

Betty Jean Holtz, 85

Aug. 30, 1930 - Aug. 15, 2016

AVOCA — Betty Jean was born on August 30, 1930 on a farm northeast of Shelby. She was the first child of three girls born to Harold and Mabel (Havick) Davis. She was born on her dad's twenty-fifth birthday. When she was 3 years old the family moved to the farm where her dad (Harold Davis) was raised. She attended Tennant Schools from kindergarten through most of her junior year in high school when the family moved to Avoca. She finished her last 3 months of her junior year as well as her senior year at Avoca School. At this time she met Clarence. They sometimes double dated with her sister Maxine and her new friend Gene (also a friend of Clarence's). Betty Jean participated in high school mixed chorus and glee club, played the saxophone in the band, was a member of the FHA and played basketball.



Betty Jean married Clarence George Holtz on March 15, 1950 at the First Lutheran Church in Avoca. They had rented a house in town, but before they moved in, Elmer Rock asked if they wanted to rent his farm southeast of Avoca and of course they did! They lived there for three years. They then moved to the Billie McCray farm east and south of Hancock and farmed there for one year. Debra was born while they lived there. Their next move was to an eighty acre farm five miles south of Avoca owned by Chris Miller. After farming there for two years, in 1956 they moved to a larger farm that Chris owned three and a half miles northeast of Avoca. They farmed there for fifteen years. Michael was born while they lived there.

Betty Jean attended Iowa Western College and graduated as a L.P.N. on August 27, 1971. In 1970 they bought thirty-seven acres one mile south of Avoca on Highway 59. In 1971 they moved to town and Betty Jean got a job at Myrtue Memorial Hospital in Harlan. She was a nurse there for 40 years retiring at the age of 70. She also claimed to have helped deliver most of the babies in the area and when she retired, the hospital in Harlan awarded her the Old Yellow Rocking Chair that she used to rock babies for all those years.

As time went along, they owned and operated the Botna Valley Kennels for about ten years. At one time they had around one hundred dogs. In 1976 they bought the Parkway Café and Campground located just west of Edgington Park along the Nishna Botna River. From 1982-1988 they operated the Coffee Cup Café in Avoca. Betty just loved the campers! She also loved working with all the "kids" and teaching them how to bus a table, take an order or flip a burger. Many would come back years later to thank her for their first job. They did the same with the Coffee Cup Café downtown. They operated the café at the Avoca Sale Barn for around ten years. For recreation Betty Jean and Clarence loved to go camping, they were excellent ballroom dancers (especially the polka and waltz), loved to visit family and friends, often played cards with all the farm neighbors, and enjoyed spending time with their children and grandchildren. Betty Jean passed away in Denver, CO on Monday, August 15, 2016. She had attained the age of eighty-five years, eleven months and fifteen days.

Betty Jean was preceded in death by her parents Harold and Mabel, and her sister Norma Rose. She is survived by her husband of sixty-six years Clarence Holtz of Windsor, CO; daughter Debbie and her husband David King of Denver, CO; son Mike Holtz and his wife Kim of Windsor, CO; grandchildren Margaret, Joseph, Thomas and Matthew; sister Maxine (Gene) Sornsen of Avoca; nieces and nephews; other family member and friends.

A small service was held in Colorado before Betty made the journey home to Iowa. Her family greeted friends on Thursday, August 18, 2016 from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Avoca. A funeral service was led by Pastor Eric Meissner on Friday, August 19, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church. Shirley Pattee accompanied Jeff Krueger who sang "The Old Rugged Cross", "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" and "Amazing Grace". Casket bearers were Lynn Sornsen, Steve Sornsen, Keith Holtz, Tom Holtz, Frankie Havick, Matthew Holtz and Dave Kardell. Betty was laid to rest at Graceland Cemetery in Avoca.

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FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION

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