



## Christine Leah Behnke-Ruiz

January 23, 1941 - June 4, 2024

Christine Leah Behnke-Ruiz passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on June 4, 2024, in Yreka, California.

Beloved and adored daughter, sister, wife, mother, and friend, Christine Leah Behnke-Ruiz was born to Warren and Jewel Behnke on January 23, 1941, in Yreka, where she was also raised.

Christine's love for her family was fierce and knew no bounds. She married Ronald George Wilson in 1957, and together they had three amazing children who were her pride and joy: Gary Ronald Wilson (Lori), Debra "Hijirah" Kay Kem (Decd) (Randy), and Daniel Scott Wilson (Donna). Later in life, she found love again and married her soulmate, Patrick Arthur Ruiz, on January 1, 1982, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Yreka and they enjoyed a wonderful life together until Pat passed away on January 20, 2007.

Chris adored her role as a fun-loving grandma to her 7 beautiful grandchildren: Jessica Jackson (Scott), Jordan Wilson (Casey), Omer Kem (Rebecka), Eli Kem (Kathy), Joshua Anderson, Dusty Wilson (Liana), and Heather Miller (Ryan). Chris also cherished her wonderful greatgrandchildren: Rylee, Noah, Evelyn, Benjamin, Karsten, Ulysses, Eleanor, Annabelle Joy, Rylei Jo, and Bowen Alexander. Christine is also survived by her sister, Nini Finnegan (Mike - decd.), her brother Martin Behnke (Jennifer), niece Holly Shaw Slabbink (Ron), nephews Brian Shaw (Jill), Kyle Behnke, and Luke "Lu" Behnke, along with great-nieces and nephews Liam, Laine, Kirby, Jaxson, and Thomas.

Professionally, Christine was a dedicated educator for 30 years with a passion for teaching. She possessed a rare gift for connecting with her students, ensuring each one felt seen, heard, and valued. Her commitment to education extended beyond the classroom, leaving a lasting impact on countless young lives.

Beyond her professional achievements, Christine's love for life and laughter shone brightly in her time spent with family and cherished friendships. She enjoyed reading books, gardening, and listening to music. Her vibrant spirit, infectious laughter, and fun-loving nature brightened every gathering she attended, making her a treasured presence within her family and community. Christine's strong faith and endless love for God were evident in her kindness and unwavering compassion toward all. She will be deeply missed, and her memory will forever be cherished by her family, friends, former students, and all who had the privilege of knowing her.

A memorial service to celebrate Christine's life will be held on July 21, 2024, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM at 1102 Quarry Ct., Yreka, CA 96097. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Christine's name to the Siskiyou County Library 719 Fourth St. Yreka, CA. 96097.

# Tribute Wall

DB

“ Dear Nini and all of Chris's family,  
Chris was a treasured friend from kindergarten through our whole lives, even if we didn't see each other often. I didn't make it over the hill to the "Miner Girls" luncheons but a few times, and Chris was always the one to call me and be sure I knew about the place and time scheduled. I knew from the times I did see her that she suffered terribly from her various medical issues, but she was so brave and never complained, always more concerned about the rest of us around her. I am so sorry for her loss and hope that your faith in her being in a much better place and released from her pain will help you as you work through the time ahead of you. She loved her family and friends so totally, and I feel privileged to be counted among those friends. My sincere condolences and love to each of you. I won't be able to attend her celebration of life gathering in person, but send my best wishes to you all as you support each other and move forward without the anchor that Chris was to her family. Affectionately, Deanna (Wardrip) Van Buskirk.

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Deanna Van Buskirk - July 12, 2024 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Girdner Funeral Chapel

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A Memorial Tree was planted for Christine Leah Behnke-Ruiz - June 25, 2024 at 12:00 AM