

Donna Stephenson Murphy

Donna moved into Villa Maria with her husband, Kermit, in November 2012. Donna recently lost Kermit but remembers their life together fondly.

Donna and Kermit were seniors in high school when they met in Blackwell, Oklahoma. Donna was walking down the sidewalk and Kermit was driving his father's car in the opposite direction when he turned and smiled at her. Donna thought he was quite a flirt, but three days later they went on their first date. The two young people graduated and soon after Donna Stephenson became Mrs. Kermit Murphy on October 27, 1947 in Wellington, Kansas.

The Murphy's moved to Hewins, Kansas where they started a dairy farm and lived and worked for more than fifty years. During this time, turkeys were established in Kansas on their property. The Rio Grande Turkey was crossed with the Eastern Turkey and after a couple of attempts the first live turkeys were harvested from the Murphy farm and shipped to Northern Kansas, Colorado, Utah and California. The turkeys seen in our area, and scattered throughout Kansas, are likely from the bloodline established on the Murphy farm.

Although Donna helped Kermit with the dairy cows and turkeys, working by his side on the farm, her days were filled with raising their four children, all of whom are very successful community members today.

The Murphy's were the runners-up Kansas Farm Family of the Year in 1970 and taught their children the importance of community by helping friends and neighbors and being active members in their church. Donna and Kermit were married for sixty-five years and Villa Maria is thankful to Donna for the privilege of being able to share in a small part of their life together.