



## Garnette Francis

October 23, 1918 - January 17, 2011

Garnette Elizabeth Riddle Francis, a devoted wife and mother and beloved teacher, died Monday, January 17, from intestinal complications. Born October 23, 1918 at Keeling, Virginia, she was the daughter of Lloyd David Riddle and Callie Motley Riddle. She graduated from Averett College in 1938 and Madison College (now James Madison University) in 1940. She loved teaching English at Whitmell Farm Life School for a number of years. In 1945 she married Joseph Thomas Francis, who owned J.M. Francis Store in Swansonville and died November 13, 1982. She was a longtime active member of Swansonville United Methodist Church, where she served as Administrative Board Chairman, United Methodist Women president, teacher of the Ladies Bible Class and a member of the choir. She was also a member of Epsilon Chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society and the Pittsylvania County Retired Teachers. In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by two brothers, Rev. Benjamin A. Riddle and Motley Riddle and one sister, Frances Lane. Survivors include daughter Mary Elizabeth Griffith and son-in-law W. Kimball Griffith of Washington, DC; son, Joseph Thomas Francis, Jr. and daughter-in-law Patricia Shaud Francis of Birmingham, AL; one brother, David Riddle of Danville, and six grandchildren, Andrew, Joe, Thomas and Kathryn Griffith and Joey and Katherine Francis. Visitation with the family will be held Friday evening, January 21, from 7-8:30 PM at Wrenn-Yeatts, Westover Chapel, 5858 Riverside Drive in Danville. Funeral and graveside services will be held on Saturday, January 22, at noon at Swansonville United

Methodist Church, 16492 Franklin Turnpike, Dry Fork, VA, 24549. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be sent to Swansonville United Methodist Church or Tunstall Fire and Rescue, P.O. Box 575, Danville, VA, 24543. Wrenn-Yeatts, Westover Chapel is serving the Francis family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrenn-yeatts.com](http://www.wrenn-yeatts.com)

# Tribute Wall

RS

“ To the family of Garnette Riddle Francis,By way of introduction, I am the youngest son of the late J.T. and Lucille Smith of Dry Fork. Before she married, my mother was Lucille Oakes and her parents, Lester and Lillian Oakes, lived in the house just the other side of the Swansonville Pentecostal Holiness Church from your mother and father. My parents lived in Hampton, Virginia for some years when I was small and we would come to Swansonville to visit my grandparents. Since there was not a lot for a child to do in Swansonville, my cousins and I would spend a lot of time at your father's store. I did not know your mother at that time. However, after my father died in 1998, I would accompany my mother to visit my aunt and uncle, Len and Christine Herndon, who had moved into my grandparent's house after my grandparents died. On several occasions, your mother would come to visit with my aunt while my mother and I were there and I got to meet your mother. I know that my aunt thought a great deal of your mother and was glad to have her as a neighbor. Your mother seemed to be a very nice person. My aunt died at the first of 2008. My mother died later that year. So many of that "greatest generation" have left us now and we are the poorer for it.I just wanted to contact you to let you know that I was sorry to hear of your mother's death. Take care and best wishes to all of you.

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**Ronald Smith** - January 25, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GA

“ Wanted to let you know we are thinking of you at this time of sorrow in your lives.

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**George and Phyllis Herndon Allen** - January 21, 2011 at 12:00 AM