



Betty AnnIola Gutcher

September 1, 1927 - July 3, 2012

Glendive, Montana: Betty AnnIola Gutcher, 84, passed away on Friday, June 29, 2012 at the Glendive Medical Center in Glendive. Visitation will be held from 1:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M. on Monday, July 2, 2012 at the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive. A Life Tribute Service will be held on Tuesday, July 3, 2012 at 2:00 P.M. in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements. Betty was born on September 1, 1927 in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, the daughter of Andrew and Ida (Berge) Stene. At the age of two, the family moved (to their true home) to Billings, Montana where Betty completed her education, graduating from Billings Senior High School with the class of 1945. An accomplished Stenographer, Betty worked many secretarial jobs around Billings as well as in the Seattle area. Betty married the love of her life, Robert "Bob" Gutcher on July 18, 1947 and together they raised three children. Betty's husband, Bob, managed Gambles Hardware Stores, and in those early years the family resided in Sheridan, Wyoming, Red Lodge, Montana and Hamilton, Montana. In 1961, Betty and Bob purchased Farm and Home Furniture in Glendive which they operated together as a family business for twenty-four years. As a business owner, Betty enjoyed traveling with her husband to furniture markets in San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis and Las Vegas.. Betty and Bob retired in 1984 and traveled the United States, wintering in San Diego and Las Vegas before settling back in Billings. Betty was preceded in death by her

husband in 1990, two brothers and four sisters. Betty was a devoted mother and grandmother, also an accomplished Duplicate Bridge Player and a proud Norwegian as well as a fifty year cancer survivor. Survivors include one brother, Andrew Stene of Billings; two daughters, Bobbie Gutcher of Phoenix, Arizona and Billie Henry of Glendive; one son, Blaine Gutcher of Glendive; five grandchildren, Dawn, Brent, Sharlee, Destiny and Brooklyn; two step-grandchildren; four great-grandchildren, six step-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com. Betty Anniola Gutcher is probably best described by her grandson, Brent. He feels the picture of Betty you see on the memorial card captures her for the “classy, regal, beautiful lady” that she was. The tilt of her head and her smile exude personality. Betty had the sparkle of “a diamond” that outshone all other gems. Always professional and very worldly, she seemed to know what to do in every situation. Born into a large Norwegian family, Betty was the fifth of eight children. Her childhood was spent living during the Great Depression, and World War II was a part of her teen years. In 1941, Betty’s parents took in their small twin grandchildren to raise, and Betty became a big sister to them, helping with their care and being an active part of their life. In high school, Betty took shorthand classes, and began working at the stockyards in Billings as a stenographer. Younger brother Andrew says it was a bit of a family joke that Betty began writing everything in shorthand, because she had forgotten to spell. Daughter Billie remembers when she took shorthand. Betty sent her to the grocery store, and when Billie looked at the grocery list, Betty had written it in shorthand. Well, times had changed and so had shorthand. Billie couldn’t read her mother’s shorthand. Betty was sure disappointed to learn that they wouldn’t be communicating that way. During high school, a young man entered Betty’s life by the name of Bob Gutcher. Bob was interested in a friend of Betty’s and Betty was with her friend when Bob and her friend first talked. As the two girls walked away, their backs to Bob, it was Betty who caught Bob’s eye. He was entranced with her walk and loved her beautiful

legs. The pursuit was on and Bob and Betty were soon an item. Andrew remembers Betty wanting to go see Bob one night. The family car was in the garage, and Betty wanted Andrew to help her get it out and drive her to Bob's house. Andrew was only about 13 at the time and hesitated but his big sister got her way. Andrew and Betty pushed the car out of the garage and rolled it between the house and the trees to the alley. Andrew drove her over to Bob's, but there were no lights on, so they just drove around a bit and then returned home. No one seemed to have heard them coming or going, and as far as they knew, their joy ride was never discovered. After high school, Betty continued her work as a stenographer, and the love between Betty and Bob grew into marriage, which in turn, became a young family of three children, daughters Bobbie and Billie, and son, Blaine. A favorite memory of the kids was of the times Betty would hold them on her lap and sing "Cowboy Jack" to them. During the early years, Bob managed Gambles stores, and the family moved around to different stores in Wyoming and Montana. In 1961, Betty and Bob purchased Farm and Home Furniture here in Glendive and operated it as the family business for the next 24 years. As a partner in the store, Betty became an integral part of the business, working behind the scenes, keeping the business and family books, going to market with Bob, and helping keep their store on the cutting edge of the times. They both loved to try new items and both had very good taste in merchandise. Betty prided herself on staying on top of the business and she was very smart and enjoyed her work. Betty always looked the part too, as appearance was important to her. She never left the house without looking good, whether for work or for social occasions. Daughter Billie remembers her Mom kissing her good-bye as she would leave, and Billie remembers how good she looked and smelled, and the lipstick kisses she left on the faces of her children. When her girls and granddaughters were older, Betty would always remind them to put on their lipstick before going out. In spite of being a businesswoman, Betty never neglected her home or family. The house was always in order, and well kept.

Family dinners in the evening were still an important part of the day. They just took place a little later. Bob and Betty would get home after a long day at the store, relax with a beverage, and then Betty would turn out a full, healthy meal that included meat, potatoes, and side dishes. Daughter Bobbie tells that as kids, she and her siblings were on their own a bit, but their mother rarely reprimanded them for what they did before she got home. The family had a charge account at the grocery store, and Bobbie says after school treats were very likely to be bags of potato chips charged at the store and eaten while the kids waited for dinner. A favorite family activity was card games. Betty loved cards and was a stickler for rules. Family and friends would play late into the night, and there was always time for "one more hand." Betty and Bob were avid duplicate bridge players, and bridge was a lifelong activity for Betty. Blaine was the child that learned bridge from his mother and has kept up with it. Betty would cut out the daily newspaper page with the bridge hands on it and give them to Blaine to study to improve his game. The newspaper was Betty's daily friend. She read the paper thoroughly, going back to it during the day, working the daily crossword puzzles that she loved to do to keep her mind sharp. It was rare that she didn't finish each day's puzzle. Another friend of Betty's was her coffee. Blaine says the aroma of Norwegian coffee was always in the house when his mother was home. She enjoyed her beer and tomato juice, and she loved champagne; it made her giggly. Betty also liked gambling, playing the machines. She enjoyed going to Vegas, and after Bob died she took her daughters one year and Blaine the next. The girls got quite a kick out of their room there. Betty had gotten a room with a king bed, mirrors on the ceiling, and a huge bathtub with steps up it to get in. They especially enjoyed the look on the bellman's face when he opened it up to let in three ladies. Betty was no ordinary woman! Popcorn was her trademark favorite and she was a magician at making the best buttered popcorn in the world. It will be a remembered comfort food for her children and grandchildren. She was famous for her pork roasts, and for the toasted ham and cheese sandwiches with homemade ranch dressing. Betty was blessed with beautiful hands and

fingernails, and took great pride in them. She loved sharing her polish with her daughters and granddaughters. Granddaughter Dawn especially remembers these little pleasures that grandma shared with her family. Dawn's best memory with Betty came 7 or 8 years ago during a stay she had with Betty in Billings. The visit was full of these simple things, and others, including going grocery shopping, playing cards, and sharing Betty's nail polish. They enjoyed conversations about everything and nothing, talking politics with Betty threatening to jump off the rims because of current policies as Dawn laughed about it. The best part of the visit for Dawn was sharing a few days together one on one. Betty had a special way of appreciating the moment. Enjoying a steak in New York was equal to enjoying a steak in Wibaux. Every moment in life had its own unique quality and Betty could find value in each. Betty had a way of making the ordinary special. Betty watched FOX news faithfully, always interested in current events, and she was very up on the issues of the day. Most of the family avoided talking/arguing politics with Betty, as she had very strong opinions to share on every subject. But no matter what she thought, or how angry or frustrated she might be, Betty never swore. Betty had a great deal of anger, pain and frustration over her health issues, but she kept it pretty much to herself. Bobbie and Billie once tried to get her to say the "f" word, because they just knew she must have wanted to. But they never heard their mother even mutter it under her breath. Fiscally frugal, Betty believed that you had to earn what you had. But she was so very giving. When she enjoyed something, or would find something that made life easier, she would try to share it with those she loved and cared for. For instance, if she found a mop that she loved, she would buy her kids and grandkids one too. Grandson Brent remembers when he was at the age to start shaving. He had a scar on his chin and hand held or disposable razors weren't working for him. His grandmother bought him an electric razor and now whenever he uses an electric razor he can still hear her laughter. She had a great laugh that was very infectious. She also gave him a dictionary back in 1983. Brent isn't sure why, but he still uses it. A concerned mother, Betty was protective of her

children and grandchildren, even a bit of a warrior. Betty was terrified of bees, something Bobbie had in common with her mother. On one visit to see her mother, Bobbie arrived in her car, with Betty's granddaughter, Dawn, in a carseat in the back. A bee had gotten in the car, and Bobbie came running into her mother's house in a panic. Betty grabbed a 2x4 and ran out to the car swinging. No one remembers if she killed the bee or even if she did any damage to the car, but she certainly saved her granddaughter, overcoming her own fear to do it. But of all the things family members admired about Betty, it was her and Bob's relationship with each other that stands out. Betty and Bob were very good partners, in their business and more importantly in their marriage. They never lost their love and adoration for each other. Bob was the comedian; Betty was his audience. It was apparent on a daily basis that they remained truly in love. Bob would make Betty blush with his comments about how beautiful and sexy he found her to be, and he reminded her of this until the day he died. His nickname for her was Tasha, and they enjoyed many of the same things. Travel, meeting new people, socializing with friends at the Elks and at home, playing cards, especially bridge, working in the business together, and family time with the kids and later the grandkids. Betty and Bob's children and grandchildren all recognized the special love that characterized Betty and Bob's marriage for 43 years. That marriage was the kind of relationship that they all held up as a model of what they each wanted to find with their life partner. Brent termed theirs a "fairy tale love." When Betty lost Bob in 1990, it was her greatest heartache in life. Betty had lived through and with some difficult times of her own, and some of these health issues were very serious. Betty's son Blaine described his mother a "miracle" for having survived for 84 years. Shortly after Blaine was born, Betty was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma, a disease most often fatal. She survived that only to be plagued with irritable bowel syndrome, which over the years caused her much discomfort, embarrassment, and eventually curtailed her desire to go places. At age 75 she endured back-to-back colon surgeries. All of Betty's

health tribulations were certainly a testament to her inner strength. These past few years, Betty's health began to interfere with her independence. She adamantly refused nursing home care, so she moved from Billings, back to Glendive, to an apartment near Billie. With Billie and Blaine to help look out for her, she remained in a home of her own that she loved. Her senior companion, Betty Kuntz was a godsend and good friend to Betty, taking her grocery shopping and visiting her. On Wednesdays, Betty looked forward to Betty Kuntz taking her to "play cards." Playing cards was her code name for going to play the machines. Although there were still things she enjoyed, Betty was wearing down. 84 years of living is a pretty good run, and Betty had enjoyed many things and many people over the years. The lives she has touched are countless, and the people that she has loved, her family and friends, have shared many experiences and life lessons with Betty. Betty was a unique and special lady, a wonderful and loving wife, a caring and supportive mother, a businesswoman ahead of her time, a friend for life, and grandmother who didn't fit the mold and gave new meaning to the title. Betty Gutcher was greatly loved and she will be greatly missed.

Tribute Wall



“ *Betty Annlola Gutcher*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM