



# Betty Joyce Denney

OCT 28, 1928 - DEC 28, 2016



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## **Betty Joyce Denney**

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**B**etty Joyce Denney, 88, of Cleburne, Texas, formerly of Decatur, IL, passed away on December 28, 2016, at 4:30 a.m. at Hospice House at Huguley in Burleson, Texas.

Betty was born October 28, 1928 in Decatur, Illinois, the daughter of Chap and Della Culumber. She was raised in Decatur, Illinois with her sisters, Ruth Marie, Wandalee, Pat, and Scampy, all of whom have preceded her in death. She graduated from Stephen Decatur High School and received her degree in education from Illinois State University. She taught English and Theater at St. Teresa High School in Decatur, Illinois and later at Leander High School in Leander Texas after her move to Texas. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Judy Kay Denney.

Surviving are her devoted husband, Charles David Denney of Cleburne, Texas, daughter and son in law Joyce and Jim Morgan of Burleson, Texas, granddaughter and husband, Carrie and Kevin Miller, and two great grandchildren, Ashley and Avery of Flower Mound, Texas.

Services to celebrate Betty's life will be 11 AM Tuesday, January 10, 2017 in Graceland/Fairlawn Funeral Home. Visitation will be 10 -11 AM Tuesday in the Funeral Home. Burial will be in Graceland Cemetery. There will be a reception to follow at the Decatur Conference Center.

The family is being served by Graceland/Fairlawn Funeral Home, 2901 N. Monroe Street, Decatur, IL 62526. Send condolences and share memories with the family at [www.gracelandfairlawn.com](http://www.gracelandfairlawn.com).

Video Tribute for Betty J. Denney:

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/LCR7TCF8PTH4X56R>



## Tribute Wall

**Betty Joyce Denney**

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EG

**Elizabeth Stewart Gandy** posted:

Lit a candle in memory of Betty Joyce Denney

January 9 at 7:29 AM

LG

**Linda Graves** posted:

Remembering Aunt Betty I am so grateful I was able to visit Aunt Betty and Uncle Pete and the rest of the "clan" in Texas in April 2015. They were still living in their home and still in their prime and able to get around time. Had a such a fabulous time with them. Aunt Betty had quite an affinity for Gone with the Wind (GWTW) so we visited the GWTW museum and lingered in the full experience of that romance (who would ever have guessed this gem is in Cleburne, TX rather than Atlanta, GA!) But the best part was just hanging out with her and Uncle Pete and being regaled by Aunt Betty's dry wit. She could do the best poker face until you were buying the story and then, click, she delivered the ending. When I was a child I was rather afraid of her, as she was the most "formidable" of the five Culumber sisters which included my mother Wandalee. We had these fabulous Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday get togethers at the grandparents' house that included ALL our relatives and us cousins having a raucous good time. Aunt Betty was the one who could call us to order and back to behaving. Aunt Betty was truly loving and compassionate and took care of what needed to be done, not just to her darling Pete but to everyone. She did the right thing whether it was appreciated or not. When Grand Della could no longer take care of herself living at home, she was moved to a nursing home. Aunt Betty faithfully visited her mother virtually daily and ensured that Grand Della's needs were being met. Aunt Betty was smart and well-organized, in a different time she might have been a CEO. Those skills were applied to having a well-ordered home. She could have written one of those how to de-clutter books since there was never any clutter anywhere and everything was clean and in its place. When it was time to move from her cherished home into an assisted living home with Pete, she recognized that she could no longer take care of the two of them from home and it was the right and best thing to do. I doubt it was at all easy emotionally or in any other way, but she was smart about it and recognized it was the best way to ensure that Uncle Pete and she got the care that she was becoming less able to provide herself. Aunt Betty was smart and well-organized, in a different time she might have been a CEO. Those skills were applied to having a well-ordered home. She could have written one of those how to de-clutter books since there was never any clutter anywhere and everything was clean and in its place. I admired Aunt Betty for embarking on a new career late in life after being an executive homemaker until after her kids were grown. She became both a high school English teacher and the school play drama coach. Wish I could have seen one of her productions. It was after Aunt Betty became an English teacher, and especially after my own folks passed, that I discovered our wonderful connection through books and literature. I cherish letters from her in which we discussed what we were reading or recommended. She had quite a personal library, one room of their home was floor to ceiling books. It must have been hard to give that up when they left their home. I would like to think that she will be enjoying a vast Cosmic library and heavenly repose for eternity.

January 4 at 5:49 PM



## Tribute Wall

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PF

**Pat Freese** posted:

In 1983 while living in Joliet our lives were suddenly shattered. We were told we had to leave everything and move or not have a job. 6 weeks to buy, sell, move and settle a Soph. in Hs in a new school. To Decatur no less~~~~~ who move to Decatur? First thought was Aunt Betty and Uncle Pete. He said she was good at this and put Betty on line. Within hours we had a realtor, dates to meet set up etc. She helped with everything!!!! Also fed and watered us on several occasions. We managed to live thru that horrible time and even tho it hurts it is always nice to know there was SOMEONE there who cared and helped. Gary & Pat Freese

January 8 at 5:44 AM

BR

**Ben Rose** posted:

Psalms 116:15 – Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. I actually remember a day that Betty was speechless upon hearing a story about a chinaman named Hungchow. May the Lord comfort you Pete and your family during this time of loss. God Bless you. Ben and Yolanda Rose

January 8 at 3:33 AM

MI

**Marylois Irvin** posted:

What a wonderful tribute, Jim. Wish I could have known Betty! Sincere sympathy to all the family and much love to Joyce! MaryLois Irvin

January 7 at 4:09 PM

PS

**Pamela Schueler** posted:

Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Joyce and family, during this time of sorrow. Your Mother sounded like a very special Mother, and you were so lucky to have her in your lives for as long as you did. May all your fond memories give you some comfort and peace in knowing she is now with our Lord. God Bless you and your family. Pam and Steve Schueler

January 7 at 6:42 AM



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JM

**Jim Morgan** posted:

What a sense of humor combined with brutal honesty. I never will forget not long after I was engaged to her daughter, Betty pulled me aside and asked me a question. "Why are you getting married to my Daughter?" Not knowing what to say I remained silent too long for her to hear my answer (if I could even have come up with an answer). She finally said, you guys are having too much fun, why go and get married. Well she did let me marry Joyce and accepted me into the family. My Mom died at a very young age and my Dad at even an earlier age. Over the 25 years I knew Betty, she became not only a Mother-in-Law, but a wonderful replacement for my Mom. She made me feel loved and welcome, but at the same time she was quick to remind me that I was only the "Son-in-Law. She is and will be greatly missed. Jim Morgan

January 6 at 8:08 AM

CM

**Carrie Miller** posted:

If I have to sum up one of my favorite qualities about my Grandma it's that she always made me feel like I was the smartest one in the room. It didn't matter if I was 4 years old making bologna and cheese sandwiches, if I was a teenager putting puzzles together with her or if I was an adult having a conversation about my own children. She always listened to me and embraced my thoughts and told me how smart I was. Definitely made an impact on me. – Carrie Miller

January 6 at 7:28 AM

CM

**Carrie Miller** posted:

Betty was very clear that written Thank You notes always needed to be sent. One of my favorite stories was when I gave her a "pre-thank you note" to thank her and Pete for all of the Christmas gifts they were about to give me that year. She had a really good laugh over that one! Thanks to her, I know how to write thank you notes now. – Kevin Miller

January 6 at 7:25 AM

CM

**Carrie Miller** posted:

Granny's jokes always made me laugh especially when she would make them towards Pappy. She would come to our house on Christmas morning and always be so happy to spend time with us and enjoy being around the craziness of our house. It was really hard to get a picture with her though because she would always put her present in front of her!! – Ashley Miller

January 6 at 7:22 AM



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CM

**Carrie Miller** posted:

I loved how Granny always made sure that when I came to visit she always had new coloring books and puzzles and games for me to play! She would always sit down and do them with me too which I though was special. – Avery Miller

January 6 at 7:19 AM

CJ

**Colleen Jiron** posted:

With great love and appreciation, I recall my childhood days of blissful innocence at The Shack behind Chappo's amusement park complex in Decatur, IL; safely ensconced in the family circle of parents, brothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, barbecuing hamburgers and hand-churning homemade vanilla custard ice cream. How precious were those times, those people. And key among them was Aunt Betty, the person I could always count on for something honest, uplifting and funny! With keen intelligence and quick wit, she had a way of cutting through the dross and telling it "like it is," but with humor and humanity laced through her words. Now she can do the same for the angels:). Their gain is our loss. We love you, Aunt Betty! – Carol Colleen Jiron (nee' Roth)

January 4 at 5:49 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Betty by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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