

Rita Rae Ullmann, beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend, passed away at Walworth County Care Center surrounded by the love of her family on June 16, 2026.

Born on May 30, 1941, in Kalispell, M.T. to Dallas F. and Margaret Fay Eklund, Rita spent her early years in Somers before the family moved to Kalispell in 1950. It was there she met Donald Schott before marrying in 1958. Married life first took them to Fargo, N.D. before moving to McLaughlin, S.D. to work for Rita's father-in-law Jacob Schott. Together they purchased the Pete Schott Ranch north of McLaughlin and welcomed three children: Debbie, Dallas, and Joyce. Not only did she raise these three rumbunctious children, but Rita also embraced ranch life with energy and heart. She was a true ranch wife involved in anything from milking cows, gardening, canning, butchering and made some of the best German sausage. During this time, she was an active member of the Eastern Star, Cowbelles, and 4-H, immersing herself in the McLaughlin and surrounding communities.

Later, Rita moved to Rapid City, attended further education and also obtained her flying license. In her spare time, you may have found her painting, drawing, or playing the accordion. In 1979, she married Bill Ullmann and joined him on the Cottonwood Ranch near McLaughlin. Together in love they grew their family with two more children, John and Angie. One of Rita's most unique chapters in life was helping Bill build a sailboat, Saguarro. With their children aboard, they spent four unforgettable years traveling. Rita treasured those memories by journaling and sent her memoirs back to South Dakota where they were published. This endeavor was proof of Rita's adventurous spirit, and a symbol of her loving strength for family as she didn't even know how to swim.

The family returned to South Dakota in 1996 and it was then that Rita ran the café at the McLaughlin Sale Barn. People still talk of the 'at home' cooking and service provided at this establishment. Feeling the continued service to her community she also opened and operated the local ambulance service for some time. By 1999, with the last child graduation behind them, Rita and Bill ventured to Pocomoke City, M.D. Here Rita returned to active participation in the Eastern Star and became a dedicated leader on the Board of Directors of the Costen House Museum making many dear friends along the way. Despite the miles, she made seasonal trips back to her family in Montana and South Dakota, holding family and making memories with them always near to her heart.

After her husband's passing, Rita eventually settled in Timber Lake in 2024 with her dog, Charlie. With this final move, her travels did not end. Many trips were made back to the coast to visit her daughter Angie and son-in-law, Tim. Rita spent much of this time with them on the water: sailing, racing, and just cruising the harbor.

Rita's talents were many, but her greatest gift was the way she poured love and encouragement into the lives of others. Her life was a tapestry of resilience, adventure, service, and love. Her legacy lives on in the family she raised, the communities she strengthened, and the countless lives she touched.

Rita is survived by her children: Debbie (Jeff Verworn)McAdams of Columbia Falls, MT; Dallas (Liana Durocher)Schott of McLaughlin, SD; Joyce (Jim) Mulloy of Timber Lake, SD; Holly (Steve) Lewis of Bloxom, VA; John (Amy) Ullmann of Pierre, SD; and Angie (Tim Tucker)Ullmann of St. Augustine, FL; brother Brian Eklund of Kalispell, MT. She also leaves behind 13 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and many cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends too numerous to count. Rita was preceded in death by her husband Bill Ullmann; parents Dallas and Fae Eklund; sisters Donna Keller, Marti Elletson, and brother-in-law Les Elletson.

In Loving Memory Of



Rita R. Ullmann

May 30, 1941 - June 16, 2026



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Rita R. Ullmann

85 years ~ 17 days

BORN
May 30, 1941
Montana

PASSED AWAY
June 16, 2026
Selby, SD

*In tears we saw you sinking
and watched you fade away.
Our hearts were really breaking
but we could not make you stay.
God watched you as you suffered,
He knew you had your share -
He tenderly closed your weary eyes
and took you in His care.
But when we saw you sleeping
peacefully free from pain,
We could not wish you back
to suffer that again.
Our hearts still ache with sadness,
and secret tears still flow
what it meant to lose you
only God will know.
To the place of rest we wander
where we say a little prayer,
No one knows the heartache
As we turn and leave you there.*

FUNERAL SERVICE
10:00 am, Friday, July 31, 2026
Family Worship Center
Mobridge, South Dakota

CLERGY
Pastor Paul Hathaway

SPECIAL MUSIC
"What Would This World Do" - Maren Moris
"I'll Fly Away" - Alison Krauss & Gillian Welch

INTERMENT
Hunt Family Cemetery
Red Scaffold, South Dakota

Arrangements Entrusted to Kesling Funeral Home, Mobridge, South Dakota.