



# Athena Marie McColm

DEC 30, 1956 - FEB 1, 2025



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Bath-Naylor  
Funeral Home  
& Crematory

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## **Athena Marie McColm**

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**A**thena Marie McColm, a local community volunteer and retired school teacher passed away on February 1, 2025 at the age of 68. She spent her life helping school children and making the community a better place. She taught in the Columbus School System for 36 years. She taught fifth grade for one year and second graders the remaining 35 years, for her a reward not a job. She graduated from Columbus High School in 1975. In 1977 she received an Associates of Arts Degree from Northeastern Oklahoma A. and M. College. Then in 1979, a Bachelors of Science in Education Majoring in Elementary Education from Pittsburg State University and a Master's Degree in Elementary Education in 1984.

Athena was born to Charles L. and Margaret M. (McGown) McColm on December 30, 1956. On Easter Sunday, April 1, 1956 Charles and Margaret were married in the United Chapel Church, of rural McCune, Kansas. Two daughters, Athena and Anita, were born to this union. In 1957, she and her family moved to Columbus where she lived her entire life. She was currently a member of the Columbus First United Methodist Church where she held many jobs. She helped the children with acolyte duties, was a member of the Trustee, Church Council, communion steward, helped with funeral dinners, helped with crafts at Vacation Bible School and did at times volunteer work for the free lunch program and Thrift Shop. The nativity scene displayed in front of the church was purchased in memory of her family. She was President of the Retired School Personnel of Cherokee County, Past President of the Columbus Teachers Association, and Past President of Delta Kappa Gamma Society an Honorary Sorority for teachers. Athena and Margaret were named Citizens of the Decade 2011 to 2018 for Columbus with the work they did in making the Veterans Memorial a reality. In 2012 Athena was named Columbus Teacher of the Year and received the Golden Apple Award and she received the Chris Award in 2018. Through her interest in Columbus she had compiled information in a self-guided walking tour around the Columbus Square. With her love for working outside and raising beautiful flowers her yard was named Yard of the Month, The family was major contributors to the Columbus Sports Hall of Fame at the Columbus Museum. Athena spent time volunteering at the museum. She enjoyed giving tours for



## Obituary

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those who came in for a tour along with setting up displays. She was also a member of the museum board. The family put on antique tractor pulls for over 28 years and put on kiddie tractor pulls at county fairs in Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma with the miniature sled they designed and built. Athena had continued to exhibit pedal tractors and implements at local fall festivals. She was hoping an addition to the south side of the museum could be built to hold over 40 pedal tractors and their implements. She believed this would be a major and unique display for Columbus. As an eighth grader she received the American Legion Award presented to her by her father. She enjoyed 4-H and won several local, district and state awards. Her reporter's book won two state awards. She received The Kansas 4-H Key Award in 1974 and was named outstanding 4-H Member of Cherokee County in 1974 and 1975. She also attended a conference in Washington D.C. for 4-Hers. During the summer months she enjoyed Girls Scouts, playing softball with her sister and was coached by her mother and she later coached co-ed teams her. Showing her Welch pony, Lightning, at local and district events along with her registered Quarter horse Flicker brought special memories along with the friends she made. She had a 100-year-old Dr. Buggy that she proudly drove in parades with her Shetland pony, Sugar. She loved taking care of the animals on the farm. Athena was very active in High School. She was a member of the concert band, marching band, pep band, and stage band in High School and in College. She also was active in High School clubs and a member of the National Honor Society. In 1974-1975 she played on the first Girls Basketball Team in High School and was coached by DeAnn Sarwinski. She was preceded in death by her parents Charles and Margaret McColm, and younger sister Anita McColm. She is survived by Marietta Munding, Parsons, KS, Patti Mustard, Oak Point, TX, Ray Zimmerman, Clinton, IA, Charlotte Forth, Weir, KS and Gene and Shirley McColm, Wichita, KS. Along with several cousins and many longtime friends. Suzie, her four-legged loyal and beloved friend will deeply miss her. She has been well taken care of by Jake and Jessi Cain, Berry Cain, and Mary and Ernie Brumback. A celebration of life will be conducted at 10 am Saturday, February 8th, 2025 at the Bath-Naylor Funeral Home in Columbus. Pastor Dorcia Johnson will officiate. Burial will follow at the Park Cemetery in Columbus. Those serving as pallbearers will be Jake Cain, Roger Forth, Harry Mitchell, Bub Tate, KC Youngblood and Steven Zimmerman. Honorary pallbearers will be David Belt, Ernie Brumback, Eugene McColm, and Ray Zimmerman. Memorial contributions may be made to Columbus First United Methodist Church in care of Bath-Naylor Funeral Home.

A visitation with family members and friends will take place on Friday, February 7th, at the Bath Naylor Funeral Home, Columbus from 6:00-8:00 PM. Bath-Naylor Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Condolences may be left at [www.bathnaylor.com](http://www.bathnaylor.com).



# Events

**Athena Marie McColm**

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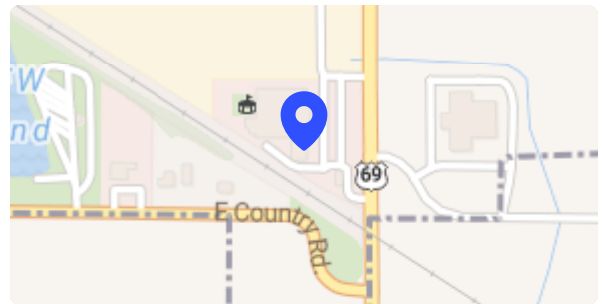
## Visitation

**Friday**, February 7, 2025

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM CT

**Bath-Naylor Funeral Home & Crematory - Columbus**

611 S. East Ave., Columbus KS 66725



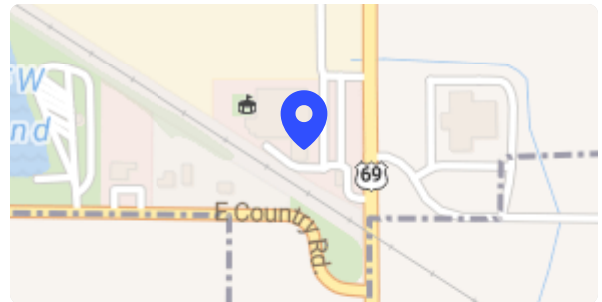
## Celebration of Life

**Saturday**, February 8, 2025

10:00 AM CT

**Bath-Naylor Funeral Home & Crematory - Columbus**

611 S. East Ave., Columbus KS 66725

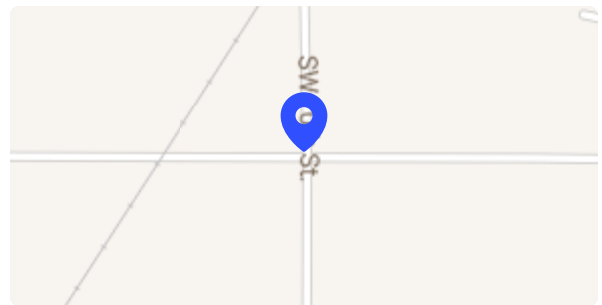


## Burial

**Saturday**, February 8, 2025

**Park Cemetery**

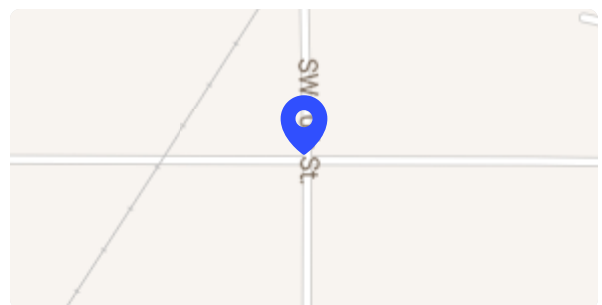
SE Wyandotte Road, Columbus KS 66725



## Cemetery Details

**Park Cemetery**

SE Wyandotte Road, Columbus KS 66725





## Tribute Wall

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**Vicki O'neal** posted:

Athena and I were members of the Cherokee County Retired Teacher's group. I always enjoyed her beautiful smile and cheery personality! She and her sister Anita also had such a positive attitude. She was a dedicated teacher and always so active in her community! What a loss for her family, community and her church! May she rest in peace. My prayers for all her family! 🙏❤️

March 18 at 1:39 PM



**Tracee Madl** posted:

Athena will be missed I will miss her smiling face and waving as she went by or stopping to chat. I have the flu type A and am sorry I had to miss the services. May she enjoy being reunited with her loved ones in heaven.

February 8 at 1:44 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Athena by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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