

The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.



SERVICES IN CARE OF
Lowe-Gardner Funerals & Cremations
Quitman, Texas



in loving memory

Geraldine "Jerry" Jordan Nichols

March 7, 1933 - October 18, 2025

Obituary

Geraldine “Jerry” Jordan Nichols slid out of her 92-year-old body and through to the other side at 4 a.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2025. When Juan D. Nichols—her husband of seventy years—died in 2021, Jerry told him, “I won’t be long behind you.” Instead, she stayed four more years with her family, sharing love, wisdom, and humor.

Jerry was born on March 7, 1933, in Newsome, Texas, to the late Grady and Novelle Jordan. She attended school in Newsome through eighth grade, skipping two grades and entering Winnsboro High School at the age of twelve. Always independent and resourceful, she sewed new clothes for herself the summer before she began. Jerry met Juan when she started high school, but didn’t “go steady” with him until their senior year. As she said, “I chased him until he caught me.” She graduated as Salutatorian at age sixteen and enrolled at East Texas State Teachers College (now East Texas A&M University) in 1949.

In 1951, Juan enlisted in the U.S. Navy during the Korean conflict. Jerry joined him in California when he completed boot camp, and they married on May 18, 1951, at the First United Methodist Church of Vallejo. They lived in Vallejo, Long Beach, and San Diego, California; Charleston, South Carolina (where their oldest daughter, Marian, was born in 1954); Brooklyn, New York; and Newport, Rhode Island. When Juan’s ship was overseas, Jerry would return to Texas to take more college classes. She graduated with a B.A. in English in 1956.

After Juan was discharged from the Navy, the family returned to Winnsboro, Texas, where their twins, David and Carolyn, were born in 1958. They relocated three more times—to College Station, Cuero, and Waco—before settling in Quitman in 1962 when Juan took a job with Wood County Electric Cooperative. Jerry didn’t want to leave her children to work outside the home, so she opened “The Kiddie Kollege,” a private kindergarten for five-year-olds (at the time, public school began with first grade). Her twins had the distinction of repeating kindergarten three times before graduating. Jerry operated her school until 1970, when Juan and Jerry’s last child, D’Ann, was born, and they could finally survive on Juan’s income alone.

Jerry was president of the Area Young Homemakers of Texas; co-chairman of ladies activities for the Texas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., in Austin; instrumental in establishing the Quitman Public Library, and active in the Quitman PTA and the First United Methodist Church of Quitman. Her proudest accomplishment was Governor Ann Richards’ appointment of her in 1991 as the first female director of the Sabine River Authority. She served for six years, including as President of the Board. Jerry remembered a time when Juan had to cosign for her to inherit property from her father, open a bank account, or get a credit card. “Of course I’m a feminist, and we’ve come a long way, baby!” she proudly declared.

Jerry was a skilled gardener with the prettiest flowerbeds in town, and was always happy to share her plants with others. She was known for her keen intelligence and quick wit. A devoted and doting mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, her guiding motto was “draw the circle bigger and invite more in.” She touched countless lives, from strangers God put in her path to friends she included as family. Left to cherish her memory are her children: Marian Jackson, Carolyn (Harold) Gilbreath, Connie Hamm Nichols, D’Ann (John) Drennan, and David Nichols, her beloved eight grandchildren and their families, and her ten great-grandchildren.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Geraldine Jordan Nichols

“Jerry”

FUNERAL SERVICE

2:00 PM Tuesday, October 21, 2025
Lowe-Gardner Funerals & Cremations
Quitman, Texas

OFFICIATING

Pastor Larry Pittman

PALLBEARERS

Monica Jackson	Emily Jackson
Chris Gilbreath	Callie Hays
Molly Palmer	Audrey Fadal
Thomas Drennan	Katherine Drennan

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Hadlie Gilbreath	Coy Gilbreath
Reid Gilbreath	Charlie Hays
Eli Hays	Maggie Hays
Ruby Hays	Eliza Palmer
Lydia Palmer	Lily Fadal

INTERMENT

Black Oak Cemetery
Como, Texas