



Willa Dell Freelend

September 21, 1934 - May 9, 2019

Willa was born on September 21, 1934 to Vernon William and Iva (Waggoner) Sidders in Silver Creek, Nebraska. She grew up and attended schools in rural Merrick County. She then attended Central City High School, Nebraska Central College, Hastings College, and off campus courses at UNL.

She married Robert Charles Freelend on June 6, 1954 in Cairo, Nebraska. Willa taught school in rural Merrick County District 18 and 29. With summers off, she traveled to Washington D.C. to work for the FBI. She loved teaching. Children arrived and Willa was at home until returning to a parttime work in an insurance office and eventually leading to Real Estate in 1968 freeing her to be on call and allowing her to work at home and in the greenhouses. She joined Central Farm Development Co. in 1970 after Jim was born, became a partner in 1976, and bought out the business in 1980 becoming Central Realty and Insurance. Willa retired in 2005 and went on to manage Central City Housing Authority for the next 5 years. She retired again in 2010.

Willa was a member of Christ Episcopal Church. She volunteered as a 4-H Leader for years, taught Red Cross Swimming from 1956 until the late 60's, Red Cross Director, Jr. Women's Club, instrumental in creating Lone Tree Park, Litzenberg Hospital Pink Lady, Sunday School teacher, Organist, Layreader, School Board, Ind. Steering Committee, Ed. Advisory Committee, Chamber Vice President, Chamber President, Merrick County Ag and

Industrial President, Housing Coordinator, Fitness Center Board Member for 10 years, Fine Arts Center proponent, Merrick County Entertainment Group, Central Nebraska Housing Authority Board, City Council, PEO Chapter AB, and a Teammates Member.

Willa's most treasured accomplishment was raising four wonderful children who continue to contribute to their fellow man.

Survivors include her husband Bob of Central City, NE; her children – Nicholas (Rebecca) Freelend of Marquette, Jeffrey (Leonora) Freelend of Lewiston, ID, Nancy (Miles) McGinnis of Central City, and James (Joe Costello) Freelend of Denver, CO; her grandchildren – Paul Freelend, Michael Freelend, Melissa Freelend, Robert W. Freelend, Jon Scott Freelend, Emiline McGinnis, Charles McGinnis, Graci McGinnis, Jacque Hageman, Jennifer Gering, and Jami Castilleja; and one Great Granddaughter – McClain Freelend; her siblings – Gail Land of Lakewood, CO, Neal Sidders of Wood River, and Larry Sidders of Bozeman, MT.

She was preceded in death by her parents and her brother; Dean Sidders.

Cemetery Details

Central City Cemetery

Central City, NE 68826

Previous Events

Gathering of Family and Friends

MAY **13.** 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Wild Roots Greenhouse originally Freeland Greenhouse Central City NE
409 17th Ave
Central City, NE 68826
(308) 946-3261

Memorial Celebration

MAY **14.** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Edwin and Bernice Lock Performing Arts Center Central City NE
1510 28th St
Central City, NE 68826
(308) 946-3086

Tribute Wall

JH

“ Willa was a favorite teacher of mine..at District. 18. She was a wonderful lady...and I know she will be missed . Sending my sympathy and love to her family.
Jean Ryan Hutton.

Jean Hutton - July 19, 2019 at 10:38 AM

LS

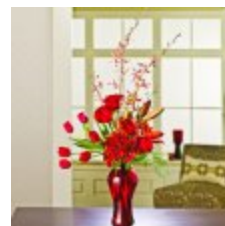
“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Larry Sidders - May 14, 2019 at 12:58 PM



“ *In Remembrance* was purchased for the family of Willa Dell Freelend.



May 13, 2019 at 01:43 PM

DP

“ *My condolences and sympathy to the entire family. Although I never had the honor to meet Ms. Willa, I feel her sweet spirit. Her legacy is in good hands with her son, my friend Jim. Praying for God's peace.*
~Debra Jones Pettis

Debra Pettis - May 13, 2019 at 12:35 PM

LS

“ Too many to count! My big sister allowed me to drive her car when I had my learner's permit and we were attending CCHS. She tried to keep me out of trouble during our years attending District 48 elementary school, kept me from sinking into the mud too deep to be extracted when we decided to cut across the field as a short cut to our farm home on the Badger place, helped me to keep the cob baskets full for cooking at the Tooley place and rode with me on our ponies named Tony and Babe when we went to visit the Morrison and Wilhoft farms. We caught more fish than probably modern limits would be allowed at the Tooley farm sandpit and Warm Slough. Willa was the special photographer at our wedding and had a hard time getting the flash attachment under the brim of her hat but she managed to favor the Sidders side whenever there was a problem getting everyone in the photo. Truth be told, she favored Donald Trump even before I did during our most recent Presidential election. What a great friend to myself and Sharon during our 60 years of marriage. No way to describe how much she will be missed.

Larry Sidders - May 13, 2019 at 12:13 PM

SB

“ Hers was a life well lived right up to its end. Her wisdom, patience, fortitude, quiet energy, warmth and genuine affectionate spirit graced a woman who always made a DIFFERENCE. Willa could always be trusted to give an honest, thoughtful and well studied response to problems presented, whether personal or professional. Her determination and creative organizational skills have built visible permanent monuments to her devotion to her community. Although I knew her at CCHS, we became good friends in later life, sharing travel adventures, sunny walks, late night laughter with our other "Swig Sisters" and confidences that only trust can bring. She will remain in my loving memory for the rest of my life, Sally Stringer Burkstaller

Sarah Burkstaller - May 13, 2019 at 11:41 AM



“ *Serene Green™ Bouquet For Sympathy was purchased for the family of Willa Dell Freelend.*



May 12, 2019 at 04:54 PM



“ *Simply Lily was purchased for the family of Willa Dell Freelend.*




May 12, 2019 at 04:50 PM



“ *I have known this wonderful lady for most of my life. We graduated together and traveled together as we reconnected high school friendships. Our girlie trips were outstanding and took us all on adventures and places we had never seen. The late night adult conversations are a treasure for me and we will miss her so much. Happy and safe travels dear Willa. xoxoxo*

Willie Shafer - May 11, 2019 at 10:52 PM

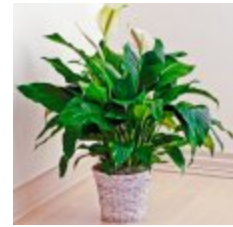


“ *Sending love and sympathy to Willa's family. Think of all the lives she touched -- and all the lives she saved (she taught so many of us how to swim)! Truly a life well-lived. -- Sara Hudgens Burczy* 

Sara Hudgens Burczy - May 11, 2019 at 03:18 PM

SM

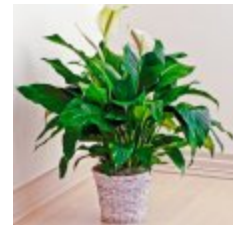
“ Steve & Cory Sheaffer and Mona Moody, purchased the Floor Plant for Sympathy for the family of Willa Dell Freelend.



Steve & Cory Sheaffer and Mona Moody, - May 11, 2019 at 01:27 PM

TM

“ Tot and Jack McClain purchased the Floor Plant for Sympathy for the family of Willa Dell Freelend.



Tot and Jack McClain - May 11, 2019 at 12:13 PM

SH

“ I was saddened to read of Willa's passing. She was a great woman and did a lot for the town and people. My sympathy to the family.

Sonia Holbrook - May 11, 2019 at 09:18 AM

AP

“ I think about my home (Episcopalian) church in Central City often. And when I do, Willa is always there playing organ for us.

Anita Powell - May 10, 2019 at 11:33 PM

CW

“ Willa made me feel loved and appreciated, helped me have the courage to shoot blue rock, always greeting me w a hug!!! I love you and will miss you dearly!! Delton and I are so sad to lose Willa. We send many prayers and hugs to Bob and family. Your wife/mom /grandma loved you so very much!!! We will look forward to our reunion in heaven!!

Cheryl and Delton Wegner - May 10, 2019 at 09:41 PM



“ Healing Tears - All White was purchased for the family of Willa Dell Freelend.



May 10, 2019 at 08:01 PM

LC

“ Lorraine Carlson lit a candle in memory of Willa Dell Freelend



Lorraine Carlson - May 10, 2019 at 06:00 PM

AN

“ I loved your mother, the minute I met her! Nancy brought me to the lake house and there was Willa Dell, on top of the roof sweeping leaves off of the roof. I remember telling Nancy right away, " I LOVE YOUR MOM!" I am so sorry for your loss of such a beautiful human here on Earth. I have been praying for God's comfort and peace for all of you.

Anne Neemann

Anne Neemann - May 10, 2019 at 05:32 PM