

Class of 1972 Coming Home Queen Nominee: Jimmie Lou Bishop Connally

Jimmie Lou was born in Amarillo, TX in January 1954 to James and Alta Louise Bishop. In 1956, the Bishops moved to Hamlin where Charlie, Jimmie Lou, and Britt all graduated from Hamlin High School. Following graduation, Jimmie Lou attended Texas Tech University as a pre-pharmacy student, later studied at U.T. Arlington, and was ultimately accepted into U.T. Austin's School of Pharmacy. Life happens and plans often change, and these plans found Jimmie Lou marrying fellow classmate Guy Clifton and settling down in Hico, TX. Their small family grew to include two amazing daughters, Brandi and Carley.

In 1987, she returned to Abilene and married Gary Connally, a successful attorney and Piper graduate from the class of 1967. After completing her paralegal studies through Texas Tech University, Jimmie Lou joined Gary and they built a thriving law practice with offices that operated in both Hamlin and Abilene for several years. During this time, they were able to purchase a vacation home in Ruidoso where they made many memories over the years. With the goal of having a home office in Abilene, Gary and Jimmie Lou restored a historical firehouse on Butternut Street. They continued to practice law in federal and district courts throughout Texas over their 30-plus years working together. Clients could always count on Jimmie Lou, and Gary was often heard saying that she was the backbone of their practice.

They created a home for their blended family in Hamlin, and Jimmie Lou gained two special sons in Matthew and Mark Connally. Mark, Brandi, and Carley also graduated as Pipers from the classes of 1996 and 2004 respectively. Eventually, Mark blessed them with two talented and creative grandchildren, Matthew and Abigail. In 2005 and 2009, Brandi and Nathan blessed the family with two beautiful and intelligent granddaughters, Lou Lou and Ellie. Finally, Carley and Brian added two sweet and tough grandsons known to the family as the "Hernandez Hurricanes," Maddox and Milo.

Both as "Mom" and "Izzy" to her children and grandchildren, Jimmie Lou has created a legacy of comforting love that could never be matched. She has lovingly prepared meals for the sick and elderly, raised funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, American Cancer Society, and American Heart Association, as well as hosting many class parties with antics still remembered by classmates to this day. Jimmie Lou has dedicated her life to serving others.

Sadly, their home in Hamlin was destroyed in the 2021 Memorial Day Flood. Gary and Jimmie Lou moved to Abilene excited to start the next chapter in their lives. In their retirement, they enjoy spending time with each other and their family. Jimmie Lou is thankful that throughout all of life's challenges and changes, her family has remained loyal to each other and to our Heavenly Father.