



Betty Jo Shaw

August 3, 1945 - February 19, 2026

Betty Jo (Gehring) Shaw, 80, of Kearney passed away Thursday, February 19, 2026 in Harlingen, TX. Funeral services will be 9:30 a.m. Saturday, February 28, 2026 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Kearney with Pastor John Rasmussen officiating. Interment will follow at Kearney Cemetery. Visitation will be 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Friday at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney. The service will be live streamed through the church's website at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=borWgJQ4k64>

Memorials are suggested to the Peterson Senior Activity Center. Condolences may be shared online at www.osrfh.com. Services are entrusted to O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral and Cremation Services.

Betty Jo was born August 3, 1945 in Kinsley, KS to August and Clara (Rupe) Helfrich. In June of 1957, she was adopted by Howard and Rozella (Herdon) Willson of Elwood, NE. She attended and was baptized in faith at First Christian Church. She was raised in Elwood and received her education from Elwood High School, graduating in 1964. Later was confirmed in the Lutheran faith at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in 1967.

On June 6, 1965, Betty Jo was united in marriage to Gerald Gehring at the First Christian Church in Elwood, NE. On June 23, 1965, Gerald left to serve in the Army in the Vietnam War. While Gerald was serving his country Betty Jo

worked in Lincoln, NE at the State Hospital.

Upon his return, the couple made their home in Elwood. This union was blessed by three children Michelle LeAnn, Monica Kay and Greg Alan. Here they owned and operated a grain, feed and seed elevator. While working at the elevator, Betty Jo also served as the church secretary for 10 years. She also had part-time jobs babysitting and cooking at the Red Rooster Restaurant at Johnson Lake. Gerald and Betty Jo opened their hearts and home to host 7 foreign exchange students and over 60 foster children. After the elevator closed in 1989, she began working at the chocolate factory. In Jan of 1995, her and Gerald moved to Kearney and transferred their membership to Holy Cross Lutheran Church. She worked at Payne Larson Furniture and later was a dispatcher for Ryde Bus until she retired. They continued to open their home as therapeutic foster parents to over 15 teenagers, but their greatest joy was getting the title of grandparents. Gerald went to his heavenly home on May 19, 2002.

On June 29, 2013, Betty Jo was united in marriage to James (Jim) J. Shaw of Juniata, NE. Shortly after they bought a home in Kearney. Betty Jo and Jim enjoyed many adventures together. Some of their favorites were going to Jerusalem, Ireland, Alaskan Cruise and the many trips booked through the Peterson Senior Center. As season ticket holders of the Merryman Performing Art Center they were also entertained with a variety of shows and performances. In 2017, Betty Jo and Jim were extras in the filming of Ice the movie. In the past several years they have enjoyed spending the winter months in Texas.

Betty Jo's pride and joy has always been her family. This was both her greatest strength and her proudest legacy. Nothing brought a sparkle to her eye like hearing someone call her Mom, Grandma or Great Grandma. Betty Jo and Jim were excited to watch their family grow and their successes. Some

of their best moments were following the grandkids activities and seeing their accomplishments. Betty Jo and Jim were blessed to witness the marriage of three grandchildren.

Betty Jo was a charter member of Gosperette Extension Club and Lioness Club in Elwood of which she held various positions. She was a 4-H Leader and taught VBS at Our Redeemer Church and Holy Cross Lutheran Church. Betty Jo served as Past President of the Gosper County Extension Council/Board member and was an officer of AAL in Elwood. She was a member of the Newcomers Club and Red Hat Society Chapter in Kearney, LWML at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, belonged to bible study groups, Adopt-a-Student program, and the Singles Ministries in Kearney. Most recently, Betty Jo served on the Peterson Senior Activity Center Board.

Betty Jo's favorite hobby was collecting precious moments, snowmen and angels. She took great pride in decorating her home for every month of the year, inside and out. She enjoyed making beautiful floral arrangements for friends and family. She spent many hours decorating cakes for 100's of people as it brought her great happiness to be part of something special and seeing the joy it brought to their faces. Her favorite color was purple, in all shades. She loved butterflies because they symbolize gentleness. yet powerful, a reminder to trust the process of life, and embracing change. We can not forget her love of Everything Elvis!! She also enjoyed camping, traveling, Husker football and volleyball but most of all, spoiling her grandchildren.

Though her physical journey has ended, the lessons of love, kindness and resilience she instilled in her family will guide them forever. Those left to cherish her memory are her husband, Jim Shaw of Kearney; daughters, Michelle (Dan) Dorszynski of Minden and Monica (Jim) Kettner of Kearney; son, Greg Gehring of Pierre, SD; eight grandchildren; four great

grandchildren; brother, Bruce (Peggy) Willson of Holdrege; as well as many extended family and friends.

Betty Jo was preceded in death by her first husband, Gerald Gehring; parents and grandson, Ghatt Gehring.

Cemetery Details

Kearney Cemetery

4400 Avenue I
Kearney, NE 68847
(308) 233-3244

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 27. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Homes and Cremations
4115 Ave N
Kearney, NE 68847
(308) 234-3500
info@osrfh.com
<https://www.osrfh.com>

Funeral Service

FEB 28. 9:30 AM (CT)

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
3315 11th Ave
Kearney, NE 68845

Tribute Wall



“ O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home created a Betty Jo Shaw Funeral Service in memory of Betty Jo Shaw



O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Homes and Cremations - February 26 at 01:30 PM



“ The Harold and Rae Gartner Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



The Harold and Rae Gartner Family - February 27 at 03:22 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



February 26 at 02:08 PM

BY

“ Beth and Wayne Young purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



Beth and Wayne Young - February 26 at 12:22 PM

BY

“ Beth and Wayne Young planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Betty Jo Shaw.

Beth and Wayne Young - February 26 at 12:22 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



February 26 at 10:26 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Betty Jo Shaw.

February 26 at 10:26 AM

NG

“ Neal and Cindy gehring purchased the Beautiful i n Blue for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



Neal and Cindy gehring - February 25 at 01:56 PM

NG

“ Neal and Cindy gehring planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Betty Jo Shaw.

Neal and Cindy gehring - February 25 at 01:56 PM



“ I met Betty Jo as a Winter Texan. I found her to be a very sweet and carrying person. I will miss our friendship.

Cheryl Neece Glienke - February 25 at 06:42 AM

DF

“ Darlene, Kip, Shelly, & Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



Darlene, Kip, Shelly, & Family - February 24 at 06:13 PM

ZH

“ Zoe & Carson Hart purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Betty Jo Shaw.



Zoe & Carson Hart - February 23 at 11:00 PM

BV

“ Deepest Sympathy to the family. Betty was a happy lady. Very talkative. Lots of challenges. I met her through my part time job. Bev Vacha

Beverly Vacha - February 20 at 05:32 PM

DC

I knew Betty through the PSAC and the bus tours. No matter where the bus went you can be sure Betty had on her "flip flops"! This hurts my heart to hear of Betty's passing. Prayers for Jim and the family. May you feel Jesus' loving arms wrapping around you as they did when Jesus said "come with me, Betty". Gone from this earth, forever in Heaven!

Doris Cain - February 23 at 08:56 PM