



## Rita M. Engle

February 23, 1949 - August 27, 2023

Rita M. Engle, 74 of Bluffton passed away on Sunday evening, August 27, 2023, at River Terrace Estates in Bluffton.

Rita was born on February 23, 1949, in Hammond, Indiana to Harry and Margaret (Zimmer) Zaleta.

On July 15th, 1972 in Lansing, Illinois, she married Dean Engle, whom she had met in Rome, Italy.

Rita graduated from Thorton Fractional High School with the class of 1967. Following high school, she attended the University of Illinois where she graduated as a registered nurse. Rita practiced nursing for over 20 years working at Caylor- Nickel Clinic, Wells Community Hospital, Cooper Rest Home and Visiting Nurses of Fort Wayne and Northeast Indiana. She also taught nursing at St. Joseph Hospital in Ft. Wayne. Rita and Dean owned and operated The Main Cleaners in Bluffton for 20 years.

She attended the First Presbyterian Church for 48 years. She was also a breast cancer survivor.

Survivors include her husband, Dean of Bluffton, daughters Jennifer (Jeremy) Daugherty of Bluffton, and Patricia (Shawn Schmidt) Engle of Portland, Oregon, along with 3 grandchildren; Kimberly (Malcolm) Marshall, Jared Neireiter and Alexis Neireiter all of Bluffton and a great-grandson, Maverick Marshall. She is also survived by her brother Jack Zaleta of Ossian and a special cousin, Linda McCann of Atlanta, GA., and her faithful black lab, Gemma.

She was preceded in death by her parents and a brother, James Zaleta.

Visitation will take place from 3 P.M. to 7 P.M. on Friday, (Sept. 1, 2023) at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton.

Funeral Services will take place at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, (Sept. 2, 2023) at the First Presbyterian Church with Rev. Terry Epling officiating. There will be an hour of visitation before the service at the church.

Burial will follow at the Garden of Chimes at Elm Grove Cemetery in Bluffton.

Memorials may be made to the First Presbyterian Church in Rita's memory.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to the family at [www.thomarich.com](http://www.thomarich.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Elm Grove Cemetery

3500 East State Road 124  
Bluffton, IN

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 1. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home  
308 West Washington Street  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
<http://www.thomarich.com>

## Visitation

SEP 2. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home  
308 West Washington Street  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
<http://www.thomarich.com>

## Funeral Service

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SEP 2. 10:30 AM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home  
308 West Washington Street  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
<http://www.thomarich.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Rita M. Engle*



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**Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home** - September 01, 2023 at 02:21 PM

JK

“ *Keeping the entire family in our thoughts and prayers. Growing up at the Bowling Center allowed me to meet many people from the Bluffton community; Dean, Rita and the girls were considered family;. May God comfort each of you during this difficult time.*

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**Jason Kunkel** - August 31, 2023 at 09:23 PM

AD

“ *We are praying for Dean and the family as you suffer through this loss of Rita. There will be a time when every thought of her becomes a loving memory overcoming the pain of separation. God bless you all. -- Alan and Gwen Daugherty*

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**Alan Daugherty** - August 31, 2023 at 06:55 PM

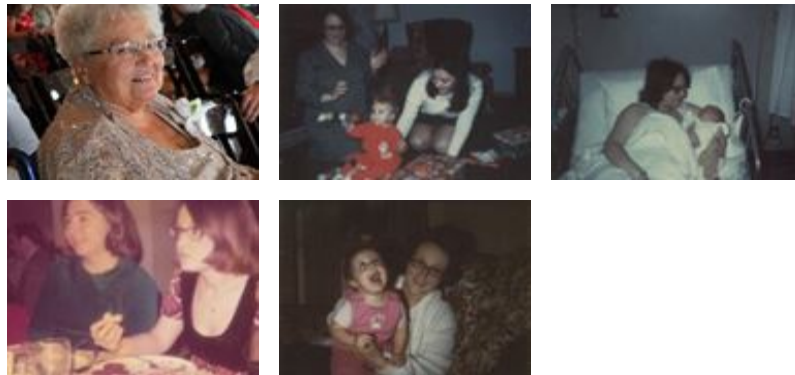
JD

“ I am her second cousin from Long Island New York now living in Arizona . Our families visited each other when our children were young. My mom Betty and her mom were first cousins . We first met when I was a teen. We wrote to each other over the years . She was a loving caring person. I was so happy to have her in my life. I will truly miss her even tho our relationship was so far from each other . Love from the damato's, Jeanette, Michael, Carl and Chris (Carl sr. Passed 3 years ago). My boys remember her kindness.

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**Jeanette damato** - August 31, 2023 at 03:54 PM



“ 151 files added to the album LifeTributes



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**Thoma/Rich,Lemler Funeral Home** - August 31, 2023 at 12:02 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Rita M. Engle.



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August 30, 2023 at 09:18 PM

SK

“ Dean, Jenni, Patti and families. Sorry to hear about Rita's passing. She was such a nice lady. I'm sure your memories are many (probably a lot of bowling memories, lol). Hopefully they will keep her alive in your hearts forever. RIP.

Steve Kunkel - August 30, 2023 at 10:11 AM

BC

“ Remembering our Christmas holidays in Daytona Beach, Florida with the entire family. Aunt Rita and Uncle Dean were the ones that started that tradition and we did it for years and years. Great memories.



Brenda E Cochran - August 30, 2023 at 03:26 AM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Rita M. Engle.



August 29, 2023 at 09:57 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Rita M. Engle.

August 29, 2023 at 09:57 PM

DG

“ So sorry to learn of Rita’s passing. Dean and the Engle family will be in our prayers. Dan and Darlene Gerdom



Dan Gerdom - August 29, 2023 at 12:00 PM

EL

“ Eunice L. purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Rita M. Engle.



Eunice L. - August 29, 2023 at 11:07 AM

EL

“ Dear Dean and family,  
Joe and I are so sad to hear of Rita’s passing. We have many fond memories of good times together as our families were growing. Rita was my best friend in high school and on into nursing school at U of I in Chicago. We were able to share and support each other through good times and low times. I will miss you dearly old friend. Always with love, Eunice and Joe

Eunice Lasky - August 29, 2023 at 10:45 AM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rita M. Engle.



August 28, 2023 at 08:18 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Rita M. Engle.

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August 28, 2023 at 07:44 PM