

Florence Wilson - Matriarch to Many

Friday, October 8th, **Florence Wilson** celebrated her 90th birthday with the help of 500 of her children, and another 100 guests, including the vice mayor of Garden City who proclaimed Friday as Florence Wilson Day. She sat in her hallmark rocking chair while the audience sang Happy Birthday. She worked – and still works - from her rocking chair. For this occasion the chair was moved from the reading pit at Florence Wilson Elementary where she reads to a different class EVERY Friday. Children clamor for the place on honor in her lap and intently listen to stories, and the moral Florence imparts.



Photo of Florence and Salvador Hernandez by Brad Nading/GC Telegram

Florence Wilson began her career in 1940 after receiving her 60-hour teaching certificate and retired in 1978 from the Garden City School District. That year she was runner-up for Kansas Teacher of the Year. She had been named Outstanding Teacher of Garden City in 1985. She was inducted into the Dodge City-based Kansas Teacher Hall of Fame that same year. She was inducted into the Garden City High School Hall of Fame in 2005. Emporia State University presented her with its Distinguished Alumni Award in 1988.

We thank Florence for her years of service to the children of Garden City – and heartily applaud the continued volunteering of her time and talents to this generation of young people. She obviously has continued to make an impact through the years.

Lynda Wheeler, KARSP Community Service. Information provided by Garden City Telegram.