



Mrs. Bennie Marie Vansickle Keckeiser

July 12, 1942 - November 24, 2025

Graveside services for Mrs. Bennie Marie Vansickle Keckeiser, 83, will be held at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, November 26, 2025, at Duncan Cemetery with Trent Tibbitts officiating. Interment will follow under the direction of Crawford-A. Crim Funeral Home.

Mrs. Keckeiser passed away November 24, 2025, in Henderson.

Eulogy for Bennie Marie Vansickle Keckeiser

(Written by her niece Kathleen Boucher Tibbitts/Dallas, Ga)

Today we gather to honor the life of a woman who defied every expectation ever placed upon her—a woman whose joy, resilience, and unwavering spirit left an imprint on every person she met. My Aunt Bennie was born into a time when medical understanding was limited, and from her very first breath, people doubted what her life would become. A difficult birth, early developmental delays, and discouraging predictions from doctors led many to believe she would never live a full or independent life. But those people didn't know her. And they certainly didn't know the fierce love of my grandmother, who refused to give up on her child.

Instead of sending her away, as she was advised, my Mamaw kept her close—raising her, nurturing her, and fighting for her while Papaw was at war. She

protected her from the world's unkindness, taught her strength, taught her love, and gave her a foundation that would carry her through the rest of her life.

When Aunt Bennie finally started school at the age of six, she faced teasing, isolation, and misunderstanding. Yet even then, she was joyful. Even then, she was resilient. She made it through fifth grade—a milestone she was proud of all her life—and she carried that pride with her like a badge of honor.

In adulthood, she came to live with my parents, my brother, and myself, becoming not just an Aunt but a caretaker, a constant presence, and in many ways a second mother. She raised us with gentleness, innocence, and steady affection. She always trusted me, and from the time I was young, I knew one day it would be my turn to take care of her. That promise was woven into our family's story, and I embraced it long before I understood what it would truly mean.

When we moved to New Jersey, my mother helped her find her first place of belonging outside the family—volunteering at the hospital. There, she met the man who would become her husband. Many doubted the relationship, but in true Bennie fashion, she followed her heart. They were married for more than 47 years, and even when the marriage brought struggle and pain, she stayed steadfast. When he later fell ill, the family stepped in to support her, just as she had always supported us.

Throughout her life, my mother and grandparents ensured she was cared for—clothes, food, trips, treats, radios, DVD players—anything she wanted, they found a way to provide. And she received all of it with the gratitude and wonder of someone who never stopped seeing the world with childlike joy.

When the time eventually came for her care to be passed to me, distance

didn't stop our closeness. I bought her an iPhone and an iPad, and she learned them quicker than anyone expected. She FaceTime everyone, and in doing so, her world grew. She made friends at church—friends who loved her, visited her, took her out to lunch, drove her to Walmart and CVS, and gave her a sense of independence she had never known. Her church became her community, and through it, she grew braver, stronger, more connected.

This year brought new challenges. After a serious illness in June, she fought her way back to strength in true Alexander fashion—determined, strong-willed, impossibly resilient. She wanted to see Neal McCoy for her birthday, and with that goal in her heart, she pushed herself through physical therapy, changed her eating habits, and did everything asked of her. And she made it. She went to that concert, glowing with joy, surrounded by people who loved her. She lived that moment fully—another victory in a life full of quiet triumphs.

Her personality—jovial, forgiving, pure-hearted—never dimmed. She rarely felt anger or bitterness. She forgave easily and loved freely. She felt pain deeply too, especially with the loss of Papa and, years later, my mother—her sister, her caretaker, her anchor. She struggled to understand grief, but she learned, and she allowed herself to feel. I often told her, “God gave you tears to heal your heart,” and in time, she embraced that truth.

In her final days, as she began to transition from this life to the next, she was surrounded by love. Though I was far away, technology let me sit with her, speak to her, sing to her, and reassure her. She was visited by friends who cared for her tenderly, including John who held her hand as she passed—telling her he loved her and asking her to save him a seat in heaven.

For a woman the doctors said would never live a normal life, she lived beautifully. She lived joyfully. She lived surrounded by love—giving it and

receiving it freely. And she touched every life near her.

Aunt Bennie embodied perseverance, innocence, faith, and unconditional love. She proved every prediction wrong. She proved that limitations are often nothing more than misunderstandings. And she proved that a gentle heart can be one of the strongest forces in the world.

Today, I believe she walked into the arms of her mother, her father, her sister, and into the presence of God Himself. And I know He greeted her with the words she earned every single day of her life:

“Well done, my child. Well done.”

Rest in peace, my sweet Aunt Bennie. You lived a life of love—and you were loved more than you ever knew.

I'd like to end with this quote that states they whispered to her you cannot withstand the storm she whispered back. I am the storm.

Words of comfort may be shared with the family at www.crawfordacrim.com.

Cemetery Details

Duncan Cemetery

9346 S County Road 454
Henderson, TX 75654

Previous Events

Graveside Service

NOV **26**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Duncan Cemetery
9346 S County Road 454
Henderson, TX 75654

Tribute Wall



“ 2 files added to the album *My life with Aunt Bennie*

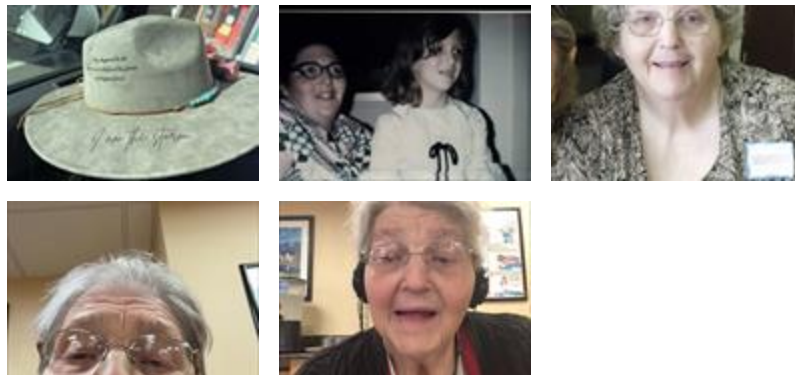


Crawford- A.Crim Funeral Home - December 19, 2025 at 05:05 PM



Kathleen
Tibbitts

“ 8 files added to the album *My life with Aunt Bennie*




Kathleen Tibbitts - December 04, 2025 at 11:07 AM

SM

“ *Bennie I'm so sorry I'm just seeing this. Heaven has gained one of the funniest and sweetest angels. You were an amazing and genuinely sweet lady.*

Shelby Medina - December 02, 2025 at 10:37 PM


Kathleen
Tibbitts

“ 16 files added to the album *My life with Aunt Bennie*



Kathleen Tibbitts - December 02, 2025 at 01:35 AM

JR

“ *I'm sorry for your loss.*



Jane Roy - November 30, 2025 at 09:36 AM


Kathleen
Tibbitts

Thank you Jane

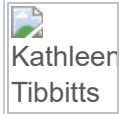
Kathleen Tibbitts - December 02, 2025 at 01:04 AM

KP

“ *Kathy Porter lit a candle in memory of Mrs.
Bennie Marie Vansickle Keckeiser*



Kathy Porter - November 26, 2025 at 09:10 PM



Thank you cousin Kathy

Kathleen Tibbitts - December 02, 2025 at 12:56 AM

PW

“ *Benni was more than a friend, she is my sister in love of the Lord, Jesus Christ. She understood Heavenly Father and was gifted with a long life of taking care of all around her by gentle and sincere Love. Her laughter was easily released and shared with everyone who encountered her. In the life she lived, her words always reached out and engaged those who tended to surround her. One thing I will send to her today is a Sassafras tree. One of her favorite drinks was from the humble root made into tea. Benni was rooted in goodness and kindness, because she loved Jesus Christ, all people, walking the path of goodness, goodwill, and love.*

Paula Worden - November 26, 2025 at 07:11 AM



Paula, Thank you for all you did for her.

Kathleen Tibbitts - December 02, 2025 at 12:57 AM

CP

“ *Bennie loved to visit. She loved you so much Kathleen! - Patsy and family*



Connie Phillips - November 25, 2025 at 05:23 PM



Thank you cousin Patsy!

Kathleen Tibbitts - December 02, 2025 at 12:55 AM