



Cynthia McNiel Graham

March 14, 1960 - February 15, 2018

Cynthia McNiel Graham, 57, of Rockdale, previously of Milano, passed away Thursday, February 15, 2018. Memorial services will be held at 10:00 am, Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at the Rockdale Christian Fellowship Church located at 811 Burleson Street in Rockdale. A reception will immediately follow in the fellowship hall.

Cindy was born March 14, 1960 in Wichita Falls, Texas to Cleber McNiel of Milano and Marcella Noak of Rockdale. Our beloved Cindy was a beautiful woman with an equally beautiful soul and adventurous, free spirit. Her crystal blue eyes and her deep throaty laugh belied her very real strength and bravery. She dealt with her share of hardship, illness and negativity, never losing her wonderful sense of humor and always looking on the bright side. During 11 years of illness, Cindy didn't complain (in fact she always reported she felt "great"). Loyal as they come and generous to a fault, she would give you the shirt off her back if you needed it and could always be counted on to be a caregiver, provide a hug, or hold your hand. Cindy was happy to shoulder any burden but refused to be a burden to others. Aside from hardships, Cindy was abundantly blessed. She married her life's love: her adoring and caring best friend Gillis. Cindy remained close to two beautiful, loving daughters, and enjoyed caring for her many grandchildren. Cindy was also blessed with the unconditional care and love from her wonderful mother Marcella, and the love of so many others.

Growing up and living most of her life in Sand Grove, Cindy had a passion for the outdoors, animals and nature. She loved planting her bountiful gardens and walking in the woods. Most of all, Cindy loved hunting with Gillis, and the peace and challenge of sitting in the sun catching fish. Wherever she travelled, she truly never met a stranger and collected friends along the way. Always a good sport, Cindy loved to pull pranks, dance, laugh and tell stories. Giving so much love, hope and laughter to all, Cindy was beautiful inside and out. Cindy's sweet and precious presence, smile and love will be forever missed.

She is preceded in death by her dedicated and loving husband, Gillis Graham of Milano; father Cleber McNiel of Milano; grandparents, Alvin D. and Lillie Mae McNiel of Milano, and James and Frances Reid of Wichita Falls; brothers, Paul McNiel of Milano and Larry McNiel of California; and sister, Diana Keen of Milano.

Cindy is survived by her mother, Marcella Noak of Rockdale, Texas; two daughters, Denice Jones of Bastrop, Texas and Laura Cate of Rockdale, Texas; seven grandchildren, Desiree, Alyssa and Gillian Rich, Joseph New, Scott and Eyan Cate, and Jordan Sanders; two sisters, Marcella Hubnik of Cameron, Texas, and Elaine Lyon of Fredericksburg, Virginia; three brothers, Chris Lyon and wife Kristyn of Spring, Texas, and Berry and Garry Lyon of Wichita Falls, Texas; aunt, Yvonne McNiel of Boerne, Texas; five sister cousins, Princess Cook, LaDawn Shryer, Francine O'Brien, Tami Terry and Danielle Howard; two brother cousins, Greg McNiel and Tommy Coldiron; as well as so many other beloved family and friends we would love to mention, please know how much she loved you all.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

FEB 21. 10:00 AM (CT)

Rockdale Christian Fellowship Church
811 Burleson Street
Rockdale, TX 76567

Tribute Wall



“ My beautiful mother had an infectious laugh and a spirit that could never be broken. She acted silly as often as possible, often causing me loads of embarrassment as a teenager but those are the moments I miss the most now. I remember when I was 12 I injured my knee. I had to see a specialist and while waiting on the dr to come in my mother began to dance around the room with the skeleton. When the dr walked in she came to a halt and it's head popped off. I was mortified but my mother and the dr burst out laughing. She loved to jump in elevators, dance in the rain, hunt, fish, take long walks in the woods, talk to and feed wild animals and spend time with her grandchildren as often as possible.

I miss her laugh, her smile and her humor daily. There's many things I wish I could change and do over again. I took time for granted, I got frustrated often and I was selfish but I loved her with all my heart and my heart is so broken without her here. I know she's at peace and there is no more pain. I know she's with all of our loved ones that have passed before us and that brings me comfort and joy in this time of sorrow. She was one of a kind. God broke the mold the day he created her. She will be forever missed and I can't think of a better face to welcome me home when my time comes. Thank you all for your wonderful stories, the pictures you have shared. It means the world to us all. I pray you all find solace knowing that she's finally home and pain free.



Denice Jones - February 26, 2018 at 09:19 PM



“ *With all our love, Danielle Howard and Yvonne McNiel*



Danielle Howard - February 22, 2018 at 11:07 AM



“ *I've had a lot of 1st in my life, most were wonderful experiences and well, some maybe not so great. This morning I lost my 1st best friend, my Aunt Cindy. As young kids we would spend the summers together exploring the woods around our Granny's and Grand-Daddy's home in Sand Grove. We would run barefoot through the hot sand from the house sometimes all the way to Aunt Eunice's, crawfish with strings tied to our toes, fish with just a cork and a piece of bacon on our hook, play with granddaddy long leg spiders, swing on grape vines, smoke grape leaves 🍷, chase Granny's chickens, plus we did a million other kid things and of course go to Sunday services. Time went on and we grew up, and as in a lot of cases, we lost touch with each other. On the occasions we did see each other I could still feel that bond. I had the chance to sit and visit with Cindy recently, I asked her to forgive me for not staying in touch and being a better friend. She said to me, "Honey there is nothing to forgive, I love you." We talked more of old times and about our lives and when I left I knew in my heart and mind she would forever be my 1st best friend. Go rest high on that mountain Aunt Cindy, I love you too!*

Sherry Mueck - February 21, 2018 at 01:58 PM

TT

Sherry, I am so happy you post this here. We all have similar wonderful memories of our time in S G and Cindy. I can hear her voice saying, "Honey, there is nothing to forgive"..... that was Cindy. She's high on that mountain, but that girl will never rest♥

Tami Terry - February 23, 2018 at 02:36 AM

GJ

“ My heart is absolutely breaking for all of you as mine is too with the passing of Cindy. Please know that if you need anything please let me know. I have know Cindy and shared some great memories with her for 43 years and i will truly miss my sweet forever friend. We have fished, danced, played pool, partied and the time of our lives growing up together and i was just talking with Cindy the other day and we were planning on a lunch date when she felt better. I know my sweet friend is in a better place and i know my momma will watch over her too. I am forever thankful for having her as a part of my life and she will always live in my heart. I find comfort in knowing she has won this battle with cancer and now lives in the arms of our Lord and savior. Thank you Jesus for ending her suffering and taking her home.

*all my love,
Gina (soul sisters)*



Gina Jatzlau - February 20, 2018 at 12:45 PM

PC

“ 2 files added to the album New Album Name



Princess Cook - February 20, 2018 at 12:39 PM

LS

I remember that top I was wearing and probably pulling on my undies. We had such great memories at grandma and granddaddy. How fortunate we were to always have these big get togethers.

LaDawn Shryer - February 20, 2018 at 10:37 PM

GJ

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Gina Jatzlau - February 20, 2018 at 11:38 AM

TT

“ Growing up my very fondest childhood memories were of being at our Grandma and Granddaddy McNeil's in Sand Grove. I would get so excited just anticipating all the upcoming fun adventures, also knowing I'd get to see my playmate and cousin Cindy. The time spent in Sand Grove is where all of us cousins, especially the "sister-brother" cousins grew so close and developed our special bond and shared memories we continue to have today. Cindy was tiny but brave, tough and mighty. She never wore shoes back then, feet tough as cobbles, walking through the endless grass spurs, hot sand and woods without a wince. She was the ringleader of all our adventures. Cindy introduced her city cousins to sliding down gullies, crawfishing at tanks, exploring old abandoned houses, jumping from the barn loft into the hay, smoking grapevine leaves, and learning about all the different varmints in her neck of the woods. She would talk us into walking to the graveyard late at night only to scare ourselves, or have others scare us lying in wait on the graves, then run fast as lightning back to Grandma's screaming and laughing. We all built treehouses together and elaborate deep sand tunnels. Onetime Cindy let us bury her in one of those sand tunnels with just her head sticking out. She couldn't move at all she couldn't get out. God bless her, we left her like that for a good while before digging her out and she never let us hear the end of it. Our nights at Grandma's would consist of 4 of us sister cousins in a double bed under 7 to 8 quilts, we'd have to turn over at the same time the quilts were so heavy. We'd tell stories, jokes and laugh all night. Cindy always having the biggest tales and the most stories. I have been blessed to have stayed in touch with Cindy and to have seen her throughout our lives, mostly through her efforts I admit. We always had so much fun together, have had many more adventures, laughs and created more memories. I admire how loving, caring, selfless Cindy was, with the deepest sense of family. It would do us all good to be more like her. I will forever be able to smell the lantana, sand, and heat of Sand Grove. With that I will always cherish my most vivid memories there, always with Cindy. Sweet Cindy, I'm sure when my time comes I will follow the sound of

your contagious robust laughter to the other side. You are always in my heart.

Tami Terry - February 19, 2018 at 11:44 PM



You made me cry when you wrote about remembering the smells. Even today, lantana takes me back for an instant. I loved every minute of our adventures, though I was scared most of the time! Cindy will always be a part of who I am.

Danielle Howard - February 22, 2018 at 10:52 AM

WF

“ *With all our love, Penny, Dawny, Tami and families purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Cynthia McNiel Graham.*



With all our love, Penny, Dawny, Tami and families - February 19, 2018 at 03:22 PM

FC

“ *Francine & Tim O'Brien, Katie, Maura and Claire purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Cynthia McNiel Graham.*



Francine & Tim O'Brien, Katie, Maura and Claire - February 19, 2018 at 12:33 PM

GM

“ Greg McNiel and Trish Michael purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Cynthia McNiel Graham.



Greg McNiel and Trish Michael - February 18, 2018 at 11:42 PM



“ Ringed by Love was purchased for the family of Cynthia McNiel Graham.



February 18, 2018 at 11:27 PM

BV

“ Prayers and sympathy to Cindy's family. Growing up I visited Cindy, Granny McNiel & Grand-daddy McNiel often with my sister-in-law Marcella Hubnik. Cindy & all of the family accepted me as one of their own. As we got older & went our separate ways we did visit from time to time and it seemed we picked up where we left off last time we visited. I will always cherish the memories of Cindy. Thanking God she is no longer living in her illness. Your friend in Christ, Barbara Hubnik Vansa

Barbara Hubnik Vansa - February 18, 2018 at 09:50 PM

JY

“ *Judy York lit a candle in memory of Cynthia McNiel Graham*



Judy York - February 18, 2018 at 08:27 AM

CO

“ *Constancehippel sent a virtual gift in memory of Cynthia McNiel Graham*



constancehippel - February 18, 2018 at 03:33 AM

LS

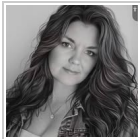
“ *Our beloved little Cindy, was always a burst of sunshine to all she laid her crystal blue eyes on. Her outward beauty was only a small portion to her beautiful soul and spirit. She gave so much love, hope, and laughter to us all, especially her family. We will always keep her memories alive and try to live as bravely as she did. She never forgot to call and wish GP and me a happy whatever holiday it was. I will miss her singing to me on my birthday and never forget how adorable she sang twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder where you (is) when she was on Uncle Cleber's knee very young. Even though she was younger and smaller than her cousins she was very protective of us all. I am sure her new journey will still included sending light and love our way. We love and will so miss you our darling, precious dear heart. Love you all, Marcella and family.....*

LaDawn Shryer - February 17, 2018 at 11:32 PM

FO

Beautiful LaDawn! ~ I had to laugh at the memory of the bawdy Happy Birthday wishes Cindy always sang to me too! What sweetheart she was. Love to all.

Francine O'Brien - February 19, 2018 at 11:29 AM



“ *Mellissa Ison Zawadzke lit a candle in memory of Cynthia McNeil Graham*



Mellissa Ison Zawadzke - February 16, 2018 at 07:21 PM