

**OBITUARY -
EVELYN SMYTH MCNEILL
2008**

Evelyn Smyth McNeill, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, educator, teacher and friend to all, passed away peacefully of natural causes at her home in Bluewater, New Mexico, July 10, 2008. Her 93 years were a full life, well lived.

Evelyn was born November 24, 1914, the middle of six daughters of Frederick Duncan Smyth and Mary Verona Cox in Fountain Green, Utah. Her sisters Frances, Mable, Alice, Verona, and Carol preceded her in death. Evelyn and all of her sisters were remarkably intelligent and talented musically. They commanded excellence in the classroom and gave meaningful service to the LDS church and to the greater community.

Evelyn was a superior student and valedictorian at Moroni High School, Snow Jr. College, and Utah State University. She received an Honorary Degree from Snow College for lifelong contribution to students in Ephraim, Utah. She excelled in academic pursuits, piano and organ, choir, debate, student government, tennis and other sports. Her love of learning was only exceeded by her love of teaching. She taught and required excellence of the more than 8,000 students in her forty year teaching career at the elementary, jr. high, high school, and college levels in Utah and New Mexico. Her ability to teach reading, English, typing, music, and religion was amazing. Her vocabulary was unparalleled. She instructed, corrected, and encouraged with a tapestry of words and of possibilities unmatched.

She met and married her match in every meaningful way in Kenneth Reed McNeill of Bluewater. His size, intellect, humor, and leadership complemented well her unique set of talents, gifts, and spiritual awareness. They were married in the Manti, Utah LDS Temple June 11, 1940. They established their new home in Culver City, California, where Ken worked at Douglas Aircraft during the war years. They returned to Bluewater, New Mexico in September, 1944, to care for Kenneth's aging parents. They lovingly cared for T.J. and Mary George McNeill and for her mother, Verona Cox Smyth, for the remainder of their long lives.

Evelyn Smyth McNeill was the mother to ten children with eight of them surviving her. She was the grandmother to twenty-nine grandchildren, and has thirty great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Kenneth Reed McNeill, and her sons Kenneth Smyth and Donald Lee. Surviving children are Mary Jones of Grants; Beth Bartel of Bluewater; T.J. McNeill (Shauna) of London, England; George McNeill (Clara) of Sandy, Utah; Jane Mayfield (Ray) of Casper, Wyoming; Richard McNeill (Lisa) of Milan; Susan Smith (Allan) of Bluewater; and John McNeill of Bluewater.

Evelyn enjoyed a lifetime of service in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as extensive service to students, community, friends, and family. She played the piano and organ and led singing groups for many years. She taught almost all ages of youth groups and adult classes, but perhaps taught best her faith by living it well.

She served as a full-time missionary for the LDS Church in the San Jose California Mission. She was instrumental in developing methods and procedures for teaching English as a second language with pioneering concepts and enthusiasm. She also served as an organist and Children's Center Coordinator for several years in the Manti, Utah LDS Temple. She was a faithful and valiant follower of Jesus Christ with a strong testimony of the restoration of the gospel and of the reality of the resurrection.

Evelyn was always an advocate for the disadvantaged, for the neglected, and as a defender of the minority position. She leaves a great legacy of literacy among the young and old. Her great capacity and leadership brought relief to many of the powerless, the needy, and the poor. Her service as President of the New Mexico Classroom Teachers Association brought her much national recognition as an advocate for the student and of the teacher. She was active in Republican politics and as a candidate for office. She actively sponsored 4-H gatherings. She led many Senior Citizen organizing and building projects and promoted many larger community gatherings. She insisted upon accurate historical data and generously provided funding for education and worthy projects. She lived the way she taught ... with compassion, energy, and effectiveness. Evelyn Smyth McNeill in her Christ-like service has made a significant contribution to life quality and to life purpose for a vast number of grateful students, parents, and friends.

Funeral services will be held on Monday July 14, 2008, at 11:00 am at the Bluewater Ward LDS (Mormon) Chapel located at 1010 Bondad Street in Grants, New Mexico. A public viewing will be held Monday, July 14 from 9:30 to 10:30 am prior to the funeral service. Interment will follow at the McNeill Family Cemetery in Bluewater, New Mexico.