



Jean Maxine Bennett

September 9, 2008

Jean Maxine Bennett, age 80, of Glendive, Montana, passed away on Thursday, September 4, 2008, at the Billings Deaconess Clinic in Billings, Montana. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 P.M., Tuesday, September 9, 2008, in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive, with Rev. James Hageman and Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment will be in the Dawson Memorial Cemetery. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home

Have you ever walked a country road with a friend, looking skyward, watching the clouds and finding pictures in their shapes? This was one of the simple pleasures Jean Maxine Bennett enjoyed. Jean spent the last 60 plus years on the farm and ranch where she and her husband Johnny lived. A picture of the Bennett's family home is displayed here at the front, where the Jean's family has put together a collection of her favorite things. Another place Jean enjoyed spending time was the family cabin at Fort Peck. Both the farm and the cabin had an abundance of clouds and a big sky for cloud watching. Jean was not a complicated woman. She was first, foremost, and totally a wife, mother, and grandmother. Jean came from a large family, she had nine brothers and sisters. She loved and raised four boys of her own. Her life was about family, home, friendship and simple pleasures. To her sons, Jean was a mother and a friend. Their father, Johnny was the disciplinarian of the family, but Jean was outspoken, and you knew just what she thought about things. Son, Gary often heard how he was "just like his father!" and Grandson Bryan was well aware that Grandma didn't much care for his goatee and tattoos. But

heaven help anyone who criticized her family! Red-haired and fair-skinned, Jean's work and activities were pretty much in the house. Living on a farm and ranch, there were times when an extra hand was needed and she would help outside. During haying or harvest, Jean might drive truck, but for the most part, she took care of the household duties and raised the children. When Johnny was alive, he had a garden and Jean did the canning of the produce. Jean was partial to vegetables. When Johnny died that was the end of the garden and the canning. Although Jean didn't grow things outside, she did love growing houseplants. On television, Jean watched an advertisement for water bulbs. These are long stemmed colored glass bulbs that when filled with water and stuck into a plant pot, enables the plant to draw the water out as it needs it, relieving you of watering so often. This looked like a good deal to Jean. You could get two of these bulbs for just \$9.95 or so, and Jean ordered two sets, four total. Jean received the two sets she had ordered. The next week, two more sets arrived, and the next and the next. It became a family joke, all these water bulbs Jean was getting. She had no idea why she kept getting more or even if she was getting charged. She ended up with a collection of about twenty of them and yes, she got charged. It was too much of a good thing. Jean didn't get out to shop much and learned to shop by mail order. She would order many of her clothes through catalogs, and if they weren't right or didn't fit, back they went. Jean always looked good and dressed well, keeping up on the latest styles. Jean had about twelve magazine subscriptions she received through the mail. She loved to read and her favorite magazine was "People", an issue of which is displayed here among her favorite things. Her favorite books to read were mystery romance, and one of the books displayed is by her favorite author Julie Garwood. This particular book was one Jean didn't get to finish reading. And Jean would read the daily newspaper cover to cover. Every Wednesday was Jean's day to go town. She had a standing hair appointment; she would do her shopping for the week, have lunch and then indulge in a favorite activity, playing the poker machines. Jean had a \$20 limit, just enough to have a little fun with. Once in

awhile, she would win a little, but she just enjoyed playing. Her favorite game was Jacks R Better. Jean also liked the scratch tickets. She would do a few and then save some for another time. Bryan would bring her a handful when he would come to visit his grandma, and he has left one for his grandmother here at the front with her other favorites. Jean enjoyed playing cards with her family. Rummy was a favorite and she would play 31 for pennies with the grandkids. She also liked to shake dice, with the family favorite being a dice game where you count points called "chicken." An avid fan of rodeos, Jean was partial to the bull riding, and would faithfully watch the Professional Bull Riding on television every Saturday and Sunday. If you were visiting, you could watch it with her or go home, she was watching PBR. She loved going to Billings to the PBR events and she made it to Las Vegas to the National Finals Rodeo on three occasions. Another television show that Jean watched regularly was "The Price Is Right". She loved that show. Jean also loved country music. The music for today's service has a country flavor to it in honor of Jean. Jean would listen to a country music radio show she liked on Saturdays and to her own CDs on Sunday morning. The reason she did this on the week-ends was because "The Price Is Right" isn't on television on the week-ends. Besides her collection of water bulbs, Jean did have a couple of things she collected on purpose. One was vases and the other was dolls, mostly porcelain dolls. She loved baby dolls, because she cherished babies, and the dolls she collected were dressed in ordinary clothing. She had a few that were pretty fancily dressed, but for the most part, she liked the ones in every day outfits. On her last trip to Las Vegas, she picked up one of those dolls that stand in the corner with their back to you and are about three feet tall. Her son, Jim, and daughter-in-law, Sally, thought they were going to have to get an airplane seat just for the doll. But they did manage to get it on board and home without doing that. You can see one of her vases and a baby doll from her collections displayed today. Around the house, Jean was a good cook and a wonderful baker. Granddaughter Heidi would come to her

grandmother's every Friday and stay the night. On Saturday, Jean would do her baking. Heidi would perch in her favorite spot, sitting on the corner cupboard, and watch and help her grandmother turn out batches of cookies, a favorite being the raisin-filled ones. Jean loved and thought all her grandchildren were very special. She loved having them around and was good at helping them sort out their arguments and not walk away from each other angry. And she took time to get to know each of them individually, and she gave them advice tempered with love. Grandma had a sweet tooth and she had a candy drawer that her grandkids still go to first thing when they walk in her house. Heidi recalls a time in high school when she was in love with a boy from Sidney. Heidi's dad, Gary, had grounded her and she was crushed that she couldn't see this young love. Well, Grandma and Aunt Sally took her shopping with them...in Sidney. They went shopping after dropping Heidi off with her boyfriend and his parents. Heidi spent the day with them at a parade in downtown Sidney, while grandma and Aunt Sally shopped. Jean's friend, Madelyn Schmuck, said of Jean that she was always trying to do for others. Jean and Madelyn were best friends, playing the machines together, having lunches, and they shared a birthday every Valentines Day. Jean was one year younger than Madelyn and Valentines Day was their special day to celebrate. Madelyn calls Jean "one in a million." They were great friends. Jean was very adaptable. She would take things as they came and make it work. An example of that is her background. Born and raised in Bismarck, she grew up in town with all the amenities of indoor water and plumbing. When she moved to Glendive and lived in the country, the water was from a pump outside and the bathroom was an outhouse. Jean adjusted just fine. With no indoor plumbing and even later when there was, there was not always a bathtub, the babies in her life got baths in the sink. It was a bit of a family tradition. And oh...the yellow house. Another thing the family shook their heads over. Every time Jean went to Bismarck, on the drive down 7th by the hospital to the mall, Jean would point out a big yellow house that she had lived in, every time they went by it. The hospital, clinics and parking lots had surrounded it in later years, but

Jean made sure she pointed it out every time she was in Bismarck. The family heard it over and over. On one trip as they went by the yellow house, it was being torn down. They stopped and Sally took a picture and went and picked up a piece of yellow siding for Jean. It was the last of the old neighborhood houses to go and it had an importance to Jean. They aren't sure why, other than she had lived there. One of Jean's habits over her lifetime was smoking. She had quit for a time, but after Johnny died, Jean had a difficult time adjusting and she began to smoke again, and was not inclined to give it up. In her later years, she developed emphysema and she was able to enjoy her simple pleasures less and less. Her hair appointments and trips to town changed to Saturdays when one of her boys, Gary or Jim or their wives, Renee or Sally could take her. She still enjoyed her reading and the machines, but did become less active. One of her last, best times was her 80th birthday party. Her children began planning it in May of 2007. It was a surprise and they almost slipped up many times. But it all came together this past February. All Jean's family was able to be here and they surprised her at the Shamrock in Wibaux. Jean loved the Shamrock shrimp and to her delight, she had it that night with everyone celebrating with her. Was she ever surprised to see them all! Nothing meant more to Jean than her family and there they all were. What a wonderful 80th birthday. In talking to her sons about Jean, you can just hear the love and respect for their mother in their voices. Jean always had time for them, listened to them and was there for them throughout their lives. After their father died and it was so hard on their mother, they tried to be there for her. Dave and Terry who live away, called their mother all the time. Gary and Jim, who lived close to Jean, did all they could for her, as did their wives, Sally and Renee. To her daughters-in-law, Jean was like a second mother and also a good friend. Everyone who was part of her family knew how important they were to her; she made that clear. Jean greatly loved her family and they greatly love her. She will be very much missed. And so in Jean's honor, don't forget to look skyward and cloud watch...you may catch a glimpse of her there. Let us now listen to a song

chosen by Jean's family for her, Willie's Nelson's "Seven Spanish Angels".
Song: "Seven Spanish Angels" by Willie Nelson
Speaker: Granddaughter Heidi Bennett
At this time Jean's granddaughter, Heidi Bennett, would like to share a few thoughts and a poem with you.
Closing: Celebrant
Today is an important day. We have come together to remember Jean Bennett and recognize her touch on our lives. We come together to honor her and pay tribute to the wonderful person she was. As we grieve the loss of Jean, we celebrate her life. Gary, Terry, David, Jim and all of Jean's family, you have lost an important person in your lives. That Jean has lived, what Jean has experienced can never be taken from her or from you. Aren't you fortunate to have had her in your lives. She is a part of each of you and will live on in your hearts. As your friends and community, we grieve with you and we grieve for you. Know that we are here for you and offer our support. At the conclusion of Jean's committal service, her family will be placing pennies with her at the grave. The pennies signify that they are thinking of Jean and sending their loving thoughts with her. As the family goes about the busyness of their lives, when they find a penny in an unexpected place, these "pennies from heaven" will remind them of Jean and they will know that she is thinking of them and sending a loving thought, hug and kiss to them. "Remember Jean in your heart
In your thoughts, In the memories of the times you loved
In the memories of the time you shared. For if you think of Jean She will never be gone." Let us now listen to the song "Go Rest High On That Mountain" by Vince Gil. We will then close Jean Maxine Bennett's life tribute service with a prayer from Pastor Hageman. Song: "Go Rest High On That Mountain" by Vince Gil of Glendive has been entrusted with arrangements. Jean was born on February 14, 1928 in Bismarck, North Dakota, the daughter of Frank and Rose (Annunson) Ritchey. She was raised and educated in Bismarck. In 1944 Jean moved to Glendive to be with her father. It was in Glendive where she met Johnny Bennett. They were united in marriage on September 16, 1945, in Miles City, Montana. Johnny and Jean made their home in Pleasant View west

of Glendive, where they farmed and ranched their entire lives. Mom lived her life for her children and grandchildren. During her life she was able to witness the birth of two of her three great grandchildren. Mom loved to watch rodeos, especially the bull riding, and she never missed the National Finals Rodeo. Another show that mom never missed was the Price is Right. If you went to mom's house, she always had a plate of food ready, unless she was gone playing the machines. Mom enjoyed spending time with her family at their cabin at Fort Peck, she loved to read books and play cards. Mom had a special place in her heart for her dear friend Madelyn Schmuck. Jean was preceded in death by her husband, two grandchildren; Dani Ellen and Dustin, three brothers; Frank, Ben and Bob, two sisters; Margaret and Violet. Survivors include her four sons; Gary Bennett and his wife Renee of Glendive, Terry Bennett and Linda of Helena, Montana, David Bennett and his wife Kari of Billings, Jim Bennett and his wife Sally of Glendive, two brothers; John Ritchey of Woodford, Virginia, Bill Ritchey and his wife Arla of Helena, two brothers-in-law; Robert Bennett of Glendive, Walt Stockert of New Salem, North Dakota, two sisters; Annette Fleck and her husband Matt of Aurora, Colorado, Patty Klinesasser and her husband Bob of Bismarck, one sister-in-law; Dee Ritchey of Linwood, Washington, six grandchildren; Johnny Allen of Las Vegas, Nevada, Heidi of Morrisville, Vermont, Dawn (Oscar) of Billings, Bryan (Amanda) of Sheridan, Wyoming, Lindsay (Rob) of Federal Way, Washington, Amy (Chad) of Billings, three great grandchildren; Bella, Austin and Joey, numerous nieces and nephews. Mom we love you and will always miss you. Jean Bennett Tribute Video from Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home on Vimeo.

Tribute Wall



“ *Jean Maxine Bennett*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM