

Erika Anna Runnells

January 4, 1937 ~ July 30, 2025

Erika Anna (Bahe) Runnells was born on January 4, 1937, in Hannover, Lower Saxony, Germany. She returned to her Heavenly Father on July 30, 2025, in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Erika was the oldest of the three daughters of Hans Botho Bahe and Margareta Anna (Leyer) Bahe. She is survived by her husband Donald D. Runnells; two adult children, Suzanne Mulvany (Michael) and Timothy R. Runnells (Connie), sisters Ilona Stuart (William, deceased) and Silvia Schwemmer (Walter), five grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

Together with her parents and sisters, Erika survived the years of World War 2 in Germany. After the end of the war Erika finished her education, and in 1952 the family immigrated to the United States, eventually moving to Salt Lake City, Utah. None of the family members spoke or understood English, but they attended evening classes and studied the language prior to obtaining American citizenship. Erika ultimately obtained employment in the bookstore at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. It was there that she met her future husband, Don.

Erika and Don were married September 3, 1958, in a civil ceremony, which was solemnized on April 20, 1985, in the Salt Lake temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After their marriage the couple lived and worked in several states before settling down and raising their two children in Boulder, Colorado. During the years in Boulder Erika had a daycare business, sometimes with as many as eight toddlers and babies. Erika loved to sing and was a member of the Boulder Chorale. She enjoyed baking and preparing German food for her family and friends. Christmas was an especially busy and joyful time for Erika.

Erika was a life-long, faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She was proud of her service as a missionary in Salt Lake City. Over the years she served in numerous other callings for the Church, most of which involved children and music. She was an incredibly generous person, giving freely of her time and energy to bring happiness to other people. For several years after moving to Fort Collins she gave free voice lessons to friends and acquaintances. She had a deep love for her family, her pets, her music, and everyone's babies. Those of us who remain behind have lost an example of a kind and loving wife, mom, grandma, and friend.

Services will be held for Erika on Saturday, August 9, 2025 at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Loveland Stake Center, 3800 Mountain Lion Drive, Loveland, CO 80537. There will be a time of Visitation at 10am followed by Erika's Memorial Service at 11am.

Following her services in Colorado, services will be held in Utah on Saturday, August 16, 2025 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at 808 East Roosevelt Avenue in Salt Lake City. There will be a time of Visitation at 10am followed by Erika's Memorial Service in the Emerson Chapel at 11am, after which she will be laid to rest at Salt Lake Cemetery.

For those unable to attend the Utah service in person, the family invites you to join via Zoom. Please click the watch services button above.