



Rita Mae Drabek

May 16, 1932 - October 26, 2025

Rita Mae (Cockrell) Drabek passed away peacefully at her home on October 26, 2025, at the age of 93. In her lifetime, Rita was defined by her devotion to her husband, family and friends, as well as her students and faculty.

Rita is survived by her son John Allen Drabek & wife Gloria of Sugar Land, Son-in-law Donnie Marshall of Waterwood, her only grandchild Colby Drabek & wife Michelle, great-grandchildren John Henry & Adeline of New Taiton, brother Robert Cockrell & wife Linda of Natchitoches, LA, and numerous nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her parents Allen Wesley Cockrell & Clara Mae (Safford) Cockrell, her parents in-law Henry & Annie Drabek, husband of 55 years Johnnie Henry Drabek, daughter Dr. Linda Kay Drabek Marshall, sister Dr. Sarah Cockrell White, brothers A.W. Cockrell & wife Barbara, Jasper Cockrell & wife Mary, sisters-in-law Ella Bartos & husband Jim, Frances Reuther & husband John, Emily Motl & husband Ervin, Virgie LeCombe & husband LeRoy.

Rita was born in Corrigan, Polk County, Texas on May 16, 1932. Her parents believed strongly in education which led her to earning a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Houston. While working and attending school she met her husband, Johnnie, and the couple married August 22, 1955. They

built their home in The Hill neighborhood of Sugar Land in 1963 which she proudly called home until her passing. Rita has been a resident of Sugar Land for 70 years.

She began her teaching career at Lakeview Elementary as a substitute teacher, this is where her love of teaching began. She then decided to return to college to obtain a teacher's certification and master's degree in administration. In 1957 she began to teach 4th grade at Lakeview Elementary, where she taught for 16 years. She was appointed as their Assistant Principal in 1973. In 1974-1984 she was appointed Principal at Meadows Elementary School and served as the first female Principal in the district. In 1984 she was named as Director of Elementary Curriculum until she retired from FBISD in 1990. After retirement Rita served on the Board of Trustees for Fort Bend ISD for 10 years where she was honored to have an elementary school named after her. She enjoyed visiting and supporting the teachers and students of Rita Drabek Elementary which included helping with the annual school spelling bee and reading library books aloud in the classroom. She also thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the Delta Kappa Gama International Society for Women Educators, where she was a 58-year member & founding member of the local Lambda Sigma Chapter. Other affiliations include the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Texas Retired Teachers Association, board member of Region IV Service Center for 6 years, Sugar Creek Baptist Church, and Merry Ministries Bible Study. In her spare time, she enjoyed going to her home place in Corrigan to gather with family and cook large meals, genealogy research, quilting, and visits from her great-grandchildren. Friends and family are left with wonderful memories and stories that will live on for many generations to come. Her kindness, strength, compassion, and wisdom will never be forgotten.

A special thank you to her caregiver, Amelia Murphy, for the exceptional care and companionship she provided throughout the last year.

Please join the family in a Celebration of Life led by family friend, Deacon Bob Bass of Sugar Creek Baptist Church on Friday, November 14, 2025, at Davis Greenlawn Chapel, located at 3900 B.F. Terry Blvd. Rosenberg, TX 77471. Visitation will begin at 9:00 AM, a Celebration of Life will commence at 10:00 AM, followed by burial at Davis-Greenlawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to be made to the charity of one's choice in her name.

Friends and family are invited to join us for a reception & meal at the Fort Bend KC Hall located at 2007 Kay Cee Drive, Rosenberg, TX 77471 to share memories and stories after the service.

Cemetery Details

Greenlawn Memorial Park

3900 B.F. Terry Blvd.
Rosenberg, TX 77471

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **14**. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Davis Greenlawn Funeral Chapels and Cemeteries
3900 B.F. Terry Blvd.
Rosenberg, TX 77471
(281) 341-8800

Celebration of Life

NOV **14**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Davis Greenlawn Funeral Chapels and Cemeteries
3900 B.F. Terry Blvd.
Rosenberg, TX 77471
(281) 341-8800

Tribute Wall



“ *Davis Greenlawn Funeral Chapel and Cemeteries created a Tribute Video in memory of Rita Mae Drabek*



Davis Greenlawn Funeral Chapel and Cemeteries - November 11, 2025 at 09:10 AM

SH

“ *Dear Drabek Family,
We express our Heartfelt Condolences & Deepest Sympathies. It was such an Honor and a Blessing to be chosen to cross the short path of such a Legendary woman. May God's peace and comfort be with you.
T. Donahue
Spear Hospice
Sugar Land, TX*

Spear Hospice - November 14, 2025 at 07:12 PM

SF

“ *Steve and Leslie Elliott & Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Rita Mae Drabek.*



Steve and Leslie Elliott & Family - November 13, 2025 at 09:36 PM

SF

“ Steve and Leslie Elliott & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rita Mae Drabek.

Steve and Leslie Elliott & Family - November 13, 2025 at 09:36 PM

TF

“ The A.W. and Barbara Cockrell Families purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Rita Mae Drabek.



The A.W. and Barbara Cockrell Families - November 12, 2025 at 01:35 PM

BH

“ Barry and Jo Ann Holcomb purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Rita Mae Drabek.



Barry and Jo Ann Holcomb - November 12, 2025 at 12:58 PM

RS

“ Rita Drabek Elementary Faculty and Staff purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Rita Mae Drabek.



Rita Drabek Elementary Faculty and Staff - November 11, 2025 at 03:15 PM

RS

“ Rita Drabek Elementary Faculty and Staff planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rita Mae Drabek.

Rita Drabek Elementary Faculty and Staff - November 11, 2025 at 03:15 PM

CE

“ Carolyn Elmore purchased the Love's Journey for the family of Rita Mae Drabek.



Carolyn Elmore - November 04, 2025 at 03:32 PM

CE

“ Carolyn Elmore planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rita Mae Drabek.

Carolyn Elmore - November 04, 2025 at 03:32 PM

LS

“ Love, the family of Leroy Safford purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Rita Mae Drabek.



Love, the family of Leroy Safford - October 30, 2025 at 10:27 AM

KH

“ *An amazing lady and a huge asset -- not just to teaching, but to the entire Fort Bend Community. She will be missed by many. Prayers for the family. Rest in peace, sweet Rita!*

Kathy Huebner - October 29, 2025 at 02:27 PM

DS

“ *I helped in her first school board election and it was by the grace of God that she was elected because neither one of us knew anything about politics.
Rita was a great educator, great school board member and overall an outstanding person. She will be missed but there are many sweet memories!*

Donald Smithers - October 29, 2025 at 06:57 AM

BS

“ *I'm so sad to see this news. Mrs. Drabek was my 4th grade teacher at Lakeview Elementary and I have wonderful memories of her and that time in Sugar Land. She devoted her life to educating young children like me and was exceptional at her job. May she rest in peace after a life that made an impact on so many people.*

Billy Streich - October 28, 2025 at 11:25 PM

AW

“ *Rita enriched the lives of so many. She was an exemplar leader in education. She set the bar high for excellence in teaching. Her legacy will be forever. God bless you Rita.*

Arlise Wilson - October 28, 2025 at 08:12 PM

VT

“ Rita Drabek was a very dear friend and colleague when we worked together in FBISD and later at Region 4 ESC, where for many years she mentored future teachers and principals. She is a true icon who had immeasurable, lasting impact as a teacher, leader and mentor for literally thousands of students and educators. She will be dearly missed, but her legacy lives on. Rest in heavenly peace, my friend.
Virgil Tiemann

Virgil Tiemann - October 28, 2025 at 06:05 PM

PW

Rita Drabek was an exceptional education leader, a woman of great intellect, wisdom, and strength, a caring person, and a dear friend. She was a member of the Region 4 ESC that hired me as executive director and I was a better leader and a better person because of her mentorship and support. Even after she retired from the Board, she continued to share her insights and support and I will forever be grateful to her. To her family, I know that you realize what a remarkable human being she was. I send prayers for peace and hope that the great memories you have will bring smiles in your grief.
Pam Wells

Pam Wells - November 01, 2025 at 02:44 PM

CZ

“ From the time that Rita and I were fourth grade teachers at two of the three elementary schools in FBISD (Rita at Lakeview and I at Wilcox) fifty-seven years ago, I was blessed with her friendship. She was an inspiration to me and so many others over those years. May she now rest in peace after a life well lived.

Carolyn Zaskoda - October 28, 2025 at 05:43 PM

CA

“ Rita was one of a kind! We were so honored to know her and I had the privilege of working with her at Lakeview Elementary! Rest well, sweet friend! ❤️

Carolyn adden - October 28, 2025 at 01:54 PM

KH

“ There’s a book entitled “A Woman of Substance” about an outstanding woman like Rita. What a great lady and friend she was to all who knew her. Our loss is Heaven’s gain. She will be sorely missed as she made the world a better place. A super lady and a wonderful friend.

Katie Hodge - October 28, 2025 at 09:40 AM

VD

“ My Heart is broken ,, but I know she lived a Very Good life , I know she is with Johnny again and Linda ,,and my parents are sitting and catching up with everything ,Praying for the Little Johnny and all the family 🙏❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

Vivian Pamplin Dimmock - October 27, 2025 at 10:01 PM

RP

“ Our world is a little less bright. Sad news but a life well lived and a huge legacy in FBISD and our community. May she rest in peace. Sending condolences and prayers of comfort to her family and friends. I also graduated from Dulles in 1974 with her daughter, Linda, who passed away in 2020. 🙏



Roberta Prater - October 27, 2025 at 09:25 PM

ML

“ Prayers and Condolences to all the families. Mrs.Drabek was a fine person and a very good Teacher for many years at Fort Bend ISD.
Mark & Kay Lowik

Mark Lowik - October 27, 2025 at 08:08 PM

SG

May Rita Rest in Peace. She hired me in 1974 in my 20's as her first bilingual teacher and she was a wonderful leader. Later on at retired educators meetings she always told others that she and I went back many years. Please accept my condolences.

Sylvia Garza - October 28, 2025 at 06:52 PM

TG

My condolences to John and the rest of the Drabek family on the passing of Mrs. Drabek. I never had her as a teacher, but I understand she was a good one. When our paths crossed in the past, she always spoke and asked about my parents. Very friendly. May she always rest in peace. Travis Gandy

Travis Gandy - October 28, 2025 at 07:19 PM

SD

Blessings to the family of Rita Drabek,a godly woman,an awesome educator, a loving wife,mother, friend and colleague. May each day be filled with precious memories that linger in your soul!
In His Love,
Sue Dinges Friend and Colleague

Sue Dinges - October 28, 2025 at 07:27 PM

KG

Rita Drabek was a family person first, then an educator. Between those two roles she was everything else in the community. Her role as friend to students, staff and parents in the classroom and school took her time and talent. Her example to the community will last forever because she taught us how to work and live together.My dear friend leaves precious memories.
Kathy Graeber Kubelka

Katherine Graeber-Kubelka - October 29, 2025 at 02:12 PM