

# Westbrook

## Featured Resident

### Shirley Dysart



Shirley was born in the rural area around Norborne and Stet. She was the oldest of nine children born to Warren and Gladys Davis and the only girl. They lived on a farm and her father farmed for the man down the hill. Shirley's mom had a large garden that she took care of and Shirley mostly stayed inside taking care of her younger brothers. She said that if one of the boys got hurt, she'd become so anxious and excited. One time she even ran right past her father while yelling "Daddy, daddy" for help. She took her responsibility seriously. She attended grade school in Stet. Her family moved to a farm in the bottoms between Waverly and Carrollton. A neighboring orchard allowed her family to gather the peaches that had fallen on the ground. Her mom canned all kinds of peaches as well as other vegetables. They ate peaches and ate peaches and ate peaches. Her dad quit eating them though when he found a worm in one of the jars. On Sundays, the family was sometimes allowed to get Coke and ice cream. She would look so forward to this special treat. Another treat for Shirley was going to the library. She loved reading and still does. She also liked to go bicycling when she could get a turn on the bike. Shirley graduated from Carrollton High in 1955.

She went to work for the Banner Candy and Cookie factory. She shared a rented sleeping room with her friend, Nancy. Before too long, they moved to Kansas City and Shirley went to work for T.H. Mastin Insurance Company processing payments. Nancy and Shirley liked to go roller skating on the weekends. It was there that Shirley met Charles. He kept telling her about his older brother, Wayne, who was in the Navy and had lots of blonde hair. Nancy started dating Charles' brother, Glenn. They in turn actually set Wayne and Shirley up on a blind date. Shirley was quite surprised though. Wayne was basically bald! This did not matter to her however and they married six months later. Glenn and Nancy also married.

Wayne and Shirley moved into a studio apartment in downtown Kansas City. However, they didn't stay there long and nine months and four days after they married, Mary Katherine was born. They rented an apartment a couple an older couple's house in Fairmount. The Tye's fell in love with Mary Katherine and were sad when the Dysart's moved to Sugar Creek. Wayne was working for Crooks Paper Box and Shirley was watching children in their home. She had as many as seven or eight at a time. They then moved to a house in Independence. In 1966, they added to their family Kurtis Wayne. He was almost ten years younger than his sister. In 1970, the family bought a ten acre farm on the south side of 92 Hwy in Kearney. They loved horses and had as many as four for their enjoyment. Kurtis and Wayne would ride in the Jesse James parade. Wayne was so attached to his horse that when it died, he isolated himself for an entire day and then had the horse buried on the property. Wayne and Shirley were actively involved in Community Covenant Church here in Kearney. Shirley taught Sunday School and VBS and their daughter was married there. She also went back to work; first for Paul Nelson at his grocery store and then for Bob Pence at his heating and cooling company.

Wayne retired in 1993. He and Shirley traveled out to Colorado, California and settled in Arizona for the winter. They rented a motor home from a couple in Yuma every winter for a few years. One winter she spent hand quilting a beautiful quilt she still displays in her room. They had always enjoyed going to the Lake of the Ozarks and boating and fishing. One time, Wayne caught a catfish on a trout line that was taller than Shirley. Wayne was diagnosed with emphysema. Eventually they moved to a house in Kearney because Wayne couldn't keep up with the farm. Wayne passed away in 2011.

Shirley moved to Westbrook in 2012 when she realized she was no longer able to take care of herself due to dementia. She's glad that Wayne kept them on a budget so she can live here now. She loves doing crossword puzzles and does the one in the KG Star every day. One of Shirley's cherished possessions is a picture of Jesus. It belonged to Wayne's grandparents. When they passed away, Wayne's Uncle Bill asked Shirley if she wanted it. She was thrilled and still has it hanging up in her room. She says no matter where she is in her room it appears that Jesus is watching her. Shirley has her son and daughter, their spouses – Julia and Steve, and four grandchildren.

*Very thankful for everything they do for the residents. I recommend them constantly and actually have a friend moving in very soon! — Diane*

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