

Laura Irene Thomas, age 73, of Liberal, MO died Monday, June 25, 2012 at Hospice House in Kansas City, MO. Irene was born November 5, 1938 in Lamar, MO to Frank and Bessie (Creamer) Bunton. She was a graduate of Liberal High School. On May 17, 1958 she married Don A. Thomas in Miami, OK. Together they raised two daughters. She and Don bought Liberal Produce in 1969 which later led to Seed & Farm Supply. When Don died suddenly in a plane crash in 1977, Irene took over and managed the business with help from her brothers and later her nephew, until her retirement in 2011. Irene coordinated bringing the Red Cross Bloodmobile to Liberal over 40 years ago. She was a 4-H leader for over 15 years in Barton County and Shiloh. She was instrumental in the formation of the Liberal Chamber of Commerce, which later became the Liberal Civic Group. She was a member of the Hannon Free Will Baptist Church and served as a Sunday school teacher of pre-schoolers for more than 15 years. She led the children's and youth choir and directed the Christmas program as recent as 2011. She was involved in the mission outreach group (Women Active For Christ), and Vacation Bible School. In April of 2012 she was awarded the "Volunteer Spirit of the Year" by the Barton County Chamber of Commerce. Irene leaves behind two daughters; Vicki and her husband, Steve Davis of Lamar; and Denise and her husband Jeff Phillippi of Olathe, KS; six grandchildren; Ashley & Josh Negron of Joplin, MO, Jo & Ben Cross of Louisville, KY, Kelly Davis of Lamar, MO, Caleb, Logan & Jacob Phillippi of Olathe, KS; one great grandchild, Stephen Phillippi of Olathe, KS; and three sister-in-laws, Mardeane & her husband Lloyd Hummer of Wichita, KS; Ruth Bunton of Lamar, MO and Virginia Bunton of Liberal, MO. Irene was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Father-in-law and Mother-in-law, Dean & Marge Thomas, (her second set of parents); and two brothers, Don and Lee Bunton. Funeral services will be 11:00 am Friday June 29, 2012 at Daniel Funeral Home with Matt Proctor officiating. A private family burial will follow the service. Irene enjoyed visiting with many friends in April at her retirement party and no visitation is scheduled. Friends may pay their respects on Thursday until 6 pm at the funeral home. Contributions are suggested to Hospice House of Kansas City, Ozark Christian College or Red Cross Bloodmobile, all in care of Daniel Funeral Home.

Service

11 AM, Friday, June 29, 2012
 Daniel Funeral Home
 Lamar, Missouri

Officiant.....Matt Proctor
 Vocalist.....Robert Nutting
 Songs.....*Faces, It Is Well With My Soul*
 Pianist.....Debbie McGuire
 Eulogy.....Laura Denise Thomas Phillippi
 Prayer.....Bob Dickey

pallbearers

Brent Hanshaw Lendon Blanchard
 Marty Bunton Matt Bunton
 Mike Bunton Paul Helms
 Rodney Bunton

Private Internment

Barton City Cemetery



The family would like to especially thank:

Dr. Greg Unruh, Mike Gage and Troy Snyder

*Vicki and Denise would like to thank their supportive husbands
 Steve and Jeff who Mom grew to love as the sons she never had.*

*Their countless hours of support, visits with Mom,
 and love can not be matched.*