



Mrs. Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson

July 24, 1927 - February 15, 2021

If ever there was a treasure and an icon in this world, we lost one on February 15, 2021.

Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson was born in Little Rock, Arkansas on July 24, 1927 to Nick and Gladys (McGowan) Holloway. She graduated from Little Rock High School (now Little Rock Central) where she was well-known for her outgoing personality and dancing at Robinson Auditorium.

After graduating high school, she attended Arkansas Tech to attain her Associate's Teaching degree. It was here that she saw a young, blonde-haired country boy in the student center and wanted to meet him so badly, she yelled out, "Hey, Blondie!" He promptly told her where to go, but as fate would have it, the two did get together and soon fell in love. On December 22, 1946 she married O. V. Beeson and soon moved with him to Hattieville, Arkansas where the "city girl" who was used to weekly hair appointments and manicures began life in the country learning that potatoes grow underground and the best way to cool off in summer is with a swim in the creek.

Having left her teaching position at David O. Dodd Elementary in Little Rock, she became one of the three teachers at the three-room Hattieville Elementary with Mrs. Etta Peck and Mrs. Audley Williams. This was the beginning of over 30 years of teaching grade schoolers in northern Conway County and changing the lives of every student who passed through her classroom. Early in her career, she attained her Bachelor's Degree from Arkansas State Teachers College (now University of Central Arkansas.)

She spent seven years teaching at Nemo Vista Elementary and the remaining 16 years at Wonderview Elementary, retiring in 1987 after having taught four family generations of students in some of her classes. After her retirement, she continued helping the education of local children by tutoring them in her home for another 20 years.

Her career also included working at the Conway County Welfare Office, along with working in the couple's store, O. V. Beeson General Merchandise (now Beeson's Grocery) in Hattievville, helping on the cattle farm, keeping house, and taking food and water to O. V. when he was fighting fire for the National Forest Service.

She also served as a volunteer with St. Vincent Morrilton Hospital, CASA, Conway County Library, and other local civic programs. In addition, she was a member of Arkansas Retired Teachers Association, Pathfinders Club, Friends of the Conway County Library, Conway County Extension Homemakers, and numerous other organizations. A strong Methodist, she was a member of Pulaski Heights Methodist in Little Rock, Morrilton Methodist, and finally Plumerville Methodist Churches.

One of her fondest activities was her annual "Miss Bernie's Easter Egg Hunt" which her daughter and she started with a small family gathering that has grown to over 100 participants in the last few years including kids who participated bringing their kids and grandkids. This kept her active and in touch with the children she loved so much.

Her activities also included entertainment as a part of an all-female barber shop quartet in Hattievville in the late 1950s and early 1960s performing with Audley Williams, Dorothy (Dot) Brents, and Rena Stout in various venues in the area including a competition in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

But she is best known for her "Minnie Pearl" act that played on the character created by Sarah Cannon telling jokes with her flower emblazoned hat with the price tag hanging from the side and a boisterous "HOW-DEE! I'm just so proud to be here!" She performed for various civic organizations, hospitals, churches, and nursing homes while never taking a dime in payment. While

she never got to meet her Grand Ol' Opry and Hee Haw idol a trip through Nashville was not complete without a stop at the late entertainer's residence for a photograph and to pay homage.

She left an impression on everyone she met with her infectious laugh and upbeat tone. She never met anyone she did not like and treated everyone the same regardless of their background or status. She was always willing to lend an ear and left everyone with a smile on their face and the joy of having met such a woman.

Everyone loved "Miss Bernie."

She is preceded in death by her parents, husband, step-great-grandson Zachary Bragg, son-in-law Danny Mourot, and her brother Nick Holloway, Jr. She is survived by her children Nicki Jean Beeson Mourot of Hattiesville and Terry Virgil Beeson (Cindy) of Springfield, Missouri, 6 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, 17 great-great-grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews, and hundreds of those who were part of her classroom over the years who she considered her "children" plus a wealth of friends.

The family has no immediate plans for services due to COVID and weather restrictions but will have a public celebration of her life July 24th of this year on what would have been her 94th birthday. All her friends, family, and "children" are encouraged to attend and say a fond farewell to "Miss Bernie." The family wishes to thank all the people who helped during her last few years, especially Glenna Schmidt and Jen Reid.

The family requests no flowers, but rather donations in her honor to Plumerville Methodist Church or Conway County Library.

Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson*

January 30, 2023 at 02:08 AM



“ *Nickie and Terry, Mrs. Bernie was a joy to everyone that was around her. She was a wonderful teacher and friend. I am so thankful to that I was raised up around the Beeson's family. Just know that you both will be in my thoughts and prayers.*

Cindy Upchurch - February 22, 2021 at 11:08 AM



“ *Trudy Norwood Brents lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson*



Trudy Norwood Brents - February 20, 2021 at 12:43 PM



“ *Sheree Rowell lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson*



Sheree Rowell - February 18, 2021 at 02:00 PM

CC

“ Ms. Niki and family, we are so sorry to hear of the loss of your mother. Eventhough we didn't see her very often, will always remember her big smile and kindness.
Prayers for you and your family.
Robert & Carolyn Clontz

Carol Clontz - February 18, 2021 at 10:36 AM

LM

“ so sorry of the death of you 2 mother and she was such a good lady

Linda Montgomery - February 17, 2021 at 09:08 PM

KL

“ Ken Lynch lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson



ken lynch - February 17, 2021 at 08:30 PM

KT

“ Mrs. Beeson was a kind, happy blessing to her students. She was my 5th-grade teacher and a memorable character from my elementary school days. Mrs. Beeson demonstrated a passion for teaching and nurturing spirit. May she rest in peace, and may her family be comforted.



Kim (Gunderman) Thompson - February 17, 2021 at 05:48 PM

KT

“ *Kim (Gunderman) Thompson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Joye Bernice "Miss Bernie" Beeson*



Kim (Gunderman) Thompson - February 17, 2021 at 05:38 PM

BJ

“ *Thank you Miss Bernie for the many years of service you gave to teaching. Thank you for teaching my father, me, my little sister and my niece. You were a Godly woman who believed in Jesus and her Country. It showed every time I was around you. You were loved and will be sorely missed. We can all find comfort in knowing that you are in heaven rejoicing with your Lord and Savior. Brigham, Jr.*

Brigham Jr - February 17, 2021 at 05:26 PM

TS

“ *Nicki our prayers are with you and your family. I have great memories of O.V. and Mrs. Bernie from my childhood that I will never forget. Please let us know if we can do anything.*

Tammy (Johnson)Stewart Family

Tammy Stewart - February 17, 2021 at 01:54 PM

BS

“ *My sincerest condolences to Miss Bernie's family for their loss. She was a one of a kind, larger than life personality. She was quite the character. She will be missed by many. I will remember her fondly. Her struggle is over, and she is at peace.*



Beth Sharbaugh - February 17, 2021 at 01:39 PM