

Charlotte Betts, 79, passed away on March 6, 2024, at Rolling Hills Healthcare in Belle Fourche, SD.

She was born on December 28, 1944, to Cecil and Louise Dandridge in Seattle, Washington. She spent her childhood in Lead, South Dakota, and then Spearfish Canyon. She was the oldest of 3 children, her brother Harry "Butch" and sister Sandra following. She graduated from Lead High School as a very proud member of the class of 1962.

She moved to California where she lived the next 4 years, briefly marrying, Bob Bender and giving birth to her first child, Cherie, in San Francisco. She grew homesick and returned to the Black Hills in 1966, where she met classmate, Dan Dower at a dance. She followed him to Norfolk, Virginia, where they married and lived while he was in the Navy. There, she had 3 children, David, Douglas, and Cindee. They returned to the Black Hills settling in Spearfish but later divorced.

In 1984, she met her best friend, John Betts, who she later married in 1992. In Spearfish, she was active in the Community Action Program and Food Pantry. This involvement led to her being hired as the Director of Senior Center where she stayed until retirement in 1995. The next year, John and Char bought land and moved to Pine Haven, WY. They built their dream home nestled in the pines with views of Keyhole Lake. They have a wraparound porch where days were spent playing dominos and cards and enjoying the wildlife. Retirement did not slow her down and Char was eager to help where help was needed and always with a smile on her face. She helped establish the Pine Haven Fire Auxiliary and Food Pantry and was President of Royal Neighbors of America Pine Haven chapter. She and John were the grand marshals in the annual Pine Haven Labor Day parade in 2011 which filled them with pride. They were proud of their community and often referred to the Black Hills area as "God's country." She helped organize all the class of 1962, Lead High School reunions, staying in touch with many classmates since graduation over the years, which gave her immense joy. Char had a heart of gold, she never knew a stranger, kind to everyone. You felt relaxed and welcome when in her company. She was also known as the "Voice of Pine Haven" for many on the radio, and always ended her show with "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away." She is so deeply missed.

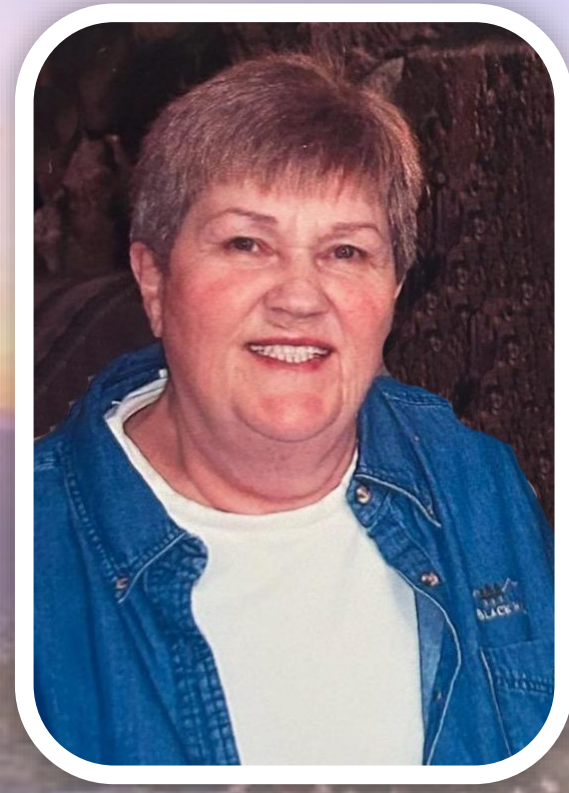
She is survived by her son, Doug Dower; daughters: Cherie (Brian) McGrath, and Cindee (Darrell) Wisnoski; step-daughter, Christy Betts; step-son, Matthew (Petra) Budde; 12 grandchildren; and 6 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Virgil and Louise Lakson; husband, John Betts; sister, Sandy Sandidge; brother, Virgil "Butch" Lakson; son, David Dower; and step-daughter, Elizabeth Hudson.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.kinkadefunerals.com](http://www.kinkadefunerals.com).

*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch  
at the Sturgis Vets Club, 868 Main St., following the inurnment.  
Thank you for your presence and condolences.*

***In Loving Memory Of***  
***Charlotte "Char" Betts***  
***December 28, 1944 ~ March 6, 2024***



*I'd like the memory of me  
to be a happy one.  
I'd like to leave an after glow  
of smiles when life is done.*

*I'd like to leave an echo  
whispering softly down the ways,  
Of happy times and laughing times  
and bright and sunny days.*

*I'd like the tears of those who  
grieve, to dry before the sun  
Of happy memories that I leave  
When my life on earth is done.*

*In Loving Memory Of*  
**Charlotte “Char” Betts**

*Born*

December 28, 1944  
Seattle, Washington

*Died*

March 6, 2024  
Belle Fourche, South Dakota

*Memorial Service*

Tuesday, April 2, 2024, 10:00 a.m.  
Kinkade Funeral Chapel  
Sturgis, South Dakota

*Officiant*

Wayne Bell

*Musical Selections*

“Over the Rainbow”  
“Wish Upon a Star”  
“What the World Needs Now”  
“Rock Around the Clock”

*Honorary Pallbearers*

*Grandchildren:*

Carissa Cuesta   Cassandra Estrada   John McGrath  
David Dower   Derick Dower  
Brooke Wisnoski   Emilee Wisnoski

*Great Grandchildren:*

Zylah Cuesta   Ethan Estrada   Ava Estrada  
Nora Estrada   Brian McGrath   Luke McGrath

*Final Resting Place*

Black Hills National Cemetery  
Sturgis, South Dakota

*When I come to the end of the road*

*And the sun has set for me,*

*I want no rites in a gloom-filled room*

*Why cry for a soul set free.*

*Miss me a little – but not for long*

*And not with your head bowed low*

*Remember the Love that we once shared*

*Miss Me – But let Me Go.*

*For this is a journey we all must take*

*And each must go alone*

*It's all a part of the Master's plan*

*And a step on the road to home.*

*When you are lonely and sick of heart*

*Go to the friends we know*

*And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds*

*Miss Me – But Let Me Go*