ There are never the right words to fill the void when a special person like Geri leaves us! Regret being so late., my memories are like everyone else remembering her sweet spirit, her smile, her singing and playing the piano. Geri had a gift to make everyone feel special. Love and prayers to the family.
Jessie Logan



jessie Logan - July 25, 2019 at 10:40 AM



“ One of the sweetest women I have ever known!



Paul Neustrom - July 24, 2019 at 09:06 PM

FJ

“ I have very fond memories Geri singing at the Ramada Inn on South Topeka Blvd. when Shelly would accompany her on Patsy Cline songs. They both were such wonderful singers. My sincere sympathy goes to the Vanover family, Shelly, her sisters Kathi, Lori and Pam, and her brother Alan. I know Shelly was very close to her mother and this loss must be especially painful for her. My thoughts are with you in this difficult time.

Frank Johnson

Frank Johnson - July 24, 2019 at 05:06 PM

AB

“ She was a jewel! Always so kind and loving to Michael and I thru out the years. I shared with Irene and her some our biggest secrets. Always loved to hear her play. Irene and I went to Salina and Ft. Riley and different places to hear her sing. And love family dinners at Vanovers in Dwight. Sure did love her and will miss her, Such a special lady!!

Anita Vanover Berry - July 24, 2019 at 08:16 AM

KD

“ Geri was a classy lady, who had a beautiful smile, and shared it with everyone. She was so talented. Thinking of you kids and your families, and wishing you peace through the many happy memories I know you each have with your Mother. Hugs and prayers.

Karen Domer

Karen Domer - July 23, 2019 at 04:11 PM

DS

“ *Don Hoover*

*I know this is a difficult time for you. You and Geri were so cute together. You have 27 years of cherished memories with her. Without Geri and you, Dale and I would never have met. Will always be very thankful that the two of you thought enough of us to introduce us to one another.
Our thoughts and prayers are with you Don!
Love you, Dale and Eula*

Dale and Eula Schneider - July 23, 2019 at 02:14 PM

MR

Beautiful message.

Millie and Jack Robinson - July 23, 2019 at 04:24 PM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 23, 2019 at 12:44 PM

JD

“ *So sorry to hear the news. Geri was always one of my favorites growing up. Please accept Mauri Ann and my condolences. Prayers for you all.*

Jay Domer - July 23, 2019 at 09:05 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 22, 2019 at 05:27 PM



“ *I first met Geri when I was about 19, visiting my aunt at the Gatehouse Apartments, now called Cedar Ridge Apartments. Geri was performing in the clubhouse of the apartment complex (the Bitter End Club, circa 1972?). For the past 35 years, my husband and I danced to Geri & Friends at many venues around Topeka at every opportunity. We regularly danced to Geri's music at her daughter's club at the Ramada Inn, then later at Mickey's Landing. Geri would ask us if we wanted to play with her "toys." She would point to her box full of marachas, a tambourine, and various other small percussion instruments." Geri knew how to play for dancers. Geri & Friends last played for the Carousel Rendezvous Dance Club a little more than 2 years ago. I have so many happy memories of Geri. Her joy for entertaining so many people was infectious. She made so many people happy. Geri's passing is a loss to the local community of talented musicians, and will be missed by dance clubs who loved her music.*

Liz Post - July 22, 2019 at 12:11 PM



“ *Heavenly Heights Bouquet was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 22, 2019 at 10:44 AM

DK

“ *Many a Saturday nite at SCC was spent enjoying the music of Geri Van. She was a wonderful entertainer and a person full of life.*

David Knudson - July 22, 2019 at 09:21 AM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 22, 2019 at 08:24 AM

KJ

“ *Geri was our friend for a long time. We've shared many meals with her and Don at different restaurants. She was a kind and loving lady and we will miss her a lot. She was a dear friend.*

Hal and Darlene Gakeler

kathy jilek - July 21, 2019 at 07:07 PM

CJ

“Gerry Van - You betrayed me. You were suppose to live longer than me and play at my funeral. Remember? The last tune was to be "When The Saints Go Marching In." But you are forgiven. The many times I enjoyed your music and upbeat personality and the times you played at the nursing home where my life lives. Your music opened up the minds and memories of dementia patients more than any medicine could. You are more than forgiven, you have my blessing.

Now when "The Saints Go Marching In" is played in heaven, you will be leading the band.

Charles Jeffress

Charles Jeffress - July 21, 2019 at 09:40 AM



“Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.



July 20, 2019 at 11:24 PM

MR

“We met Geri at The Flint Hills Model A car club in Topeka. She was extraordinary, and amazing person. Totally God's creation. Her talent as a musician was out of this world. Her voice was like an angel from heaven, and her friendship remarkable honest. Our condolences to her daughters, and Don her long companion. May the Lord embrace you and give you peace during this moment of mourning.

Millie and Jack Robinson - July 20, 2019 at 11:05 PM

CS

“ Cheryl (Beav) Smith purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Geri Vanover.



Cheryl (Beav) Smith - July 20, 2019 at 06:59 PM

CH

“ I am honestly at a complete loss of words. I first met Geri and her family when I was I believe around 5 years old. Amy was my best friend through grade school so needless to say I quickly became one of the girls (with the exception of Chad of course 😊). There are three memories I will carry with me forever, the first was when Amy and I were caught trying act grown up and did something bad. Geri spanked both of us and walked me home. Lol. I have two girls if my own now and I tell them that story all of the time. They find it quite humorous! The second was my introduction to Grace Cathedral when I was eight. I will NEVER forget it and it changed me forever. I remember shedding a little tear at the alter and had no idea why. Fourteen years later I was getting married and I knew where the wedding had to be, and again I stood at the alter alone, but this time sobbed. The church happened to be going through changes at that time so unfortunately we were unable to be married there. When Brad and u decided to have children we wanted to be established in a church so we asked that a minister from a Lutheran Church, a priest from Grace Cathedral and another denomination come to visit to see where we thought we would fit in. Long story short I was again called to Grace Cathedral. Several years later we left the church, but while we were there Brad and I were baptized by the person who would also later change my life. Finally, (sorry, long winded) I was pregnant with my first daughter Natalie and knew where I needed to be. The priest at that time refused to baptize her so I decided it would be best just to wait until the church changed hands before returning. It's so ironic that it was right before Easter of this year that we returned. If it weren't for Grandma Geri I would have never found our church home and would not have met one of the most amazing men I've had the honor of knowing. Geri played a huge role (all of her family for that matter) in my life and I couldn't be more thankful that our journeys crossed paths. She has a wonderful and loving family and I love you all. 🥺💕

Cherie Hunter - July 20, 2019 at 12:45 PM

RS

“ Geri was very special to us at Grace United Methodist Church. she and Don shared their music with us regularly and their love and smiles every Sunday. I will miss her so much but her memory will live on. Praise God for the life she shared with us.

Rosemary & Ken Smith
Grace United Methodist Church
Topeka

Rosemary Smith - July 20, 2019 at 08:04 AM

MR

"May the GOD who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that CHRIST JESUS had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the GOD and Father of Our Lord JESUS CHRIST. "

Geri was a great spiritual loving person, and she was a devoted person of goodness and good will to any one. She was a gift from GOD to this earth. Therefore, we honor her life as a servant of JESUS CHRIST, and she was very faithful to the voice of our Lord Almighty. To those who meet her their lives were change by unite within their hearts to the Lord. Great good things were accomplished by Geri. We were honor to be part of her life and long lasting friendship. And she will always remain in our hearts and our memories. We personally met her at the Flint Hills Model A of Topeka and we just love her attitude, and the love for Our Lord Jesus. Our condolences to her family, and friends. May GOD bless you all.

Millie and Jack Robinson - July 20, 2019 at 10:53 PM

MB

I was so sorry to learn of Geri's passing. She shared her love of others and her music with so many and I am happy that my family was included. Memories bring tears, but I'm so thankful to have the good fortune to have had them. My deepest sympathy to her wonderful family. Love & Prayers, Mary Jane Burns

Mary Jane Burns - July 22, 2019 at 03:47 PM

CA

“ My dad was the bass player for the Geri Van Trio so I had the privilege of getting to know Geri and hearing her beautiful voice. Boy could she play that piano! She was so talented and even as a child I could see how she lit up the room. Dad thought the world of her. My thoughts and prayers are with her family and may God be with you during this difficult time.

Cheryl Anderson
Marquette

Cheryl Anderson - July 20, 2019 at 07:16 AM

SM

“ . I am happy for Geri, certain that has crossed through the Pearly Gates, and is probably teaching the Heavenly Host a thing or two about music. But my heart hurts for her entire family. Kathi, Pam, Lori, Alan, Shelley, Max & Don, you are in my prayers. May you find comfort and strength in each other, as you celebrate Geri's life & legacy. If there was one thing she loved more than music, it was her family. Peace be with each of you.

Sharon McGuire - July 20, 2019 at 01:45 AM

MF

“ Geri, I will miss you greatly. I met you through bowling, always enjoyed our little talks. It didn't matter if you were not feeling well, you always saw the bright side of everything. Your beautiful voice and smile will be missed. I know you will be a bright spot with the Choir in heaven. Sending prayers to your family.

Marlene Flowers - July 19, 2019 at 10:15 PM

HK

“ To a wonderful lady I was privileged to meet through her daughter Kathi. She was funny and a great singer, always brought cheers where ever she was. She will be missed

Harry & Elizabeth Kalajian - July 19, 2019 at 07:57 PM

SS

“ My little sweet Geri , you became such a part of my life all through the years. The joy you gave me when we got to sing together, which was quite often, I'll never forget our songs , you'd look at me and say “what key” I'd look at you and say “I don't know” then you always start out and it was always the right one and how you could play those keyboards and never miss a beat or words. I will miss you and thank you for keeping in touch even when I moved to California. We'll sing again when we all meet in heaven. All my prayers to your family

sandy sterling - July 19, 2019 at 05:24 PM

PM

“ Geri was one of my favorite customers. I am so sad to hear of her passing. She was sweet and such a delight through her music. I will miss her smiling face and all the laughter we shared here at findables. Rest In Peace sweet Geri. You will be so missed

priscilla mccabe - July 19, 2019 at 04:39 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.



July 19, 2019 at 04:25 PM

VG

“ Many years have passed since I used to spend time with the Dick family. I have always admired Geraldine for the beautiful music she and her father played for dances at the Legion in Oskaloosa.

I have been seeing her recently at the Cancer Center here in Topeka and we have enjoyed talking about "Old Times".

She will be missed by many as she knew so many and so nice to everyone.

My love to the family, especially Pat and Max. Violet Gottstein

Violet Mongold Gottstein - July 19, 2019 at 12:20 PM

GC

“ Don, you have our deepest sympathy. You can feel good about making these last few years very happy for Geri. To Lori and the rest of her family, she was a very special lady. We got to know her through the AACA car club and we know that we have lost one of the special "spark plugs" of our club. She was always so much fun. I also know that we have lost a lot of the music around Shawnee Co.
Gary & Charita Cunningham

Gary & Charita Cunningham - July 19, 2019 at 11:08 AM

DP

“ Don and Family, We are so sorry to hear of Geri's passing. This Classy lady will truly be missed and the world is a lesser place while the heavens benefited. Our thoughts and prayers are with you neighbor. David, Debbie, Cassidy and Tyson Parks.

David Parks - July 19, 2019 at 10:39 AM

MO

“ To Stud (Alan) and all the family,
My thoughts and prayers are with you during this time. Mom was a beautiful woman. I told her that when I grow up I wanted to be just like her!! She was so full of life and spunky. She will be missed.

Maria Olverson - July 19, 2019 at 10:20 AM



“ Geri Van was one special, classy lady! All of the years she played for Marge Heeney's Fun-R-All was so wonderful! She was the best! I'm so glad to have known her!

*RIP, Geri Van.
Peggy Hinck*

Peggy Hinck - July 19, 2019 at 10:12 AM

TM

“ Lori and family, so sorry to hear about Geri's passing. Remembering when she babysat Angela for a while when she was a baby and all the times I listened to her play. Such a sweet lady. Prayers for all.

Theresa McCulley - July 19, 2019 at 10:03 AM

NO

“ Lori, Brooke, Ashley and Don - really sorry to hear about Geri's passing. We sure are going to miss her on Sunday's at church. It was always a treat when she would pick up Brooke and Ashley from my mom's day care. Nancy and Calvin Ott

Nancy Ott - July 19, 2019 at 09:10 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 19, 2019 at 08:30 AM



“ *My Love is with you
My Compassion is with you
My spirit is with you
Your mom is the amazing person that raised you and your sisters.
She is done with this reality experience and now she has moved on
to a spiritual experience.*

I rejoice and smile on the memories that I shared with her and you

*Love
Coy & Sharon Tuck*

coy tuck - July 19, 2019 at 12:01 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 18, 2019 at 11:33 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Geri Vanover.*



July 18, 2019 at 11:27 PM



“ *It was a treat to watch Geri Van perform. She was a regular entertainer at the Moose Lodge and her dances were attended by large groups of people. Geri was a very nice lady, she loved her fans dearly. She will be missed and many will have great memories of her . My Sympathy and Condolences to her family*

Tom Lay

Tom Lay - July 18, 2019 at 09:33 PM



“ *I will always remember her voice and her singing and playing the piano! She had so much energy and loved her whole family!!! I bet she is singing with the Angels now!! Thinking of you Shelly and family!*

mallory Martinat - July 18, 2019 at 08:29 PM

WC

“ I’m sure that God is welcoming Geri with open arms but we, her friends and family, are missing her beauty and light! Our Lord’s light just shined through Geri in her music and laughter! I’m just so grateful for the way she raised up her daughter, Shelly, as she too has touched so many hearts in her lifetime too! Am praying that our Lord wrap Geri’s family in His arms and hold them tight as He fills them with peace, serenity, comfort and love. I am so very sad for our loss of this precious woman.

Wendy Campbell - July 18, 2019 at 08:27 PM

JS

“ I just absolutely love her saying that she had the body of a 65 year old at age 85. She was a beautiful example for living life to the fullest!!! She was strong and courageous and loved her family sooooo much. She will be missed by many.

Jennifer Starks - July 18, 2019 at 02:28 PM

GW

I am going to miss my friend. She was so kind and a beautiful lady . My prayers go out to her family and especially to Don. Geri is finally pain free and heaven has gained another singing angel.

gail wheat - July 19, 2019 at 10:22 AM

JT

Lori, Ashley and family. So sorry to hear of Jeri's passing, She was a beautiful woman and will be missed by many. Sending love and blessings your way.

Joyce Tabor-Coker - July 22, 2019 at 08:47 AM