



## Rita Rae Byfield

March 30, 1950 - March 27, 2025

Rita Rae (Nichols) Byfield, 74, of Bartlesville, passed away after a long battle with cancer on Thursday, March 27, 2025.

Rita was born the daughter of Billy Rae and Beverly Ann (Loper) Nichols on March 30, 1950, in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. She was raised in the area, graduating from College High in 1968.

Rita's life journey began in Bartlesville, attending Horace Mann and McKinley elementary schools, continuing through Central Middle School, and culminating in her graduation from College High. Her early years were marked by a vibrant spirit, evident in her participation in the High School Concert Choir and Girl Scouts. A lifelong learner, Rita pursued her passion for nursing with unwavering dedication.

In May 1969, Rita married her childhood sweetheart Michael Byfield at East Bartlesville Christian Church. Their 54-year love story was a testament to enduring devotion, but was tragically interrupted by Michael's passing in November 2023. Together, they raised a loving family, welcoming their children; Sean (1971), Kristi (1974), and Katee (1980).

Her academic achievements were extensive, reflecting her commitment to excellence. She earned an Associate in Nursing (RN) from Tulsa Junior

College, a Master of Education (MEd) from the University of Central Oklahoma, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), and certifications as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) along with Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) from Pittsburg State University. She was a proud alumni of both UCO and Pitt State, including a member of Sigma Tau and Kappa Delta.

Rita's professional life was characterized by compassionate care and a passion for education. She served as an Operating Room Nurse in Tulsa and Bartlesville, and later as an APRN/FNP at Coffeyville Regional Medical Center in Kansas from the late 1990s to the early 2000s. She shared her experience and expertise in Nursing as a respected Nursing Professor at Tri County Technology Center, then later at Southern Nazarene University, Oklahoma Wesleyan College, and Rogers State University, shaping the next generation of nurses.

Beyond her professional achievements, Rita was a dedicated community servant to the Bartlesville area. She embraced her roles as a Ballet mom, Girl Scout Troop Leader, Homeroom Grandma, and BBOB Supporter/Vice President. Her commitment to service extended to numerous organizations, including the Daughters of Union Veterans, Certified Nurse Operating Room District Delegate, Leadership Bartlesville Class XXI, and the National Education Committee AORN. She was recognized as a past New Professional of the Year in Vocational Education, and was a previous member of OVA, ONA, OEA, and AANP (all in Nursing). Rita also served as a docent at the Dewey Hotel and volunteered at the Hope Clinic.

As a woman of deep faith, Rita was a devoted member of First Baptist Church, where she shared her beautiful voice in the choir. Her heart overflowed with love for her family, as she was a cherished wife, mother, and grandmother. Her genuine kindness and nurturing spirit earned her the

affection of many, who called her "Mom." Rita's loving presence will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Rita will live on through her children: Michael Sean Byfield and Jennifer Fields, Kristi Leigh Byfield and Ben Davies, and Kathleen Elisa Byfield and Michael Kern; her grandchildren: Michael Lukas Byfield, Gray Byfield-Davies, and Eva Byfield-Davies; her siblings: Patsy and Chuck Moore, Frank and Debbie Dungan, and Jerry and Sonya Dungan; and as a legacy through other family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Michael Byfield; her aunt, Florence Lacey; her grandmother, Edna Lacey; her parents; and her adopted mother, Jeanne Dungan.

Rita's family will receive friends on Thursday, April 3rd from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. at the Davis Family Funeral Home & Crematory – Walker Brown Chapel, 918-333-7665, 4201 Nowata Rd, Bartlesville. Her memorial book will be available for signing on Thursday from 11 a.m.-8 p.m., and Friday 9 a.m.-11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, a go fund me page has been set up to help her family at <http://gofund.me/b171e6b2>

Graveside services will be held on Friday, April 4th at 2 p.m., at the Ball "Outlaws Cemetery," with officiant Rev. Wade Daniel. Services are under the direction of Carter Davis and the Davis Family Funeral Home & Crematory – Walker Brown Chapel. Online condolences and remembrances may be shared at [www.DavisFamilyFuneralHome.com](http://www.DavisFamilyFuneralHome.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Ball Cemetery

N 419 RD  
Nowata County, OK

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 3. 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Davis Family Funeral Home & Crematory - Walker Brown Chapel  
4201 Nowata Rd  
Bartlesville, OK 74006  
(918) 333-7665  
davisfamilyfuneralhome@gmail.com

## Family and Friends Gathering

APR 3. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Davis Family Funeral Home & Crematory - Walker Brown Chapel  
4201 Nowata Rd  
Bartlesville, OK 74006  
(918) 333-7665  
davisfamilyfuneralhome@gmail.com

## Visitation

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APR 4. 9:00 AM - 11:00 PM (CT)

Davis Family Funeral Home & Crematory - Walker Brown Chapel  
4201 Nowata Rd  
Bartlesville, OK 74006  
(918) 333-7665  
davisfamilyfuneralhome@gmail.com

## Graveside Service

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APR 4. 2:00 PM (CT)

Ball Cemetery  
N 419 RD  
Nowata County, OK

# Tribute Wall

KA

“ I love you mom. I miss you every single day in every single way. Thank you for all the love and support. You are deeply missed.



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**katee** - July 07, 2025 at 10:44 PM

DB

“ Rita was truly an advocate for her patients. I worked with her at TCTC and really enjoyed her laughs. We had a good time together. Rita was very smart and knew what she was doing. Peace and comfort for her family. I loved my friend Rita.



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**Darla Bohannan** - April 03, 2025 at 08:11 PM

SM

“ I have so many happy memories of visiting my "Oklahoma family." Rita was always warm, kind, and welcoming. I am praying for peace and comfort for all of her kids as they grieve. She is very much missed.

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**Stacy McReynolds** - April 03, 2025 at 02:49 PM

JE

“ Rita was one of my nursing instructors at Wesleyan. She was forever lifting us up and providing support. I have so many good memories of her.  
Rita, thank you for being part of the reason I became the nurse I am today.  
I have thought of you so often and will continue to throughout my life.

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**Jennifer Pettey Eagleton** - April 02, 2025 at 04:14 AM

AS

“ Amber Sanchez lit a candle in memory of Rita Rae Byfield



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**Amber Sanchez** - March 31, 2025 at 10:24 AM

AS

“ So sorry to hear about your loss. I worked with Rita at Rogers State and loved how much passion she put in to teaching the nursing students. She truly pushed them to be the best they could be. She has left a legacy here on Earth. She will be truly missed.

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**Amber Sanchez** - March 31, 2025 at 10:23 AM

SG

“ To Rita's family,I'm sorry for your loss.I knew Rita since the 60's,a very nice person,RIP. Steve Grindle

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**Steve Grindle** - March 30, 2025 at 04:16 PM

RC

“ I loved sweet Rita. She was gracious and thoughtful and always kind. I will miss her.

Rhonda Carr - March 30, 2025 at 12:12 PM

JS

“ Jeanne Foreman Shepherd lit a candle in memory of Rita Rae Byfield



Jeanne Foreman Shepherd - March 30, 2025 at 11:46 AM

JZ

“ I will miss her smile and her hugs. She was my mentor in teaching nursing. she affected so many young nurses

Juli Zyel - March 29, 2025 at 11:53 PM

WK

“ With deepest sympathy, Susan Kilpatrick purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Rita Rae Byfield.



With deepest sympathy, Susan Kilpatrick - March 29, 2025 at 12:42 PM

WK

“ With deepest sympathy, Susan Kilpatrick planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rita Rae Byfield.

With deepest sympathy, Susan Kilpatrick - March 29, 2025 at 12:42 PM

PW

“ So saddened at the passing of sweet Rita. She was a brave and caring soul who blessed our family with her beautiful smile and presence.

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**Pat Byfield Whiteman** - March 28, 2025 at 10:09 PM

MS

*Rita was truly a professional, caring and dedicated nurse with many accomplishments. She always cared about her patients and students. She was a good raquet ball player too. I'm happy that we were friends.*

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**Mary Siemens** - June 14, 2025 at 09:54 PM