



Bedelia Anne O'Brien Zeis

March 27, 1938 - April 27, 2026

Bedelia Anne O'Brien Zeis, 88, of Florence, passed away peacefully at her home on Monday, April 27, 2026, surrounded by her loving children.

Born on March 27, 1938, in Cincinnati, Bea, as she was best known, was the oldest of thirteen children born to the late John William and Anne Mary Quinn O'Brien. As the eldest sibling, she naturally became a guiding presence and a trusted "go-to" person for family and friends throughout her life. Raised in a large, close-knit family, Bea especially cherished the memories shared with her siblings growing up on the family's farm, which she lovingly referred to as "The Hill." She often recounted stories of the adventures she and her siblings had, including swimming in the pond, her brothers building log cabins, calling "Hootie Hoot Hoot" for the great horned owl, Hootie, whom her brother Jake rescued, and the shocked look of those who came upon their pet lion, Tex.

As a young woman, Bea earned her license in cosmetology, and later, as a wife and mother of three children, she began a career as a respected female trainer of thoroughbred racehorses, where her love of animals, determination, and hardworking spirit shone. After many years of training horses, Bea worked in the field of nursing, caring for patients at Booth Hospital. She then spent several years dedicated to caring for the Little Sisters of the Poor in Fort Thomas, Kentucky. No matter what her endeavor was at the time, she was passionate and devoted to being the best she could be.

Bea was fiercely loyal when it came to those she loved. Being the eldest of 13, she developed a strong sense of responsibility for those she cared for,

quick to come to aid in times of need. Bea had a genuine interest in people, never met a stranger and could strike up a conversation with anyone. She had a special way of making others feel seen, valued, and welcome.

Faith was the foundation of Bea's life. She was passionate about God's Word and eagerly shared it with those she encountered. She loved Jesus deeply, and her strong faith in Him was a constant source of strength in her life.

Bea leaves behind a loving family who will continue her legacy of kindness and compassion: her son, John Zeis of Florence, her daughter, Theresa "Tessie" Kelly (Ernie) of Carmel; four beloved grandchildren, John Kelly, Tyler Zeis, Kennedy Zeis, and Anna Kelly, who were blessed to call her "Grandma"; one great-granddaughter, Rosalie; six siblings, John O'Brien, Terry O'Brien, Anne Beck, Sheila Stacey, Matthew O'Brien, and Tessie Suetholz; along with many extended family members and dear friends.

In addition to her parents, Bea was preceded in death by her beloved son, Kevin Joseph Zeis, on April 1, 2020, Arthur J. Zeis, on August 10, 2020, and six siblings: Denny O'Brien, Patrick O'Brien, Kevin O'Brien, Mary O'Brien, Jake O'Brien, and Ellen Whitman.

A private celebration of Bea's life will be held at the convenience of the family. Memorial donations may be made to the Boone County Animal Shelter, 5620 Idlewild Road, Burlington, KY 41005. Woodhead Funeral Home, Falmouth is honored to serve the family.

Tribute Wall

DA

“ *The Lord was number one in Bea's life. Number two was her family, and they never had to question her love. Number three were her friends, and everyone who knew her was blessed. She was kind, forgiving, loving and loyal. I knew Bea for almost sixty years, and in all that time she always made time to walk beside me. When I was happy, she was happy with me. When I suffered loss, she cried with me. If I was worried, she prayed with me. When I was down, she would encourage me. I will never forget her, I will always miss her.*

Diane Ashworth - May 17 at 04:00 PM

LG

“ *Bea was more than a sister-in-law, she was a dear friend. You could always count on Bea, if you had a problem she was right there. I will always remember, put on the coffee pot and bring out the pet milk.*

Leslee Garner - May 15 at 09:07 PM

JO

We wasn't aloud up on the farm but guess who would pick me up. Only if my father knew lol

Jennifer O'Brien - May 15 at 09:16 PM

JO

The one person in the world that I had the most informed arguments with (she informed I argued) was my aunt Bedelia! They were truly wonderful conversations. It took me years to realize that she was right 95% of the time. And I am grateful I was able to tell her so a couple of months ago. every time I seen her, she would make me smile,... This time, I'm smiling and crying....

Jim O'Brien - May 16 at 08:12 PM

DA

I am sorry to read this about Bea. My wife, Susan Ashcraft, considered her one of her best friends. Rest in peace, Bea. Tell Susan hello for me.

Dale Ashcraft - May 18 at 07:24 PM