



## Vernace Nadine Yancey Nicholas

May 28, 1920 - November 5, 2024

Vernace Nadine Yancey Nicholas passed away November 5, 2024, in San Antonio, Texas, at the age of 104. She was born in Scott County, Arkansas on May 28, 1920, to parents Samuel William Yancey and Rachel Velma Hunsucker Yancey. The eldest of six children and raised on a cattle ranch in a small rural community during the Depression, her childhood was happy but also taught her responsibility, resilience, and fierce independence—qualities she carried with her throughout her life.

Nadine was preceded in death by her husband, Frank Nicholas, whose family lived on an adjacent farm in the small community of Weeks, Arkansas. Nadine, Frank, and all their siblings attended the Weeks community school thru the eighth grade, after which they each found their own path into the world of adulthood.

Nadine is survived by her three children: Frank, Jr. (Linda) of Houston; John (Christine) of San Antonio; and Connie (David Hammond) of Lucas. She is also survived by her seven grandchildren—Kirk, Sheila, Amber, Erin, Jonathan, Lindsey, and Lauren—as well as two great-grandsons, Tristan and Ethan. Nadine made it clear to all that her grandchildren were a great source of pride and joy to her and Frank.

Nadine's path after primary school was different than many others. For

example, after failing to convince local officials to provide a school bus to transport Nadine and her peers the 30 miles to Waldron High School, her father constructed a makeshift school bus and drove them himself. As a result, Nadine was able to continue her education at Waldron High School, although she was delayed a year.

Nadine's High School years were very active, with membership in the 4H Club and several singing groups, as well as a growing circle of friends larger than her Weeks community. She stood out in the new environment and was recognized with awards in local competitions for academics, baking, and singing. One of the highlights of her life was a trip to Chicago for a national convention that opened her eyes to the world beyond Weeks and Waldron.

After graduating in 1940, Nadine took a job teaching school for a while but ultimately decided it was not for her. Instead, she moved to Abilene, Texas in the Fall of 1942 to attend Hardin-Simmons University. She chose to pursue studies in Bible and Greek, which led to an opportunity for a one-on-one meeting with Reverend Billy Graham, something that inspired her faith for the rest of her life.

Nadine left school the summer after her Freshman year, as Frank had proposed marriage. They were married at Cedar Creek Baptist Church in Weeks on August 13, 1944, and spent their wedding night in Heavner, Oklahoma less than 10 miles from Weeks. The next day they took the train to New Orleans to begin their life together, where they made their first home together in an apartment at 529 South Genois Street. For the next several years Frank served his country in the Merchant Marine, and Nadine worked as a clerk in the Chaplain's office at the Port of Embarkation. While Frank never spoke to his family of his experiences sailing around the world, Nadine said he didn't take to the typical sailor's life and preferred to stay on the ship rather than roam the foreign ports with his peers. In fact, he was always ready

to come back to New Orleans to be with her.

After Frank's seagoing career ended, they bought an Airstream trailer and moved back to Weeks for a time, where their first child Frank Nicholas, Jr. was born. Next, they moved to Chicago briefly for Frank to attend a trade school, then relocated to Houston in 1949, where they became parents to two more kids, John and Connie, built a home on Houston's North side, and built a life for themselves and their three children.

After all three of their kids completed high school, Nadine and Frank built another home in Kingwood, where they lived the remainder of the 50 years they spent in Houston. Although the commute into Houston for work and medical appointments was challenging, Nadine loved the trees and greenbelts of The Livable Forest and built a second community of friends, neighbors and memories. She also loved getting to see her grandkids regularly, which was helped when both of her sons eventually moved their families to Kingwood.

Not content to be a stay-at-home Mom, Nadine worked at several part-time careers in Houston. One of the first was at the main Post Office, where she was a mail sorter. That was followed by several secretarial positions, then a clerical position at Houston Gardens Elementary School in charge of textbooks. Working at Houston Independent School District turned out to be her calling, and her passion for education and dedication to her work resulted in a series of assignments, each with more responsibilities. Her last assignment was at the HISD headquarters building, from which she retired in 1994 at the age of 74 after 29 years of service.

Nadine was an avid reader and instilled a love of books and reading in all her children. She also loved to cook and try new recipes, and many of her relatives and friends were given recipes that she would copy from books,

magazines and the newspaper. In addition, she and Frank loved to travel and took several cross-country trips that she talked about fondly in her retirement. She was also a Den Mother for Frank Jr's Cub Scout troop, and taught Sunday School for 15 years at North Houston Church of Christ. Turns out she liked teaching school, just as long as it was to 3-year-olds! She also collected postage stamps, something that likely started with Frank and his brother Harry sending mail to her from foreign countries during their travels around the world.

In December 2001, Nadine and Frank moved to San Antonio to have easier access to medical care for Frank, who was nearing the end of a long battle with Parkinsons. They became part of the Castle Park neighborhood, where Nadine built a new circle of friends who offered companionship and support after Frank's passing in January 2003. Her strength and independence became even more evident during these years; she remained active, resilient, and grateful for the community that surrounded her.

The family has planned a private Celebration of Life in San Antonio the weekend before Thanksgiving for all of Nadine's family, friends and neighbors. Reach out to the family directly if you have not already been contacted. The family also requests that in lieu of flowers, you consider a donation to help develop a cure for Parkinson's.

# Tribute Wall

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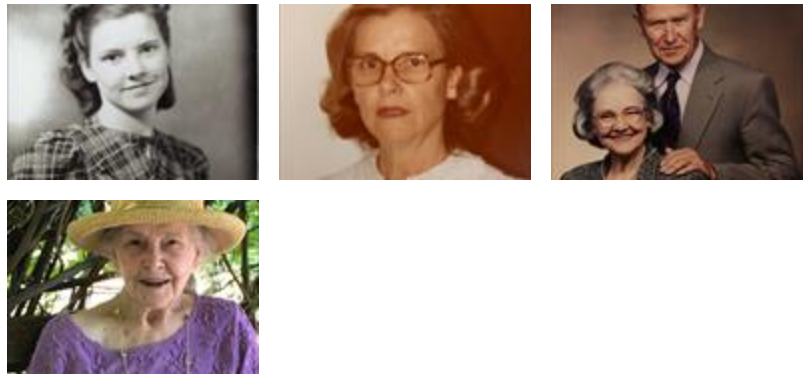
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Sam Owens - November 22, 2024 at 11:21 PM



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Mission Park Funeral Chapels & Cemetery - November 15, 2024 at 03:00 PM