



## Donna Perry

September 14, 1934 - June 26, 2023

A celebration of the life of Donna Bird Perry will take place on July 15, 2023 at the former First Christian Church building Okmulgee, at 10am. She passed from this earth on June 26, 2023.

Those who knew Donna describe her as “classy”. She was articulate and poised, with a beautiful smile. She loved to sit and read a good book, she solved crossword puzzles with red ink, and she could probably beat you in a game of Scrabble. She also came from humble beginnings.

Born Donna Joyce Bird on Sept 14, 1934, in Denison, TX, she was the daughter of Clifton H. Bird and Rena Miller Bird. Her parents later divorced, and times were difficult in the 30s. Donna sometimes lived with her paternal grandmother in a small row house in Tulsa. Her mother remarried, so when Donna started school back in Denison she was known as Donna Thomas, after the head of her household, H. G. “Rocky” Thomas.

If you knew Donna, you also knew her as a woman with opinions. Sometimes very strong opinions. She was influenced by her mom, her grandmothers, her aunts - smart and savvy women who were part of a society that did not value their strengths at the time.

Donna graduated Denison High School in 1951, and a stunning 16 year old became an adult. She did a little modeling for extra income, but she wanted to be known for her brains, not her looks. With her foot in the door as a head-turning secretary, she learned business skills from some of the best, including time at Spartan Travel Trailers, owned by the Getty family.

Donna finally met Pat Perry in the early 60s, and they were married in 1963. They shared a love of dogs, and travelled to shows with their purebred Doberman Pinschers. Pat's daughters, Susan and Jane, joined the fun on weekends.

Donna and Pat moved to his hometown Okmulgee in 1969, and set to work on their "fixer-upper" on south Seminole. (Too bad HGTV wasn't yet invented - Donna might have been the first star.) While she loved to dress well and make her home beautiful, Donna always taught her children to respect others and see good in them.

Donna joined the team at Viersen & Cochran Oil in 1970, and her coworkers there became lifelong friends. She was surrounded by paper ledgers in her office in the McCulloch Building until she retired in 1997.

While she raised her family, Donna also became part of Okmulgee. Old timers from the First Christian Church may remember some spirited Sunday School discussions. She often made the Okmulgee Times with presentations to the Business and Professional Women's Club, and was honored woman of the Year in 1992-93. Donna never went to college but she loved her sisters in the Beta Sigma Phi and Xi Alpha Iota sororities.

Donna also never forgot that we can all use our talents to make the world a little better. She worked tirelessly and was a longtime board member for the local domestic violence safehouse. And, it was a proud day for the family when Donna was honored as Oklahoma CASA Volunteer of the Year in 2002. Donna's parents, husband Pat, both her step-daughters, and many friends and loved ones preceded her in death. She lived a long life. In her last days, Donna spoke of beautiful dreams where she was with them again.

She is survived by daughter Nancy Perry Parsons (Dale) of Missouri, who remembers her Mom always smelled like Chanel No. 5.

Son Mike Perry lives in Okmulgee. He and his wife Leslie (Honick) Perry cared for Donna in her last days.

Grandchildren include Megan Perry, Quinton Perry, Katherine Parsons, Hunter Parsons, Jacob Parsons, Lisa Gielow, Michelle Taylor, Ginny Taylor, Leslie

Parker, and Cooper Johnston. Samantha Johnston preceded Grandma Donna in death, but doubtless was waiting at Heaven's gate with a big hug.

Donna was also very grateful for her caretaker, Anna Banks, who made sure the birds and small animals were fed well so they would visit the deck and Donna could see them.

If you plan to attend the celebration on July 15 and would like to bring a photo or memory of Donna, her family would love to see it.

If you would like to remember Donna with a donation, she might suggest the Okmulgee County Family Resource Center or St Jude's Children's Hospital.

We will miss Donna Bird Perry's strength, wisdom and yes, her opinions, forever.

# Cemetery Details

## Okmulgee Cemetery

2601 South Wood Drive  
Okmulgee, OK 74447  
(918) 756-5109

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JUL **15**. 10:00 AM (CT)

First Christian Church  
211 West 8th Street  
Okmulgee, OK

# Tribute Wall

KA

“ *Kim Angle lit a candle in memory of Donna Perry*



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**Kim Angle** - August 08, 2023 at 10:21 AM

DM

“ *Chanel #5 prayers, ya'll. Great lady & job. Bulldog '84. Peace & strength.*



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**David Miller** - July 08, 2023 at 07:19 PM

BB

“ *Leslie, Mike, Nancy and Family, I am so sorry in the loss of your Mother. She was a beautiful lady.*

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**Barbara James Browning** - July 02, 2023 at 04:19 AM