



## Ruth Ann Wunningham Bates

January 6, 1973 - December 2, 2025

Ruth Ann Wunningham Bates, often known as Ruthie, Ruth Ann, or Rufus, left this life for her reward on December 2, 2025, while surrounded by her closest family.

Family was the most important thing in Ruth's life. She often filled her home with family, friends, and laughter. Being a mother and grandmother was her greatest joy. Ruth Ann was a true lady; she always had a smile or something positive to say whenever she spoke to you. Ruth's hobbies included crafting, drawing, painting, and doing nails. Ruth truly brought sunshine to everyone's day and was always willing to take care of others. Her house was often full of fun and laughter and crowded with those who loved her. Her compassion and caring did not go unnoticed. Ruth also shared this caring and compassion with her closest friend, Shalon. Shalon and Ruth worked as a team to keep cancer at bay for more than ten years. Through every doctor's appointment and every scan, Shalon was there to support her and help with her care. Ruth battled cancer the same way she lived her life—smiling serenely, with a steel will. Ruth left parting words that she would like to share with everyone:

To Erin and Dustin: I love you more than you will ever know. Stay positive in tough situations. I have been so blessed to be your mother, and I wouldn't change a thing. Always hug your babies like you are never going to hug them again. Also, prayer works—I should know, I've done lots of it.

Ruth was preceded in death by her mother, Dorothy Winningham, and the love of her life, Stephen Bates.

She leaves behind a loving family of two children and three grandchildren: Daughter, Erin Halley, mother to Magnolia and Wyatt of Bradford; and son, Dustin Bates (Payton), father to Brooklyn of Bald Knob. She also leaves behind her father, Clenis Winningham of Bradford; her brother, Bob Winningham of Bradford; brother, William (Heather) Winningham of Bald Knob, Best Friend Shalon Everett (Chris) of Judsonia, Niece Lauren (Chris) Snodgrass of Lake Village; nephew Ethan Winningham (Sadie) of Cave City and many other extended family members and friends who will forever cherish her memory. Ruth Ann will be remembered for her strength, her kindness, her laughter, and the love she poured into everyone she met.

# Tribute Wall

BW

“ *Ruth Ann we so sorry we never got to say bye we will see yea again one day love you cuz*

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**betty webb** - January 06 at 12:21 PM

JT

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**Jennifer Tindall** - December 05, 2025 at 11:34 AM