



Margaret Ernestine Cadenhead

March 12, 1914 - December 22, 2017

Born March 12, 1914 to Menard former Fred and Lula Belle Davis, Margaret was the 5th of 9 children - May, Bessie, Bill, Fred Jr (Poncho), Laura Belle, Margaret, Mozelle, Edith and Ruby. Laura Belle, in her fourth year, died from a tragic wood stove accident. Margaret would grow up with the memory of this lovely little sister and all her unfulfilled promise. Mozelle and Margaret were best friends whose exuberant happy times included swinging into the San Saba from grape vines that hung from ancient pecans along the banks. Both girls were active in athletics and local dances. Mozelle, now a young 100, during Margaret's last years, kept in touch by writing to each other in pretty cards.

Margaret's father, Fred Davis, was well known in the Menard area as a community leader, businessman, Pinkerton detective, farmer, and elder in the Methodist Church where the family regularly attended. The entire family worked together on their large farm which was widely known for producing seedlings for area farmers. Fred and sons bought a café which became a favorite watering hole for locals. Fred was head of the Woodman Lodge of America and Lula Belle was a Rebecca. Lula Belle, found time to hike with her children to the nearby San Saba where they dived and swam together - racing each other to the river. Mother often told us how her mother - happy and exuberant by nature - sang in her clear soprano voice as she worked in the kitchen or fields.

We four kids saw our Davis grandparents only briefly during yearly visits

where we romped boisterously with cousins and stayed way back from the nearby river as none of us could swim. The contrast between our desert home with cactus, sagebrush, roadrunners and the lush greenness of Menard was amazing to us. A favorite memory is of us sitting near a warm wood stove as Grandmother Davis told stories and fashioned tiny animals and people from clay. Her eyes were sparkling. She was enjoying the stories as much as we were.

The robust strong energy of her parents was repeated by Margaret when she became a mother. Like her mother she would sing and dance with a broom as we girls played waltzes on the piano - or when she was simply sweeping the floor. Margaret raised her children in a beautiful desert valley - along with German children of rocket scientists - during the dawn of the 'rocket age'. As a nurse she cared for the 'fastest man on earth' John Stapp - after his rocket sled runs. She always found time to stop and listen - to share her children's daily adventures - to hike the desert and mountains with them and wonder at all their finds - fossils, bits of Indian pottery & fragments from rockets that exploded near our home.

That she shared our worlds of wonder seems amazing in retrospect, as she managed to keep meals going for her family of 6, make cheese, butter, care for the chickens, can bushels of fruit we gathered from orchards in nearby Cloudcroft, and oversaw our schoolwork and practice routines. The same adventuresome spirit and joy-of-life was shared with all her grandchildren. Margaret was head nurse on her shift at the Alamogordo General Hospital. She was much loved and respected and shared joys and sorrows of many Alamogordians through the years. Wherever she went she was frequently stopped with a cheerful, 'Hello Marge' , followed by long expressions of appreciation for how she'd cared for a loved one in the hospital. At 55 she had to quit nursing because of bad knees - a huge adjustment. She threw her strong energy into spending quality time with her grandchildren - also exploring for antiques she restored for her children.

Open arms and warm hospitality were trademarks - going back for

generations in Margaret's family. There are legendary stories of her parents and grandparents taking in friends or relatives who fell on hard times, or just dropped by to say hello. Meals were abundant and there were always chairs ready for loved ones. None were turned away or left out.

Until she was into her mid-nineties, Margaret was her own housekeeper - with a little help. For the last seven years of Margaret's life, she lived with her daughter Sharon and husband Darrell in Arizona. Until the very end Margaret was alert and happy. She fell quite suddenly into a deep sleep and managed a barely heard 'I love you' to her twins, Donald Ray and Sharon Kay before the angels led her away at dawn, Dec. 22. The rich heritage from our mother and her parents is a gift beyond measure to us and our children and our children's children. With her passing, we look afresh at the strong dynamics of her people and we realize that their energy their work ethic, their faith - a faith that sustains through tragedy and hard times as well as times of joy - are golden gifts to be passed on as Margaret passed them on to her children, loved ones, and friends.

Margaret Davis Cadenhead is survived by her sister - Mozelle Neville, her children - Voncille Williams, Donna Garrett, Don Cadenhead, Sharon Bade - spouses, grandchildren and great grands.

Service celebrating her life will be held Tuesday, January 2 at First Methodist Church in Menard, Rev. Krause officiating.