



Rozene Whitby

February 15, 1942 - October 23, 2020

Grace Rozene Whitby was born February 15, 1942 in Wynne, Arkansas and passed away on October 23, 2020 at the age of 78. She lived most of her life in Wynne.

Rozene played piano and was a charter member and the pianist for the Union Avenue Baptist Church for several years. Before that she was the pianist at the Fitzgerald Crossing Baptist Church.

Rozene graduated from the Memphis School of Commerce in 1961. She began her career as a teller for the First National Bank in Wynne and soon married Charles Whitby from Vanndale, Arkansas. Charles was drafted into the Army and served most of his commitment in Fairbanks, Alaska. She accompanied him and they were there for several months.

In 1967, when their first child, Hugh, was four months old, Rozene, Charles, and Hugh were in an automobile accident. Rozene suffered a spinal cord injury, resulting in paralysis from the chest down. She spent months in rehabilitation in Memphis, Tennessee.

Determined to live a full and normal life, she set about raising her son from her wheelchair. She and Charles built a home fully accessible to her wheelchair and to accommodate her physical limitations.

In 1969, Rozene and Charles had a second child, Lorie. Life was normal for the children because Rozene was determined to make it so. She made sure her children were involved in all the normal activities (e.g., cub scouts, brownies, church and school activities, etc.). In addition to caring for her two children, she maintained her home and cooked every meal for her family. She drove with the help of hand controls. She was busy in local civic groups and served as PTA president while her children were in primary school. She was once named Wynne B & PW Woman of the Year. Her greatest accomplishment may very well have been how amazingly normal she made life for her and her family. After her children graduated from college, Rozene enrolled in and graduated from college.

Rozene survived breast cancer.

Charles passed away in 2001 after their children were grown and out of the house. She remained at home, living independently and keeping herself busy in the community and being Nana to her grandchildren. She volunteered at the Cross County Museum. She pursued a long-held passion for writing. She published two children's books and numerous short stories and essays. She recently became concerned that some of her fellow widow friends from her church were not getting out enough, so she organized a local ministry for widows to meet every other week or so for lunch.

Rozene was preceded in death by her parents, Junior Deese and Lorie Bryant Deese and her husband Charles. She is survived by her two children, son Hugh Whitby and his wife Kandi; daughter Lorie Whitby and her husband David Lange; three grandsons, Chance Whitby, Jacob Whitby-Lange and his fiancé Jessica Hill, and Luke Whitby-Lange; one great granddaughter, Harper Whitby and Harper's mother, Kati; and Rozene's brother Mackie Deese.

Rozene loved her Union Avenue Baptist Church home and also found comfort and inclusion by the ministry of St. Johns' Lutheran Church in Lafe, Arkansas. Pastor Aaron Neugebaur of St. John's Lutheran Church will officiate the grave side service at Cogbill Cemetery in Wynne on Monday, October 26, 2020 at 1 PM. All friends and family are welcome to attend. Visitation will be at Kernodle Funeral Home in Wynne from 10 AM until 11 AM on Monday, October 26, 2020.

Per State of Arkansas COVID-19 directive, face coverings are required for any indoor gatherings, please always maintain social distancing.

Cemetery Details

Cogbill Cemetery

Wynne, AR

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **26**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Kernodle Funeral Home
315-325 E. Union Avenue
Wynne, AR
(870) 238-2323

Graveside service

OCT **26**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Cogbill Cemetery
Wynne, AR

Tribute Wall

EB

“ Elizabeth (Fowler) Bretherick lit a candle in memory of Rozene Whitby



Elizabeth (Fowler) Bretherick - November 19, 2020 at 06:45 PM

BS

“ Our families go back to the beginning and we share in your loss. Rozene was a strong, beautiful woman who loved her family and her God. She was so proud of all of you and loved sharing your accomplishments. Over the years, she was a friend and a second daughter to my parents. If she needed help, my Daddy was “on call” and he was always there for her. When he died, her kind words about him were such a blessing for me. Even though we can’t be there in person, know that our hearts and prayers are there. Thinking of all of you with love.
Beatrice, Bonnie and Dan Tacker



Bonnie Sinsel - October 26, 2020 at 07:33 AM

SD

“ Shirley & Paula Dye lit a candle in memory of Rozene Whitby



Shirley & Paula Dye - October 25, 2020 at 12:23 AM

AP

“ *Andra Pate lit a candle in memory of Rozene Whitby*



Andra Pate - October 24, 2020 at 11:06 PM

AP

“ *Sending prayers of comfort. God bless. - Andra Stone Pate*

Andra Pate - October 24, 2020 at 11:05 PM

BS

“ *I remember her courage and love for her family. An amazing woman. Brenda Cullum Sassman*

brenda sassman - October 24, 2020 at 01:58 PM

MB

“ *Rozene was a blessing to many!! My thoughts and prayers are with Hugh, Kandi, Mackie and the family! She will live on in are hearts!*



Marice Boardman - October 24, 2020 at 01:42 PM

TB

“ I was lucky enough to purchase & have Rozene sign one of her books for my grandson.
He still has it in his library.
I remember having to go to the bank & she always made an uncomfortable teenager get the business transaction done with ease and on my way back to OTASCO.
Everyone that knew her enjoyed her smile & kindness.

Tanya Kinman Baldwin - October 24, 2020 at 09:31 AM

CD

“ So sorry for your loss. Our prayers are with the family.



Chris & Chrissy Damron - October 24, 2020 at 09:17 AM

EB

“ Eldridge Brawner lit a candle in memory of Rozene Whitby



Eldridge Brawner - October 24, 2020 at 08:45 AM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rozene Whitby.*



October 23, 2020 at 10:04 PM



“ *I am so sorry for your loss. She was a great inspiration to me. Her kindness to me will always be remembered. She absolutely love her family. God was her strength and help in every part of her life. She thought me about hanging tough when tough times come. My prayers are with you all. Love and prayers Vonnie Goucher.*

Vonnie Goucher - October 23, 2020 at 09:14 PM



“ *Linda James Thomas lit a candle in memory of Rozene Whitby*



Linda James Thomas - October 23, 2020 at 09:12 PM

GS

“ *Ms. Rozene was a truly amazing person never letting a handicap stop her from pursuing an amazing life. I know her children and grandchildren were a great joy in her life. Heartfelt condolence, Lori and Hugh and all your families, from the Spence family and grace and peace to you all at this difficult time.*

*Greg & Alisa Spence and family
Sharon Spence Langley and family*

Greg Spence - October 23, 2020 at 04:19 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rozene Whitby.*



October 23, 2020 at 02:18 PM

LH

“ *Lorie and Hugh: I am so sorry for the loss of your precious mother. She was an amazing person. I will miss hearing about her. As you know my father was very fond of her and enjoyed hearing from her on Yawn Patrol. Heaven has gained another Angel named Rozene.*

LAURA HAGEN - October 23, 2020 at 01:55 PM