

Billie Jim Sikes Tabor, 91, died Thursday, Dec. 19, 2013, at Good Samaritan Center in Liberal. She was born Oct. 2, 1922, to Norbon Palmer and Emma Antha Gibbs Sikes, in Rowden, Texas.

She married Leon Tabor on April, 13, 1945, in Roswell, N.M. He survives.

She graduated from high school in Portales, N.M. She then attended Eastern New Mexico University where she met her husband, Leon. Leon's education was interrupted by serving in the United Army Air Force.

She began her 50-year teaching career at a rural school near Portales. After being united in marriage to Leon, she taught in Lubbock while he attended Texas Tech. After his graduation, the two of them taught in Sunset, Okla., Darrouzett, and Follett, Texas.

In 1968, they moved with their children to Liberal where she continued teaching music and elementary grades. At one time, she remarked that four-part harmony was her favorite thing to teach. She loved her students.

In addition to her love of teaching, she enjoyed cooking, and she loved to play the piano. She was a gifted pianist. Beginning as a very small girl of three or four, she could play tunes after only hearing them one time. At ENMU, she was trained as a classical pianist and played the cello in the school orchestra.

She was a member of Western Avenue Church of Christ in Liberal, Retired Teachers' Association, American Association of University Women, and Christian College Women's Association. She was known for her unwavering sweetness and kindness.

Immediate survivors along with her husband include sons, Gary Tabor and wife, Donna, Olympia, Wash., Jay Tabor and wife, Susan, Dallas, Texas; daughter, Janie Rine and husband, David, Liberal; son-in-law, Jerald Harris, Follett, Texas; brothers, Bob, Barry, and Don Sikes; sister, Kathryn Cox; 11 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; three brothers; four sisters; daughter, Linda Tabor Harris; and one great-grandchild.

• Funeral service will be at 10 a.m. Friday at the Western Avenue Church of Christ.

Burial will follow at Restlawn Memorial Gardens.

Friends may call from noon to 8 p.m. Thursday at Miller Mortuary. The family will be present from 5 to 6 p.m.

Memorials are suggested to New Mexico Christian Children's Home in care of Miller Mortuary.

Friends may send condolences to the family through Billie's tribute webpage at

www.millermortuary.net