



Shirley A. Brunkow

June 9, 1934 - June 15, 2026

A Funeral Service for Shirley will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at the Milligan Auditorium in Milligan, Nebraska, with Kim Dunker presiding.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with family present from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Farmer and Son Funeral Home - Kotas Chapel in Milligan, Nebraska.

Graveside Services will be held following the funeral service at the Bohemian National Cemetery in Milligan, Nebraska.

Memorials are to be directed to the Milligan Public Library or the Milligan Auditorium.

Shirley Ann Brunkow was born on June 9, 1934, and passed away at Heritage Crossings in Geneva, Nebraska, on June 15, 2026, at the age of 92. She was born on a farm 7 miles east of Milligan to Joseph Charles Synovec and Rose Katherine Urban Synovec. The oldest sibling was her brother Milton, and her older sister was Irene.

Shirley married Richard Brunkow on June 9, 1954, at Saint John's church in Western. They made their first home 1 mile east of Milligan. Shirley's father

built their new home in Milligan in 1960-1961, which became her forever home. To this marriage were born 4 children: Lois Lynne (Butler), Kathy Kaye (Deceased shortly after birth), Alan Wayne, and Jay Charles.

Shirley graduated from Milligan High School in 1951 and was valedictorian. She attended summer school at Doane College in 1951 and earned 12 hours, qualifying her to teach in a rural school. She continued college coursework at Doane and Fairbury Junior College in the evenings and weekends, and she graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1965 with her Bachelor's degree. In the early years of teaching, she taught at District 28 in Saline County, Swanton, Ohio, District 68 near Geneva, District 6, which was 2 miles north of Milligan, District 36 in Strang for 39 years.

Her pastimes included reading, crocheting, embroidery, crafts, going to coffee, and visiting with friends. She enjoyed raising flowers, entering handiwork at the county fair, and volunteering at the Milligan Library. Her baking of kolaches, cinnamon rolls, breads, and cookies were legendary amongst friends and family. Shirley published a cookbook of family favorites. Shirley was proud to be selected as a finalist in The Recipe Box Contest (Celebrating the Culinary Heritage of Nebraska Families). Her Czech Heritage recipe demonstration was on baking kolaches and was aired on Nebraska Educational TV. She also taught baking and cooking classes for adult education at Southeast Community College.

She was a past member of the Nebraska Educational Association, the Milligan Women's Club, and recently retired in March as treasurer to the Milligan Public Library. She was instrumental in writing grants for the library's renovation and the furniture and supplies within the library, as well as doing story time for the children. Her most rewarding project was her involvement in the WWII Historical markers on Hwy 41 and the airmen history research and book.

Shirley was preceded in death by her husband, Richard Brunkow; parents, Joseph and Rose Synovec; brother Milton Synovec and wife, Harriet; and her sister Irene Synovec; infant daughter Kathy Kaye, grandson, Benjamin Polhemus.

Shirley is survived by daughter Lois Butler and husband Ed (Kearney); son Alan and his wife, Deb (Western); son Jay and his wife Tina (Arvada, CO); 8 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great-grandson, and her special friend James E Betka.

Cemetery Details

Bohemian National Cemetery

Milligan, NE 68406

Upcoming Events

Visitation

JUN 23. 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Farmer & Son Funeral Home-Kotas Chapel
Main Street
Milligan, NE 68406
(402) 759-3617
<https://farmerandsonfuneralhome.com>

Family Present for Visitation

JUN 23. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Farmer & Son Funeral Home-Kotas Chapel
Main Street
Milligan, NE 68406
(402) 759-3617
<https://farmerandsonfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

JUN **24**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Milligan Auditorium
Main Street
Milligan, NE 68406