



Marlys E. Aartun was born in Sioux Falls. She would joke, “she was born in a bar.” Well, not quite, but she did spend a lot of time in one as her grandparents ran the Delmont Bar, with the help of her mom. So, there would be baby Marlys in her basket on the bar. As she got older, she would sit in the back room and play with the adding machine. When she was about 8 or 9 years old, they all moved to Colton, where they had the opportunity to run the pool hall.

Marlys graduated from Colton High School in 1963. After graduation she briefly worked at the school before taking a teller position at the local bank. When coworkers noticed a certain

young man taking a shine to her, they made sure Marlys was always the teller available to help Terry. Marlys and George “Terry” Aartun married on February 22, 1969, and would go on to have three daughters: Cheri, Jill, and Ruth.

Marlys nursed Cheri through a severe illness that culminated in a lifesaving kidney transplant from Terry in Minneapolis. The challenges of this time – much travel, coordinating care at home for infant Ruth and school-age Jill, and navigating big-city life far from Colton – would forever cause Marlys to look back in amazement: “I don’t know how we managed it.” We know how: because no one can love like Marlys did.

When Jill was diagnosed with scoliosis, Marlys again managed major medical care, with many doctor appointments and trips to The Brace Place. These big things and a million little things will live forever in our hearts. She sewed clothes for us. She made the best school lunches (the kind with notes of encouragement and fruit snacks) and work lunches for Terry (the kind with enough home baked cookies to share with coworkers). She made delicious suckers that have become Halloween legend in Colton. She gave our teachers thoughtful homemade Christmas gifts. She hosted awesome slumber parties.

When money was tight, and reliable vehicles were few, she taxied Terry, Cheri, and Ruth to and from work and school. She wrapped Jill in blankets in the driver’s seat of the second car that ran but didn’t have a working heater. For years, she walked miles and miles with Ruth on summer nights, instilling a lifelong love of long walks.

When grandson Colin came along, Marlys was over the moon to have a new baby to indulge: through sweets, treats, and shopping, she ensured he wanted for nothing. And he’d be hard pressed to remember many baseball games where she wasn’t in the stands cheering him on.

Marlys was a homemaker and also opened our home for babysitting. She and Terry cleaned First Lutheran Church and the bank for many years. She retired from Colton’s assisted living center as a med aide, having provided years of tender, attentive care for residents.

We never could have had enough time with her. Marlys is survived by her daughters, Cheri Aartun of Colton, SD, Jill (Dean) Simon of Brandon, SD, and Ruth (Eric) Raveling of Pierre, SD; grandson, Colin Simon of Brandon, SD; and other extended family members. She was preceded in death by her mother and stepfather, Dorothy and Jerome Boen; father, Harry Ward; husband, George “Terry” Aartun; and a brother, Dale Nelson.

In Memory Of **Marlys E. Aartun**

March 28, 1945 † November 20, 2025

Private Funeral Services
Monday, November 24, 2025
Minnehaha Funeral Chapel
Colton, South Dakota

Officiating
Rev. Tim Lemme

Music
“Amazing Grace”
“Beautiful Savior”
“On Eagles Wings”
“Lift High the Cross”

Pallbearers
Dean Simon Colin Simon
Eric Raveling Mike Laurenz
Wayne Lemme Dan Lemme

Interment
Zion Lutheran Cemetery
Colton, South Dakota





A Life Remembered

Marlys E. Aartun

March 28, 1945 † November 20, 2025

 **MINNEHAHA
FUNERAL HOME
& CREMATION SERVICES**

BALTIMORE COLTON DELLRAPIDS GARRETSON