



Brenda Sue (Ellis) Thompson

March 11, 1948 - April 30, 2025

Brenda Sue Ellis Thompson of Conway, Arkansas (formerly of Possum Grape, Arkansas) entered Heaven on April 30, 2025. She was born March 11, 1948 to J. R. (Rufus) and Goldie Waters Ellis in Thida, Arkansas. She was a descendant of Revolutionary War soldier Robert Ellis.

Brenda lived in several states as a child and young woman (Michigan, Illinois, Texas, Indiana, Alabama, and Florida), before returning to Arkansas in 1970. She was an active community member of the Union Hill, Thida and Possum Grape communities (Independence and Jackson Counties) until 2023 when she moved to Conway. Brenda helped organize the Thida-Union Hill Volunteer Fire Department and the Independence Jackson Water District. She was an active member of the Union Hill Home Extension Club and wrote a community news column for the Newport Daily Independent (newspaper). She had also held several offices of the Order of Eastern Star. At the time of her passing, Brenda was a member of Cadron Ridge Baptist Church in Conway. In younger years, she had served faithfully at Union Hill Landmark Missionary Baptist Church and Old Glaise Missionary Baptist Church. Brenda was a Christian who served her Lord by attending church services faithfully, teaching Sunday School, helping in Vacation Bible School, baking and decorating birthday and wedding cakes for friends and family, and gifting delicious homemade brownies to anyone she thought might enjoy them. She was a gift-giver with an uncanny sense of knowing what others needed or would enjoy. It was rare that

she visited a loved one without bringing a small gift to brighten their day.

“Auntie” was always a source of encouragement, comfort, and wisdom to her four nieces. In addition to ministering to people, Brenda had an incredibly soft heart for animals. She always had dogs and/or cats whom she loved as family. Every animal that wandered close to her home was welcomed as a new family member, and she would encourage them to stay at her house. None were chased away. She had been a pet-mama to chihuahuas, Great Danes, toy poodles, a German Shepherd, cocker spaniels, mixed breed dogs, numerous cats, a pot-bellied pig, a goat, a turtle, and a bird or two. Every pet had a name. Her first pet was a kitten her mother purchased for 10 cents when Brenda was very young. Brenda began elementary school in Union Hill, Arkansas and was promoted from one class to the next very soon so that she skipped a year. She graduated from Flomaton (Alabama) High School at barely 17 years of age and was married the next evening. Her senior picture was captioned with “She came talking, she left talking!”

Prior to retiring from Walmart in Searcy, Arkansas, where she had been an Assistant Manager of the Tire Lube Express department, Brenda had worked in manufacturing plants, owned a restaurant, sold advertising, worked in the Thida post office, and had owned and operated the Possum Grape One Stop for several years. She provided loving care to her mother for many years. Brenda made new friends everywhere she went and could carry her side of any conversation. She began bowling in midlife and placed in several tournaments. She enjoyed fishing, traveling, flea markets and yard sales, arts and crafts, reading and baking. She wrote many poems and beautiful prose, which she sometimes shared with others.

During her final years, Village Park of Conway was Brenda’s home. She was loved by staff and residents and enjoyed the new friendships that were developed there. She liked to dance any time music was played and everyone enjoyed watching her “bugaloo!” When asked how she was feeling, her usual reply was “fat and sassy!”

Brenda was preceded in death by her parents, her beloved husband Duke Thompson, her beloved only child, Darrin Lamar Dole, and stepchildren Tammy Thompson Brown and Kevin Thompson. Survivors who mourn her passing and who loved her dearly are her brother, Bill (G.C.) Ellis and wife Vicki of Haughton, Louisiana, four nieces – Sherri Cox (Gary) of Conway, Kim Chandler (Jerry) of Batesville, Tara Ellis of Conway, and Laurie Gentry (Robert) of Many, Louisiana, extended family members and many friends.

The family would like to publicly thank Rhonda and her wonderful staff at Village Park of Conway for the love and support they gave Brenda as vascular dementia took its toll. We are especially indebted to the loving ladies who helped Brenda during her final days: Mary Jo, Nitaya (TT), Danielle, Phyllis, Lisa, and Megan.

Thank you to the staff of Gentiva Hospice for the gentle care and support, and to her Sunday School class at Cadron Ridge Baptist Church for their love and encouragement to Brenda.

The Old Glaise Missionary Baptist Church and the family will host a Memorial Service on Saturday, June 14, at 2 pm, at Old Glaise Missionary Baptist Church, 213 Jackson 25, Bradford, Arkansas. The Visitation will begin at 1 pm at the church. Bro. Jerry Chandler will be the officiant.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Humane Society of Independence County are appreciated. Donations may be mailed to Humane Society of Independence County, 5 Environmental Drive, Batesville AR 72503. Cards of sympathy may be addressed to Bill Ellis, 1578 Wafer Road, Haughton, LA71037.

Arrangements were entrusted to Powell Funeral Home of Bradford.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

JUN 14. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Old Glaise Missionary Baptist Church
213 Jackson 25
Bradford
Bradford, AR 72020

Memorial Service

JUN 14. 2:00 PM (CT)

Old Glaise Missionary Baptist Church
213 Jackson 25
Bradford
Bradford, AR 72020

Tribute Wall

MJ

“ *Michael And Connie Johnston lit a candle in memory of Brenda Sue (Ellis) Thompson*



Michael And Connie Johnston - June 05, 2025 at 09:23 AM