



LaRita Rhea Shields

July 8, 1931 - March 19, 2024

LaRita Rhea (Wright) Shields passed away on March 19, 2024 in Tucson, Arizona at the age of 92. She was born July 8, 1931 in Frederick, Oklahoma. LaRita was a woman of unwavering faith, boundless love, and profound strength.

As the youngest of 10 children and the daughter of a baker turned evangelist, LaRita's life was steeped in God's grace from the very beginning. Out of high school she supported her parents working as a secretary at a local radio station, and hosting her own show called "Women's News."

Fred Shields was the love of her life, whom she had known since their high school days, and they were married for almost 48 years before he passed away on March 22, 2000. Fred's studies and work took them to many places – Checotah, Oklahoma; Tahlequah, Oklahoma; Ann Arbor, Michigan; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Lawrence, Kansas; Tempe, and finally Tucson, Arizona, where LaRita lived for 37 years. Despite their numerous relocations, they were never without a church home for very long and practically sought out a church before finding a house each time they moved.

LaRita dedicated herself to being a devoted stay-at-home mom for a decade. Later, she worked as an Administrative Assistant at various universities including University of Oklahoma, Northeastern State University, University of Michigan, Oral Roberts University, Kansas University, and her last job was in the Vice President's office at the University of Arizona. However, her favorite job was being the Executive Secretary & Administrative Assistant to the

Director of Athletics at the University of Kansas. There, she enjoyed supporting the sports teams and being part of the athletic department. LaRita was a dedicated member of Mountain View Baptist Church. For many years she and Fred traveled back to Muskogee for their high school reunions, cherishing the time spent with old classmates. Over the years she enjoyed traveling to Europe and Saudi Arabia. She was an avid sports fan, finding joy in cheering for the University of Kansas basketball team and the University of Oklahoma football team. In later years she found enjoyment watching her family expand.

LaRita is survived by her daughter, Karen Duderstadt and husband Kevin, daughter, Linda Ksiazek and husband Richard, grandchildren, Kendall Harrison, Kourtney Snyder, Nicholas Ksiazek, Whitney Schwartz, Hayleigh Ksiazek, Jacob Ksiazek, and nine great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jessie and Art Wright, her nine siblings, and her husband, Fred Shields.

A service to celebrate LaRita's life will be held at 11AM Friday, April 5, 2024 at Memorial Park Cemetery Mausoleum in Muskogee with Chief Billy Friend officiating.

The family of LaRita Rhea Shields has entrusted her service and burial to Cliff and Carmen Garrett and Staff of Clifford D Garrett Family Funeral Home and Crematory, 1020 W Okmulgee Ave. 918-910-8883.

Online condolences may be left for the Shields family at clifforddgarrettfamilyfh.com

Cemetery Details

Memorial Park Cemetery

7600 Old Taft Rd
Muskogee, OK 74401

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

APR 5. 11:00 AM (CT)

Memorial Park Cemetery Mausoleum
7600 Old Taft Road
Muskogee, OK 74401

Tribute Wall

LD

“ Love, Mark and Alice Duderstadt planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of LaRita Rhea Shields.

Love, Mark and Alice Duderstadt - March 31, 2024 at 02:55 PM

LD

“ Love, Mark and Alice Duderstadt purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of LaRita Rhea Shields.



Love, Mark and Alice Duderstadt - March 31, 2024 at 02:55 PM

FF

“ Frank, Polly & Christopher Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of LaRita Rhea Shields.

Frank, Polly & Christopher Family - March 27, 2024 at 02:03 PM

FF

“ Frank, Polly & Christopher Family purchased the Heavenly Heights Bouquet for the family of LaRita Rhea Shields.



Frank, Polly & Christopher Family - March 27, 2024 at 02:03 PM