

Home on the Range



Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

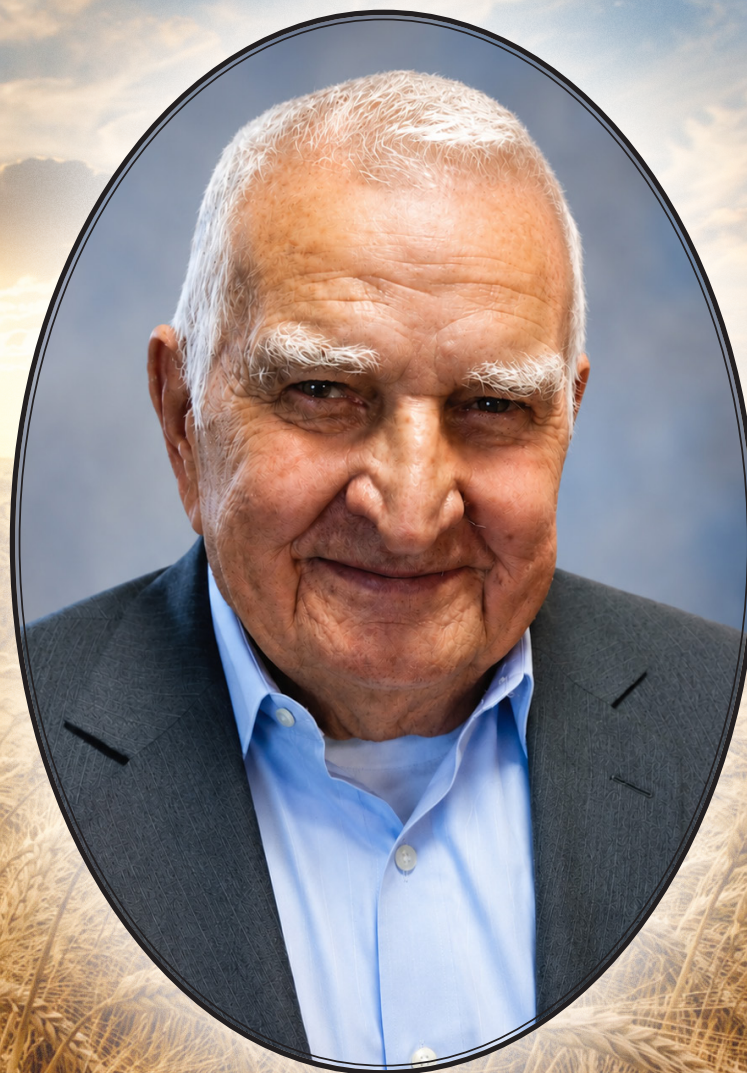
How often at night when the heavens are bright
With the light from the glittering stars,
Have I stood there amazed, and asked as I gazed,
If their glory exceeded ours.

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Oh, I love these wild flowers so glad and so bright,
They paint the meadows with beauty untold;
Oh, give me a home where the plains are so wide,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

Schmitt Funeral Home, WaKeeney & Quinter
www.schmittfuneral.com



In Loving Memory of
Raymond Phillips

Raymond “Ray” Phillips, age 95, passed away on May 25, 2026, at Hays Medical Center surrounded by the love and memories of a long, well-lived life.

He was born on August 9, 1930, in Brownell, Kansas, to Caleb and Agnes (Henley) Phillips. Growing up during the Depression years helped shape Ray’s strong work ethic, quiet determination, and lifelong appreciation for family, farming, and community.

Ray graduated from Trego Community High School in 1948. Following graduation, he worked as a farmhand until being drafted into the United States Army in 1951. He attended basic training at Fort Riley, Kansas, and Fort Bliss, Texas, before being sent to Korea, where he earned the rank of Sergeant while serving as a gun commander and ammunition chief. Like many of his generation, Ray served his country with humility and rarely sought recognition for it.

After returning home from military service, Ray attended Fort Hays State University, graduating in 1957. Education would become one of the great callings of his life.

On September 1, 1955, Ray married JoAnn Cokeley, the love of his life and lifelong partner in every sense of the word. Together they built a home centered around hard work, laughter, card games, and family. Their marriage spanned 67 years until JoAnn’s passing on March 24, 2023. To this union, three daughters were born: Debra Rae, Pamela Kay, and Kathy Lou.

Ray devoted 35 years to teaching and coaching in northwest Kansas schools. He began his career at Maple Grove, a one-room country school, before later teaching at Collyer Grade School and High School, St. Peter, and ultimately Morland. In Morland, he taught seventh and eighth grade students while coaching boys’ and girls’ athletics. Generations of students remember him not only as a teacher and coach, but as someone who expected hard work, respected others, and carried himself with fairness and integrity.

Beyond the classroom, Ray was never one to sit still. In 1957, he opened an upholstery shop which he proudly operated until 2018. He also loved farming and continued working the land in Rush and Trego Counties until 2017. Whether teaching, upholstering furniture, farming, or coaching, Ray believed in doing things the right way and giving every job his full effort.

Ray was a lifetime member of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). He also belonged to the National Education Association (NEA) and the Kansas National Education Association (KNEA).

Some of Ray’s greatest joys in life were the simple things — roller skating, hunting, fishing, farming, playing pitch with JoAnn and the girls, and spending time with family. He was known for his steady presence, dry sense of humor, and the kind of reliability that made people feel they could always count on him.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, JoAnn; his eldest daughter, Debra Rae; and siblings Ella Mae, Darrell, and Ardath.

Ray is survived by his daughters, Pamela Kay and Kathy Lou; one granddaughter; five grandsons; 14 great-grandchildren; his brother, Willard; and many other family members and friends who will miss him deeply and remember him fondly.

RAYMOND PHILLIPS

August 9, 1930 - May 25, 2026

Funeral Service

Schmitt Funeral Home

WaKeeney, Kansas

Friday, May 29, 2026 at 10:30 A.M.

Officiant

Pastor Jerod Brown

Music Selections

“The Church in the Wildwood”

“Home on the Range”

Casket Bearers

John Phillips Chad Phillips

Will Cokeley Robert McCoy

Lance Noll Todd Woolsoncroft

Honorary Bearers

Fred Hableib Dale Newcomer

Interment

WaKeeney City Cemetery

WaKeeney, KS

Memorials To

Made payable to TCLMH with

“Cardiac Rehab Services” noted in the memo line.