

Mary Jo Blevins Bohmholdt

September 28, 1943 ~ February 28, 2024

Mary Jo (Blevins) Bohmholdt, our beloved wife, mother, grandma, great-grandma, sister, and friend passed away peacefully on February 28, 2024 in her home, surrounded by her loved ones. She was 80 years old. Mary Jo was born September 28, 1943 to Josephine (Palazzola) and Millard Blevins, in San Pedro, California.

At the time of her birth, her mother was living with her parents because her father was serving in the navy for World War II. Then they lived with her Aunt Rose and she would care for Mary Jo while her mother worked. When her father came home from the war, they moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee. This was the beginning of many trips back and forth from Tennessee to California—a 5 to 6 day trip.

Mary Jo had four sisters and one brother. They spent their childhood in poverty, living in housing projects because their father could not or would not keep a job. They would leave Tennessee and return to California because her grandparents, aunts, and uncles would care for them. As the eldest, Mary Jo helped her single mother raise Joann, Grace, Lawrence (Larry), Helen, and Carol Sue. Sometimes there was no food, only flour. So, Mary Jo would mix it with water and make pancakes.

Mary Jo worked at a worm farm, while also caring for her brother and sisters. When she was 8 to 10 years old, they lived above a store and she delivered groceries by bike for a dollar and ice cream. She wore shoes until the soles came off and, in the summertime, she didn't wear shoes at all. Sometimes, she would step on her friend's feet to cross the scalding hot pavement. By the time school started, her feet were calloused and bloody.

Mary Jo did well in school academically, receiving excellent and superior grades. She was on the drill squad and captain of the varsity basketball team. She loved going to the movies every Sunday after church—sometimes she sneaked into the theater with her uncles and aunt, who weren't much older than her. Her family had a monkey and they took it with them everywhere.

Living in Long Beach, California, Mary Jo dated a lot of sailors and nearly married one, until she met the sailor that changed her life, William Faulkner Bohmholdt (Bill). She knew soon after they met that she wanted to spend her life with him. Bill was the love of her life for over 63 years. They married on November 17, 1962, at the First Methodist Church in Long Beach, California. For their honeymoon, the went to Grumans Chinese Theater in Hollywood and saw Sound of Music. They also visited the Farmer's Market and went to the Ice Capades.

A couple years after they were married, their friends introduced them to missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. They were taught all the lessons in two weeks by great stake missionaries. She was overwhelmed with the message and many of her questions were answered. Mary Jo and Bill were baptized and became members on August 15, 1964. A year later on September 18, 1965, they were sealed for time and all eternity in the Los Angeles Temple. Mary Jo was an active member and faithfully served in many callings.

After a visit to Utah, Mary Jo and Bill felt it was their home, so they moved their small family of four to Murray in December of 1969. Seven years later with three more children, they moved to Sandy and raised their six children. They enjoyed 40 years in Sandy before retiring in Riverton for the past 15 years.

Bill and Mary Jo created a beautiful life, with a precious love that sustained their marriage for over 61 years. Together, they raised six children – 5 daughters and 1 son. Mary Jo felt her purpose was to bring her children into this world and give them a better life than the childhood she had. She instilled in them a strong work ethic, fierce confidence, integrity, advocacy, and resilience.

Mary Jo was passionate about doing genealogy and she taught others how to do this work too. Countless hours were spent at the Genealogy Library, conferences, and trips in the motorhome to find her relatives' names at cemeteries for temple work. She expanded her family history research to include those that joined her family through marriage. We believe many of those relatives greeted her when she passed through the veil.

Throughout her career as an office manager and legal secretary, Mary Jo surprised people with her capabilities. She worked well with others and excelled in stressful work environments. When she retired, the company had to hire two full-time people to do the work she had done alone for years.

After retiring, Mary Jo started painting. She created beautiful art that her family will cherish forever as a lasting memory of her, the matriarch. Together, Mary Jo and Bill served missions for their church. One was in the Utah State Prison to teach genealogy to the prisoners and the other was at Heber Valley Girls Camp. They served as temple workers at Jordan River Temple and then Oquirrh Mountain Temple.

Mary Jo loved being a grandma and spending time with her grandchildren. She took them bowling, miniature golfing, camping, and spoiled them with treats and toys only a grandma could get away with. She cherished watching her grandchildren sing, dance, play sports, and perform in theater and musicals. Their infectious smiles and laughter brought her pure joy.

Mary Jo had a profound impact on all those who knew her. Her spirit and legacy will live on, not just in our memories, but in the good we do in her honor. Let us spread kindness, embrace joy, and live each day with a heart full of gratitude as her spirit remains a guiding force in our lives.

Mary Jo will be missed by her surviving husband Bill; children Jennifer & Brad Vallem, Billy & Sara Bohmholdt, Rebecca & Jeff Akester, Susan Bohmholdt & Robert Bonosconi, Grace & Kendall Payne, and Andrea Bohmholdt & Joel Provencher; 17 grandchildren and 4 step-grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; sisters Helen (Frank) Reyes and Joann (Jim) Smith; 11 nieces and 7 nephews.

Those wishing to view the COMPLETED service via Zoom can click " Watch Service" or follow the link: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/hkQc05SkRFhjKjU3IYt5BnG3MXi_W_rVfh-cKBW6AUVokC3TgAG4DRFv1xd39mbH.g