



Bethel Kowalkowski

February 25, 1925 - October 31, 2018

Known as Beth to family and friends, she was born February 25, 1925, in Mayfield, Idaho to Earl and Edith Minger. She passed on October 31, 2018.

Beth's early years were spent on her grandparents' ranch at Collister, Idaho. She attended elementary school in Dillon, Montana and high school in Boise and Twin Falls, Idaho, graduating in 1943. She attended College of Idaho at Caldwell and had dreams of becoming a librarian, but there was a war going on and her plans changed.

Just outside Boise was Gowen Field, site of many USO dances. At one of these parties she met and fell in love with an airman from San Francisco, Robert (Bob) Kowalkowski. They married on July 30, 1945. They were together until Bob's death in 2014. They made their first home in Vallejo, finally settling in Napa in 1957. Beth always said those cold winters she spent in Montana and Idaho were enough snow to last a lifetime. She was very happy to live in California, but returned many times to visit her family in Idaho.

Beth had many creative talents. She was well known for her excellent skills at sewing, knitting, embroidering and crocheting. Every summer she entered multiple projects in the Napa Fair and always brought home lots of ribbons. Her garden of over 50 roses was her pride and joy. She loved music; she played the cello and piano.

Beth never gave up on the idea of being a librarian. When her younger children were in high school, she went back to "school" and became the librarian at St. John's Catholic School. She volunteered in this role for over 30 years, where she became known as Mrs. "K" (more than a few students had a hard time with Kowalkowski). She believed every child would love reading if she could find just the right book to interest them. She also became the historian of St. John's School. She brought the pictorial history of decades of St. John's graduating classes to life on the walls of the school.

She is survived by her children Ana, Mike (Kelly), Jeanie (Greg) Fidler, and Nancy (Jeff) Cooke; grandchildren Alina (Chris) Andres, Courtney Kowalkowski, Sarah (Brendan)

Roberts, Thomas Fidler and James Fidler; and, great-grandchildren Hannah, Nolan, Gavin, Thomas and Hawk. She is also survived by cousins Jackie Smith, Jane Prestel, and Bill Chester.

We wish to thank everyone at Senior Helpers, but especially Marcella Rivera, whose kind and caring friendship enabled Beth to live in her own home to the end. The rosary will be prayed November 7th at 6:00 p.m. at Claffey and Rota Funeral Home, 1975 Main Street, in Napa. A funeral Mass will be celebrated on November 8th at 1:00 p.m. at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, 981 Napa Street, Napa.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. John's Catholic School or Collabria Care of Napa.

Cemetery Details

Tulocay Cemetery

411 Coombsville Rd
Napa, CA 94558