

Woman made a difference to animals and people

Gladine Wiles believed all living things deserved a second chance

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Gladine Velma (Wolfe) Wiles of Kittanning, who passed away Monday at the age of 93, was the founder of Orphans of the Storm no-kill animal shelter in Rayburn Township. She was remembered by her family this week as being a person who believed everyone and everything deserved a second chance, no matter what their story. Photos: Submitted

IN MEMORIAM

Gladine Velma (Wolfe) Wiles —
Kittanning

In 1969, Gladine Wiles spotted a dog cowering in the back of a cage at the police station.

She learned that if the owner didn't claim the dog, it would be taken to the dump and shot. There was nowhere else for the dog to go.

Gladine determined then and there that this would not happen to another animal.

She agreed to house stray dogs into an unused part of her stable. The very first day it filled up. Then, the basement of her home.

Homeless pets were everywhere.

The rescue moved to a local kennel and then into the present-day facility built by the county.

Orphans of the Storm, located on Route 85 just outside of Kittanning, was "born."

Gladine Velma (Wolfe) Wiles of Kittanning passed away Monday. She was 93.

She will be laid to rest today.

Difference-maker to countless animals and people

This week, Gladine's family took time to recall her story.

Gladine believed everyone and everything deserved a second chance, no matter what their story.

Her life made a real difference to countless animals and people.

Gladine was raised at a time when dogs ran loose or were chained outside.

They rarely, if ever, visited a veterinarian.

Puppies and kittens were born at an overwhelming rate as owners did not spay animals.

Operation of shelter was a family-wide endeavor

Her late husband, Ted Wiles, was her partner in caring for the



Gladine Wiles as a young girl with her pet dog.

Orphans of the Storm facility.

Their children — Phyllis Wiles, Bethann Galbraith and Jay Wiles — grew up caring for the orphans.

Woman's work also benefited other people

Gladine's work went beyond the shelter walls.

Once, she visited an elderly man who lived in a shack outside of town.

People dumped dogs on his property.

He cared for them as best he could, however, had more than 40 baying dogs tied to boxes with puppies running everywhere.

When Gladine knocked on the door, she was greeted by a long rifle barrel.

She explained she was there just to talk.

Eventually, he put the gun away and came out.

He introduced Gladine to each dog and told her their stories.

She left with a car full of dogs heading for a better future.

Until the man's death, Gladine worked with him to spay his dogs and find them good homes. Out of her own money she provided him clothes, supplies and food.

The compassion Gladine had for this man was evident in other ways she cared for people.

Giving humans hope through animal interaction

Gladine founded the pet therapy program and took animals to visit hospital patients and personal-care-home residents.

She worked with welfare and parole agencies to give people shelter jobs until they were back on their feet.

Gladine was a foster parent who could be counted on, no matter what time of the day, to take in a needy child.

She was a nurse's aide at Fairwinds Manor and a leader for Girl Scouts and Brownies, and the 4-H.

Because Gladine believed everyone deserves a second chance, many animals and people enjoyed a much better life.

Visionary left indelible mark on legacy of humane care

Gladine was a humane ambassador for more than 50 years, and visionary whose passion and insight created a haven for homeless and unwanted animals.

She began her work many years before helping animals or shelter pets was "cool."

Gladine leaves behind her legacy of the Orphans of the Storm animal shelter; a family and an army of staff and volunteers dedicated to her cause who hope to follow in her footsteps and continue to make a difference to homeless dogs and cats.

To help continue Gladine Wiles' work, send your memorial check to: Orphans of the Storm, Attn: Hope Fund, PO Box 838, Kittanning, PA 16201.

Chris Jirak O'Donnell is a contributing reporter for The Leader Times.