

Our mother, Miriam Inga (Crawford) Kirschten, left this world to be with Jesus on March 8, 2023 at the age of 86. She will be missed dearly and will always hold a special place in our hearts. She was born August 13, 1936, the ninth child of Gus and Bertha (Helland) Crawford. She grew up on the family ranch northeast of Baker and attended O'Donnell School until the 8th grade and then attended Baker High School, graduating in 1955. Miriam married James (Jim) D. Kirschten June 11th, 1955. To this union, six children were born, Michael, Shane, Mark, Merri, Bertha and David. She had 15 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren with another great grandchild set to arrive in the next couple of months. Miriam was an avid gardener and raised a huge garden for many years to feed the family. Her strawberry patch was one of her favorite endeavors. More than one child got into trouble for not attending to the strawberries correctly. She canned many great crops over the years and knew how to wield a knife when it was time to butcher chickens. Miriam loved her yard with shrubs, trees and flowers and various assortments of lawn ornaments. She was a test grower for Jackson-Perkins roses for a number of years and tended up to 40 rose bushes. She spent many hours planting, pruning, and trimming new plants. It was her place to go to have some quiet time. She called it her therapy. She was also known in the neighborhood for her wonderful caramel rolls, her special strawberry rolls, pies, and baked goods. Neighbors, friends, and local businesses enjoyed her home baked caramel rolls and goodies. Miriam was a consummate home-maker. However, she did work away from home for a few years, being employed at Nellie's Bakery, Green Acres Supper Club, and Ben Franklin. She was especially proud of working side by side with her kids, Mark and Merri, at a couple of these jobs. Miriam was also an amazing seamstress, sewing clothes for the family and occasionally sewing doll clothes and dolls for her daughters and granddaughters. Not to neglect the men in her life, Miriam had a wonderful time sewing western shirts for her sons and husband, as well as some of the bachelor men who were like family. One year, she sewed over 50 western shirts, many of them also intricately hand embroidered. All of her children knew better than to use her "good scissors". Many of her family and friends have blankets that she either hand sewed, quilted, embroidered, or crocheted. All the grandchildren and great children have many blankets that she made for them in one form or another and are treasured pieces. Her grandchildren and great grandchildren were the apple of her eye. She said she did not spoil them, rather she "over loved" them a bit. Miriam loved to travel to see her kids and grandkids, attending many special events and marking occasions over the years. Her grandkids were very special to her and she attended as many events as she could

to share that time with them. Her travels took her to various parts of Europe, to Canada, and all over the US. She traveled the Mississippi River, traveled with grandkids and to see grandkids, her kids as well as friends and other members of the family. Her kids and extended family never knew when to expect Miriam's arrival, nor often quick, early morning departures. Miriam enjoyed many years of companionship with her beloved dogs Cocoa and Charlie as she traveled out and about on her adventures and visits. They gave her wonderful company over the years. Miriam also spent time giving back to her community. She was the first woman elected to serve on the Baker School Board. She was the first woman to run (unsuccessfully) for County Commission. She was a Charter Member of the Baker Cow Belles. Miriam was also a member of the Catholic Daughters of America, Court of St. Monica from 1969 - 2003. Always a person of strong convictions, Miriam eventually returned to the Lutheran Faith of her childhood some years after Jim's death. She enjoyed a number of years reconnected to her Lutheran Faith and friendships. People have expressed the sentiment that, "You always knew exactly where you stood with Miriam". As her kids, we understand; we know what you mean. The community knows she was a lover of hats, especially red hats in her later years. More than once, when someone didn't know who Miriam was, if she was described as "the red hat lady", the person knew immediately who Miriam was. Miriam was preceded in death by her husband, James D. Kirschten, and daughter-in-law, Debi (Mike) Kirschten, her parents, Gus and Bertha Crawford, an infant sister, Bernetta Ruth; two sisters, Marguerite Varner and Ida Mae Sleeth; and brothers, Jim, Cliff, Roy, Clyde & Jesse. Survivors include her children: Mike Kirschten of Baker, MT; Shane (Connie) Kirschten of Alton, IA; Mark (Dena) Kirschten of Baker, MT; Merri Stratman of Rapid City, SD; Bertha Kirschten of Baker, MT; and David (Nicole) Kirschten of Baker, MT. One year, the six kids lived in six different states, but most of them have "come home to roost", as mom said it. Also, her grandchildren and great grandchildren: Jeremy Suttie; Kyle (Kelsey) Kirschten - Chloe and Meika; Kerry (Scott) Jacobsen - Carter, Brooklyn, and Bridget; Lesley (Boone) Liane - Emmalynn and Eloise; Jessica (Jon) Sheehy - Connor and Carson; Jordan Stratman, Cassidy (Reece) Wientjes; Karen Kirschten, James Ford, Katie Ford, and Kevin Lewis; Garrett, McKenna, Sydney, and Aubrey Kirschten. As well as a host of nephews, nieces, and great nieces and nephews. Mom wanted her friends and family to remember her as she was. And, she didn't want her grandkids to travel winter roads to attend a service. Following moms' instructions, there will be no service at this time. A Celebration of Life, and reunions of sorts, for both the Crawford and Kirschten families, is planned for August 12 in Baker.

Miriam Kirschten

August 13, 1936 - March 8, 2023



Miriam Kirschten

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Saturday, August 12, 2023 1:30 pm
Stevenson Funeral Home
Baker, Montana

OFFICIATING

Jesse Crawford

PRIVATE FAMILY BURIAL

Kirschten Family Cemetery

ARRANGMENTS BY

Stevenson Funeral Home
Baker, Montana

There will be a light reception at Thee Garage following the service. Everyone is welcome.

*When I am gone, release me, let me go.
I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with too many tears,
But be thankful we had so many good years.
I gave you my love, and you can only guess
How much you've given me in happiness.
I thank you for the love that you have shown,
But now it is time I traveled on alone.
So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It is only for a while that we must part,
So treasure the memories within your heart.
I won't be far away for life goes on.
And if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I will be near.
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear,
All my love around you soft and clear.
And then, when you come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and a 'Welcome Home'*

