

Shirley Jahnke – BS 1968 Medical Technology

Shirley Lawonn Jahnke, 73, of Grand Forks, passed away with family at her side at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota, on April 23, 2018.

Born on April 2, 1945, in Grafton, North Dakota, Shirley was the younger of two daughters of Herbert and Evelyn Lawonn. She grew up in Hensel, North Dakota, graduating from Cavalier High School in 1964. Her undergraduate college years were spent at North Dakota State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in medical technology in March 1968. On June 10, 1967, she married Lawrence E. Jahnke in Grand Forks. After their marriage, they lived on several different Air Force bases in the United States, as well as in Turkey and Germany.

They raised four children together. She was a mom who played kickball and softball with her kids, cared for the multitude of pets they brought home (including ducks, geese, rabbits, dogs, birds, a ferret, and a fox), volunteered at their school, expertly decorated all their birthday cakes, made them Icelandic pancakes, goulash, schnitzel, and brought them to museums, castles and churches to instill an appreciation for art, history, religion and culture.

Following her husband's military retirement in 1986, Shirley returned to Grand Forks with her family, and shortly thereafter decided to pursue a career in law. In May 1991, she received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of North Dakota School of Law. She then embarked on a legal career in which she chose to focus primarily on family law and child advocacy issues. She was a fierce but fair advocate who always focused on the best interest of children. Her legal career spanned more than two decades but, in early 2014, Shirley was forced to leave her practice due to the sudden onset of health issues.

Shirley and her husband celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June 2017 and were eagerly looking forward to many more happy years together until her debilitating illness made their dream impossible.

Shirley enjoyed many great and long-lasting friendships wherever she lived, from her grade school friends, her Gamma Phi sorority sisters, her fellow attorneys, and the many people she was able to help out when they were facing difficulties in the legal system or in life in general. It was her lovely, vivacious, smart, genuinely kind and gracious persona whose upbeat and friendly nature that endeared her to so very many.

In addition to her husband, Shirley, who was preceded in death by two premature infants, leaves behind two sons, Larry Jahnke, Jr. (Jill) and Matthew Jahnke (Amy), all of Grand Forks, daughter Kari Lynn Hainey (Pete) of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and

daughter Kristi Mammen (Mark) of Urbana, Illinois. She is also survived by her dear sister, Evelyn Kaye Martin (Gene), of Grand Forks, and nine loving grandchildren.

Shirley requested that her funeral service and burial be private and only attended by immediate family members. In accordance with that wish, both will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church near Hensel, where Shirley was baptized, first communed and was confirmed. Because of her passion for helping children and animals, in lieu of flowers, the family would prefer memorials in Shirley's name to the Woman's Pregnancy Center, 1726 Washington Street South, Grand Forks, ND 58201, or to the Circle of Friends Humane Society, 4375 Washington Street North, Grand Forks, ND 58203.