



Wilma Jean Bates

July 21, 1933 - March 9, 2024

Wilma Jean Bates, 90, of Crystal Falls, passed away on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at her forever home in Mansfield, MI.

Wilma was born on July 20, 1933, in Crystal Falls, daughter of the late Earl and Ada Ewig. She married Vern Bates on October 27, 1951, in Channing, and they shared more than 63 years together. Wilma spent most of her life as a homemaker. She also worked as a secretary for Iron County Insurance selling license plates and for Milwaukee Aetna Insurance Agency typing policies. Wilma volunteered at St. Vincent de Paul for several years. She enjoyed the outdoors and planting flowers. She loved Mountain Dew and anything sweet. Her children and grandchildren were the joys of her life. She was celebrated by all of her family and friends last July for a 90th surprise birthday party. She got to see everyone she loves the most and even got to take a cruise in the Corvette, with pillows so she could see over the dash, of course!

Wilma is survived by her children, Nancy Gaasbeck and Thomas Bates, both of Crystal Falls, Michigan and Bonnie Nakayama of Livermore, California; 9 grandchildren, Alyson (Dave) Dettmann, Meaghan LaChapelle, Mary (Jereck) Hegstrom, Sierra (Craig) Holmes, Kristi (Jacob) Nurmi, Brianna Bates, Jennifer Nakayama, Colton LaChapelle, TJ Gaasbeck; 10 great-grandchildren, Connor Rajala, Alexis LaChapelle, Alexis Dettmann, Lizzy

LaChapelle, Tianna Stebbins, Jason Kapaun, Desmond Brown, Zuri Brown, Ava Nurmi, Noah Nurmi; sister, Mary Quinn of Kokomo, Indiana; and sister-in-law, Dorothy Slivensky of Crystal Falls.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Vern Bates; daughter, Janine LaChapelle; son, Larry Bates; granddaughter, Alexandra "Alex" LaChapelle; sisters, Arlene Heitz and June Feak; and brother, John Ewig.

At Wilma's request there will be no formal funeral services. A celebration of life will be held in August 2024 in Mansfield and will be announced at that time.

The family has entrusted the Nash Funeral Home of Crystal Falls with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Wilma Jean Bates.



March 13, 2024 at 12:51 PM