



Cuma "Kim" Malinda Burwell

April 2, 1918 - February 7, 2011

LIFE STORY: Besides her three sons, five grandchildren, and five great grandchildren, the most important things in Kim's life were the following, though not necessarily in this order: working, card playing, keeping her hair appointments, cooking for her card playing ladies every six weeks, reading a good western or romance novel, and finally a cigarette with a nice cold beer. In an age when most women put themselves last, Kim was liberated enough to make sure that didn't happen to her. You could always depend on Kim to tell it like it she saw it. It might help you to understand this complex lady if you knew her background. She became known as Kim only after her arrival at Round Lake, Michigan. Prior to that move, she was known to the world as Cuma. She was born on April 2, 1918 with great expectations from both sides of her family. Her grandmother on her mother's side was Ida Mae Swindell and her grandmother on her father's side was Malinda Hobbs. Both grandmothers laid claim to her as their namesake. The name Cuma was chosen by her mother, Maymie, who had known an Indian Princess with the same name. So, Kim's birth certificate ended up reading Ida Malinda Cuma Hobbs. It must have been wonderful coming into this world with everyone wanting a part of you. Kim's parents, Maude "Maymie" Swindell and Dewey Hobbs parted ways when Kim was about three years old, a very difficult time for her and her beloved older brother Gailen. Kim and Gailen learned to rely on each other as their mother had to work multiple jobs to support her family. Growing up in Swinton, Missouri, Kim and Gailen spent summers with their

grandparents and learned the ways of country life and how to cook, can, and make up songs. Kim's father was from a family of fifteen children, so there were always a lot of uncles and aunts around. Kim went to school in Cape Girardeau, Missouri where she was very musical and athletic. She was first chair violinist while in high school as well as an avid golfer. After high school she had a brief stint singing at a local radio station. One of the stories that she liked best from that time relived how she and her girlfriend, at the age of thirteen, learned to inhale a cigarette smoking behind the local movie theater, wanting to be like the older girls and "be cool". She smoked for some 79 years. She often said, "I've been smoking since I was thirteen and it hasn't killed me yet!" When she was a senior in high school she married Clarence Wesley "Wes" Grant, who was 18 years her senior and ran a local car dealership called Bowers Ford. Kim and Wes kept their marriage a secret from her mother until the town gossip told on them. It was told that Wes would go out of town and take the car leaving Kim without a vehicle; Kim wasn't going to have any of that, so she would go to the dealership, take the wrecker and drive it around town. The three joys of her life came from her marriage to Wes, Clarence Wesley Jr. "Dub", Gailen Kent "Bud", and Victor James "Dude". Kim and her sister-in-law, Lenore, set up a booth at the Piedmont Fair where they charged people to see a miniature horse called Tiny Tim, which they billed as the smallest horse in the world. Ginger and Mary, Kim's nieces, remember Kim as being scared to death of their gentle dairy cows, but unafraid to hang around the crazy bulls at rodeos. Both Kim and Wes were involved in rodeo promotion along with their two oldest boys, Dub and Bud. Bud and Dub developed great skills in trick riding and trick roping and, along with their parents, took their show on the road. Kim loved to tell the story of how Wes would send her, Dub and Bud off to do old west rodeo shows with Ken Maynard's Rodeo. On one trip she was sent on the road with two little boys, their ponies and a monkey. Kim had never hauled a trailer with ponies, but that summer Maggie Ellen, a friend of the family, traveled with them through the land of Yankees. Kim, Maggie Ellen, Dub, and Bud followed Ken

Maynard's rodeo trucks from one small town to another, so the boys could perform their roping and riding tricks for money. A short time later Kim and Wes divorced. After the divorce, Kim, with young Victor in tow, moved to Detroit to be close to her brother Gailen, his wife Edith and their daughter Gail Ann. Kim worked at House of Pancakes where she waited on Sam Sneed, the famous golfer. It seems Sam wasn't known as a good tipper; the story goes that after leaving Kim only a ten cent tip, she picked up the dime and gave it back to Sam telling him she thought "... he must need this more than she did." Romance came into her life once again when she met and married Harold "Lucky" Burwell after his return from serving in WWII. When son Vic was in his teens, they moved to Walhalla, Michigan, where they purchased the Lakeview Hotel. It was rumored that the Lakeview was where Al Capone and his boys would retreat from Chicago to stay until things cooled down - the place had quite a reputation. Kim was known for being a good dancer, great card player, smooth water skier and skillful fisherman, and could definitely keep up with the best of them. After she and Lucky parted ways, and Vic had married, she worked at many local eateries. She was employed at Emerson Lake Inn, The Rendezvous, Scotty's Wren Roost, and Government Lake Inn. She usually bartended and waited tables, always with a tip jar close by. Work was her life, but she knew how to have a good time, finding a way to mix the two successfully. Kim's last marriage was to Harlan Chatfield whom she met through her work. Kim and Harlan cleared the land on her property at Round Lake, put a home and a wonderful garden on it, and she enjoyed canning everything. At Round Lake she would rent out her dock to local and visiting boaters, using the proceeds for card-playing funds. For decades, Kim played cards every Monday, never missing a day; even planning her honeymoon around her weekly card game. She said she had to keep her priorities straight. After a few years, she and Harlan parted ways. Even after she retired, she found a way to have fun while working at the Scottville Optimist Club bingo games as a beverage and snack seller. She was known, by some of the

Optimist boys, for bringing her “medicine” bottle. She would make sure the boys had a little of her “special medicine” before working the games. She would also encourage bingo players to tip her and very often had a hard time walking because she would put her tips in her socks. She didn’t want the other players to know how many tips she was given fearing that they wouldn’t tip her anymore! Also during this time, Kim was playing cards four days a week, a regular at Set Back Tournaments at the V.F.W and the Danish Hall. Kim was also known as the “Tab Lady”, collecting can tabs from local taverns to donate to the Methodist Church to help children’s needs. She would get quite upset if she entered a tavern and no tabs had been saved, and she made sure they knew it! During her days of playing cards at the V.F.W and Danish Hall she met and became lifelong friends with Don and Dorothy Sanders who were running the Optimist’s bingo at the time. After the night’s games, they would close up the hall and go directly to Steve’s Tavern for a “quick one” and Kim was known to take a second one along for the road. She was honored with an award for her many years of service to the bingo effort. She was very proud of that honor even though it had been almost impossible getting her to the award ceremony. She had to be told that it was a Christmas party and Doc Campbell had invited her. She wasn’t going to go because she said she had nothing to wear. This was another interesting thing about Kim. She never wanted to wear anything new because she said: “They just don’t make anything I like anymore” and would wear the same outfits to everything. The reality is she ALWAYS looked very sharp and well dressed. Kim was also an avid reader and loved Western books. She would always joke that she was taking a cowboy to bed with her. She read a book a day until she lost her eyesight, a very difficult thing for such an independent woman. However, as the strong woman she was, she made the best of it, listening to her Western book on tape. After losing her eyesight she was no longer able to live on her own and a new friend, who grew to be considered by all as part of the family, came into her life. Barb Luttrell became her daily companion and caregiver. Together Barb and Kim joined the Bachelor Church at Round Lake and Kim said she

enjoyed it very much, though she joked she was afraid the walls would cave when she first walked in. Barb lived with Kim in her home on U.S. 10, just north of Stiles Road, for almost four years. Kim was always grateful, as she would say, "for all the countless blessings God had bestowed upon her". One of her favorite verses was John 14:6-7. Jesus was talking with one of his disciples and said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on you do know him and have seen him." For the last four years Kim could only imagine what was around her. Now through God's saving grace she no longer needs her imagination! Kim Burwell died peacefully in her own home with her son Vic by her side on Monday evening, February 7, 2011. She will be greatly missed by her sons Dub (Doll) Grant, Bud (Marsha) Grant of Benton, AR and Vic (Kelly) Burwell of Ludington, niece, Gail Ann Klotz and Gail's two sons Steven (Kerry) Hipsky and Marc (Julie) Hipsky and their children, all of Indiana. In addition, she will be deeply missed by her beloved grandchildren, Morel (James) Belke, B.J. Grant, Scotti, Brian and David Burwell, Tiffany (Ryan) Kremer, Ashley (Andrew) Coughlan and her great-grandchildren, Cadence Burwell, Anabella Sroka, Jackson Urka, Maddison and Emery Coughlan and her long-time friend, Barb Burwell.