



## Beatrice Joan "Bea" Wurtz

June 26, 1928 - July 9, 2021

Dr. Bea Wurtz passed away peacefully July 9, 2021, in Tallahassee, FL. Bea will be greatly missed by her daughter, Debbie (Lou) Cross Jr., her grandsons Lou (Jeanne) Cross of Tallahassee, and Jim (Gina) Cross of Aurora CO, and her great grandchildren Tony, Nicole, Allison, from Tallahassee, and Stella and Hudson from Aurora, CO. Also, very dear to Bea were her nieces and nephews, and the friends she made throughout her life.

Bea was preceded in death by her son, William Jr., her husband Bill (whom she met as a classmate in 3rd grade and who was a Navy veteran and electrician); her parents Fred C. (World War I veteran and Wisconsin Farmer) and Julia Timlin Henning (teacher and homemaker); Bea's three sisters, Mary Ida Henning, Betty Jane Keough, and Rozanna Baker.

Bea was born at the family farm home in Sharon, WI in June of 1928. She was the third of four children where Catholic religion, Education, and Patriotism were highly valued. Some memories of farm life included growing up without electricity until sixth grade, outdoor plumbing until late high school years, feeding cattle and chickens, gathering eggs, driving horses and then tractors, and other duties with rural farm life. Children were considered assets more than liabilities as they provided the help needed to survive. Patriotism included being proud to be an American yet also mindful of her German and Irish ancestry. Bea graduated from Darien High School with honors as the Salutatorian, and received many awards and recognitions including the American Legion, Daughters of the American Revolution, and earned a

scholarship to UW-Milwaukee State Teachers College.

After one year of college, due to a shortage of teachers due to World War II and she received a permit to teach at the Burr Oak School in northern Illinois, grades 1-8. During the three years teaching there she married William (Bill) Wurtz and resided in Darien and Sharon, WI. During this time, her son and daughter were born and were the light of her life.

While working as a bookkeeper at the Farm Bureau, and as a secretary at Delong Feed Mill, Bea continued her education in the evenings, Saturday mornings and summer classes. With her two-year teaching degree completed, she was offered a third-grade position in Darien where she had attended grade school and high school. She went on to teach at the Sharon Public School for the next nine years teaching a variety of classes from third through sixth grades. During her tenure in Sharon, she was one of 266 recipients of the coveted Freedom Foundation Award from Valley Forge, PA recognizing exceptional service in furthering Patriotism and appreciation of the 'American Way of Life' that was based on a skit about voting that her students presented over a Janesville, WI radio station. Recipients were selected by a jury including State Supreme Court Justices, and heads of patriotic, veterans and service organizations. During this time, she completed her bachelor's degree at Whitewater State, and a master's degree from Marquette University in Curriculum & Reading. During the rest of her career in Menomonee Falls, WI, she helped to develop reading centers for students needing extra help with reading skills ranging from kindergarten to seniors in high school. She wrote Title I and Title II grants that resulted in the first Apple computers to be brought into the school district.

Bea continued serving as a reading consultant and then as the Director of Reading. She earned her PhD in Administration from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, which opened many doors including being invited to teach graduate classes in the summers and Saturday mornings at both Cardinal Stritch College and Marquette University. Dr. Wurtz was a member of the International Reading Association (IRA), the National Council of Teachers

of English (NCTE), the Wisconsin Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (WASCD), the American Education of School Administrators (AESAs), and was a member of American Education Research Association (AERA) and was invited to be the keynote speaker at their annual conference. She was a member of Phi Lambda Theta and one of the first women to be invited to join Phi Delta Kappa fraternity, and she published her research in professional journals. She spoke frequently at different schools and workshops. As a member of the National Aerospace Education Association (NAEA), she especially enjoyed training that led to the development of programs to initiate and advance Space Clubs for fourth and fifth graders. The last decade of her career was focused on working directly with teachers first as an assistant principal at Thomas Jefferson Middle School and later Principal of the Junior High. The last four years she served as principal of Ben Franklin Elementary School for grades K-5 in Menomonee Falls. Her entire educational life was spent trying to help all students to be the best they could be through teaching, program development, or leading/supporting teachers. Upon her retirement, she took up new hobbies and interests.

Bea became quite the machine embroiderer and quilter, making quilts for family and friends, and she made custom 'ABC tote bags' for the kindergarten students at Trinity Catholic School. She traveled all over the world, enjoying trips to Alaska, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Fiji, and numerous Caribbean islands, always including a stop at a Catholic church. She also took several religious pilgrimages including trips to Rome, Italy and Medjugorje, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

She had a competitive spirit and loved a good game. Always a Badger, and a lifelong Green Bay Packer fan, she later added the Seminoles to her list of favorites. She loved to play cards, especially euchre, hand-and-foot, and just about every iteration of poker.

She was especially fond of her involvement at Good Shepherd Catholic Church enjoying the fellowship of her friends the 'Young at Heart' and 'Shawl

Ministry' groups. Bea had a devout faith that brought her peace through life and especially at the end of her very joyous life's journey. She truly lived "not my will, but thy will be done" and her devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Catholic faith along with the love of family were the priorities in her life. Services to celebrate Bea's life will be held Thursday, July 15, 2021 at Good Shepherd Catholic Church on Thomasville, Rd., with the Rosary at 10:00am, and The Mass of Christian Burial immediately following at 10:30am. A reception will be held after mass in the Parish Hall. The Burial will be at 1:00pm at Meadowood Cemetery off Timberlane Rd. in Tallahassee, FL. We do not grieve for those entering the Kingdom of Heaven, we grieve for ourselves – those left behind. Bea requests only a prayer for her soul and the souls of the faithfully departed by the Mercy of God, Rest in Peace. Susie Mozolic of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the family with their arrangements. ([www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com) 850-385-2193)

# Previous Events

## Rosary

JUL 15. 10:00 AM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church  
4665 Thomasville Rd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32309

## Funeral Mass

JUL 15. 10:30 AM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church  
4665 Thomasville Rd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32309

## Reception

JUL 15. 11:30 AM - 12:45 PM (ET)

Good Shepherd Catholic Church  
4665 Thomasville Rd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32309

## Graveside Service

JUL 15. 1:00 PM (ET)

MeadowWood Memorial Park  
700 Timberlane Rd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32312