



# Naomi Irene Spalding

JAN 7, 1928 - NOV 16, 2022



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## **N**aomi Spalding Obituary

Naomi “Irene” Cieloha Spalding was born south of Haskell on January 7, 1928. She left this life the morning of November 16th, 2022. Services will be held graveside at the Haskell Cemetery, Haskell, OK on Friday, November 25th at 1:00 pm. Pastor Donald Hogue, Jr. will be officiating.

She was the 6th of 9 children born to Charles S. Cieloha, Sr. and Tinnie L. Morgan Cieloha. Her father was a 1st generation American, born of Polish parents and her mother came from Arkansas in a covered wagon as a 7 year old in 1902. She was born during the years of the “Great Depression” and no doubt, the lessons she grew up with, served her well.

She spent her young life growing up on a working farm, a couple of miles west of Porter, OK. Her stories were countless and vivid. She spoke many times of the demanding work her parents and siblings were accustomed to on a daily basis. With love in her eyes, she spoke of how the hard labor and strenuous work of her “Mama” and “Papa” kept food on the table and a home to live in. There was a job for every child and most started at daylight and sometimes ended after the sun went down. Recalling how her mama baked bread that filled the air with such a delicious aroma, the children had to have “just one biscuit” before supper and there would seem to be just enough to go around. With laughter, she told of how her two older brothers, Charles and JD, would dare her to use a few choice words around her mother, and how she was the one that got in trouble!! She became her fathers right hand after the older siblings had moved on and she was expected to work as hard as “the boys” had, and if you knew her, you know she did.

She attended Haskell schools until she was 12 and made the move to Porter. She enjoyed singing in the girls choir, made excellent grades and enjoyed doing bookwork. She graduated with the Porter Class of 1945 and moved to Tulsa to find a job at SW Bell, along with her older sister, Charline. She completed classes at Tulsa Business College.



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It was in Tulsa, she met her life love, James “Jim” Spalding. Though he passed in 1982, the love they shared remained deep within her heart and in her mind, as she reminisced about their life together until her last few days. Jim was working for Stanolind Oil when they were dating and they were going to transfer him to Casper, Wyoming. As she told it, rather nonchalantly, he showed up for a date one evening and announced he was having to move and, “Well, we better get married!” When questioned as to the hurry, he told her he wasn’t going to just take her away, he needed to make it right in her fathers eyes. So, they married on January 29, 1951 at the First Baptist Parsonage in Porter. As they were driving back to Tulsa, they made a stop at the family farm where her little sister, Teeny, made them a “1-Egg Cake” to celebrate. Jim went on to Wyoming and expected Irene on a train in a few days. She said her train was delayed and Jim was very happy to see her as she showed up hours later. He told her he thought she had changed her mind!

Their love for one another was evident and they had a life filled with their much- loved animals, and outdoor excursions were their favorite, with fishing trips and adventures while camping in beautiful National Parks. Their trips back to family in Oklahoma and Kentucky were always fun and her love for traveling continued after she lost Jim. Their jobs with the Oil and Gas industry took them to Casper, WY, Denver, CO, Riverton, WY and finally, Farmington, NM. She retired from British Petroleum and moved back to Oklahoma in 1982, after Jims death, settling in Tulsa. She was of the Catholic faith and attended Holy Family Cathedral in Tulsa while there. After cruises and trips around the world, including a visit to the Holy Lands and being blessed at the Vatican in a mass by the Pope, she worked at several retail stores, including Saks 5th Avenue. She moved home to Porter in the 1990’s to help care for her mother. Irene was as comfortable cleaning the chicken coop as she was dressed as a queen in her Saks purchases. She loved her nieces and nephews, it seemed sometimes, the youngest, the most! She became a weekly visitor to see Josh and Blake in Haskell. Their adoration was mutual until the end of her life. She was fond of all her family and had a special love connection to niece Lorri and her daughter, Jayden.

After her mother passed, she moved in her 80’s to Las Cruces, NM. After a few years, her niece and nephew, Peggy Kay and Steve Showalter moved her to Hutchinson, KS to live near them and their family. She enjoyed being close after so many years and loved very much her little neighbor girl who was her great-great niece, Alyssabeth and her mommy, Amber, Irenes great-niece and her great-nephew, Sean, who also lived across the sidewalk. They made many wonderful memories together.



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She made her request 5 years ago that she wanted to spend her last days at “HOME,” meaning Oklahoma. So in the fall of 2017, she moved to Muskogee, close to her baby sister, Tena and her daughters, Janet and Lynnette. It does “take a village,” and Joshs daughter, Whitley, was loved on and loved Aunt Irene BIG. And when Blake and Elizabeths son was born March 31st of this year, Aunt Irene remarked how happy she was that they had a baby before she passed.

Living her fiercely independent life until almost 95 years old, Aunt Irene fell in her home a little over a month ago. Her last days were spent in the tranquil, serene surroundings of Clarehouse Hospice Home in Tulsa, it was a true gift from GOD. The care given by Cura Hospice and the volunteers, caregivers, and all the staff at Clarehouse was deeply compassionate and loving. We became a part of their family and we are forever appreciative of their care. She loved Christ, believed in Heaven and it is there we hope to be reunited.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jim, her parents, Charles, Sr. and Tinnie, her sisters, Charline Baehler, Mary Catherine Damme and Mabel Christine Cieloha, her brothers, Charles, Jr. and J.D. Nephew Jimmy Douglas Cieloha and Great-Nephew Cole Baehler. Her beloved dogs, Duke, Ace and Birdie.

She is survived by her sisters: Wanda Karr and Tena Kirk, her brother, Jack and Erlene Cieloha. Many nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews and great-great nieces and nephews!

Our family thanks her good friends, Pat and Marlin Airney for their love and care of Irene the past couple of years, the staff at Pleasant Valley Retirement Apartments, the loving care from the Cura Hospice staff and the compassion and love shown to Aunt Irene and the family from Clarehouse. Thanks so very much.

To send flowers  
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