



**Gail Elvina Anderson**

January 22, 1933 – October 2, 2023

Gail Elvina (McKeag) Anderson, 90-year-old, former Ten Sleep resident passed away at the Thermopolis Rehabilitation and Wellness Center on October 2, 2023.

Gail was born on January 22, 1933 to Arnold and Elvina McKeag, the fourth of six children. She grew up on the family ranch in the sandhills near Arthur, Nebraska. She remembered that time fondly: riding horses and also driving horses on her father's haying crew. She would have told you that she always preferred the horses and the haying to the kitchen and the housework.

She started school at the one-room country schoolhouse at age four, standing at the fence crying until the teacher let her come with her sisters. She was active as a leader in the 4-H riding club and started one of the first 4-H clubs to square dance on horseback. Rodeos and ropings were a big part of her early life and, as rodeo queen, she proudly rode Sporty Green, a beautiful palomino horse.

She graduated from Ogallala High School at 16 and after two years of college, taught at multiple rural schools across Nebraska. She obtained an English degree from Ottawa University in Ottawa, Kansas and then taught English in the Worland School District. She went on to teach for many years in the Ten Sleep School District, teaching multiple grade levels: third grade, junior high and high school English. Interspersed with her teaching career, she was head librarian at the Ten Sleep Library working to make the expansion of the old library happen. She had a love of old books, especially poetry books, and collected them.

Gail left teaching to work in the Ten Sleep Post Office. She started as a Clerk working for Mayme Bader. When Mayme retired, Gail became the Officer-in-Charge (1979) and then the Postmaster (1980). During her time as Postmaster, she oversaw the building of the current Post Office. She loved serving the community and getting to visit with people. She retired as Postmaster in October of 1993.

Gail had wide-ranging interests. Her faith was a foundational part of who she was, and how she lived her life. She was active in the Ten Sleep United Methodist Church in many different capacities, including as chair of the Building Committee which built the current United Methodist Church. She actively worked in the community, founding the Ten Sleep Museum among other activities.

When the mountain lions came in and killed multiple sheep on the family property, she was instrumental in the lawsuit which resulted in the Wyoming Game and Fish being required to make payment to ranchers for livestock killed by large predatory animals. She loved antiques, estate sales, auctions, and the art of a good deal.

Most importantly, she loved her family. On June 4, 1958, she married James Anderson in Arthur, Nebraska. They made their home and raised their family on the ranch in Ten Sleep, moving up the canyon to live on her grandmother's place on Canyon Creek in the early 60's. They had three children, Mary Lou, Jami and Aaron.

Over the years many people joined the family and were always welcomed home no matter how that relationship happened – there was always room at the table.

She was preceded in death by her parents, beloved husband, Jim, sisters: Elaine Nielsen, Dorothy McKeag and Dorinne McKeag, granddaughter, Hannah Bentley, and great-grandson, Michael Meiburger.

She is survived by her children: Aaron (Sarah) Anderson of Ten Sleep, Jami (Andy) Lind of White Sulfur Springs, Montana, and Mary Lou (Dan) Fritts of Prairie Village, Kansas; brother, Delbert (Carolyn) McKeag of Ogallala, Nebraska; sister, Mary Ann Anderberg of Arthur, Nebraska; and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

She was well loved.

A Celebration of Life will be held November 11, 2023 at 11:00 AM at the Ten Sleep United Methodist Church with Pastor Kayilu Pfoze officiating.