

BettyRae Wallace

April 3, 1939 - March 22,
2026



BettyRae (Nightingale) Wallace, 86, of Hesston, Kansas, passed away on March 22, 2026, of natural causes, surrounded by her loving family.

BettyRae was born on April 3, 1939, in Topeka, Kansas, to Robert Ray Nightingale and Helen Elizabeth (Baker) Nightingale. After World War II, her family moved to the Monterey Peninsula in California, where she grew up. She graduated from Pacific Grove High School, where she was a cheerleader, class secretary, and active in theater and musical productions. She went on to graduate from Pepperdine University, where she was selected to the homecoming court, and was a member of the cheer team, even participating in the Rose Bowl.

While in Pacific Grove, she met the love of her life, Lt. Norman George Wallace, while he was attending the U.S. Army Language School. They were married just three months later and shared over 60 years of devoted marriage, building a life centered on faith, family, and service.

As an Army wife, BettyRae faithfully supported her husband through 22 years of military life, traveling and raising their family across the world. She created a warm, loving, and steady home wherever they were stationed.

Following Norman's final station at Fort Riley, the family settled in Manhattan, Kansas, where BettyRae taught first grade at Eugene Field Elementary School. While raising her family, she earned her Master of Education from Kansas State University. Over a career spanning more than 30 years, she was honored as Kansas Teacher of the Year. She had a deep passion for teaching and a gift for reaching every child. Known for her signature dresses, heels, and French roll hairstyle, she was rarely without a pencil tucked in her hair and a warm hug ready for each student.

Her life was defined by her unwavering faith in Jesus Christ. She spent hours in prayer, led Bible studies, and ministered to people of all ages. She was known for her kindness, humility, and genuine care for others.

In retirement, BettyRae and Norman moved to Tyler, Texas, to be closer to their grandchildren. She deeply valued time with her family, sharing stories, making meals, and teaching Bible lessons with her flannel graph board. In their later years, they returned to Kansas, where they remained close to family.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Norman George Wallace, and her brother, Robert "Rocky" Nightingale.

She is survived by her children: Anna (Robert) McCrummen of Carrollton, TX; David (Hillary) of Moyock, NC; Daniel (Michelle) of Hickory Corners, MI; and Rachel (Ken) Bachman of Hesston, KS; sixteen beloved grandchildren: Luke McCrummen (Cheyenne); Danielle Wallace; Lydia Graham (Brooks); Noelle Pathula (Jeneeth); Mark McCrummen; Gabrielle Wallace; Abigail McCrummen; Isaac Wallace; Ben Bollinger; Jonathan Wallace; Elizabeth Bachman; Victoria Wallace; Valerie Wallace; Joshua Wallace; Michael Wallace; and Nathan Wallace; great-grandchildren: Haevyn McCrummen, Lane McCrummen, Kade McCrummen, and Hasini Pathula; and her siblings, David Nightingale and Stacey (Nightingale) Amaral.

Friends may call from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., Thursday, March 26, at Grace Community Church in Newton, Kansas, with family present.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at 11:00 a.m., Friday, March 27, at Grace Community Church, with Pastor Jack Napier officiating. A luncheon and time of sharing will follow.

Graveside services will take place at 2:00 p.m. at Hesston Cemetery, with bagpipes and worship songs.

Memorials have been designated for Grace Community Church and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Harvey County, in care of Miller-Ott Funeral Home, P.O. Box 32, Hesston, Kansas 67062.