



## Christel Willfong

September 21, 1937 - April 26, 2025

Christel "Chris" Willfong, age 87, of Storm Lake, Iowa died Saturday, April 26, 2025 at Methodist Manor Retirement Community in Storm Lake.

Private services will take place at a later date. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements.

Chris was born on September 21, 1937, the daughter of Otto Fischer and Hedwig (Gerhardt)Fischer. She was baptized in 1937 and confirmed in 1948 at Schloss-Kirche, Winnenden, Germany. Raised by her grandmother, Chris attended Winnenden Gymnasium School. After graduating, she moved to Stuttgart, West Germany, graduating in 1962 with a degree in economics from Wirtschaftsakademie Stuttgart Business College. Chris also earned a translator diploma, German/English, from Berlitz School Stuttgart in 1964.

Chris married Jack Willfong (Msg. U.S. Army ) on May 18, 1967, in Buerg, Germany. Moving to Storm Lake, IA in 1969, often by herself, until Jack retired from the Army and joined her, living their married life in rural Storm Lake for many years.

In Germany, Chris worked as an executive secretary for Bochumer Verein & Huettenwerke GmbH Steel Company from 1960-1965. As a new bride in a new country, she obtained her first employment in the United States in 1969

-1972 as a bookkeeper for Power's Transportation Inc., Storm Lake, IA. In 1972-1975, began working for Clifton's Tax Service in Storm Lake, IA, as a Secretary/Bookkeeper. On October 1, 1976, Chris became a United States citizen after meeting several requirements, including an English proficiency test to demonstrate the ability to read, write, and speak English, and a civics knowledge examination demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of US history and government. Becoming a US citizen was something Chris was very proud of, and pridefully displayed her Certificate of Naturalization where she could see it every day. In 1975, she started her own small bookkeeping service for many clients in the area. Chris then worked at the Storm Lake School District Administration building as a part-time secretary from 1988-1989. It was then that she worked as a bookkeeper for BJK, Newell, IA, until her retirement in 2008. While still maintaining her private bookkeeping services and traveling to Sioux City IA, to use her translator skills for banks as requested. She also served as president of the Storm Lake Business and Professional Women's Organization in 1988 after serving as vice president for two years and one year as finance and budget chair for the Iowa Federation of Business and Professional Women, INC.

An avid reader of English and German novels, history, and politics of both the United States and Germany. To keep her mind sharp, she enjoyed Sudoku. Chris had a deep appreciation for nature, animals and beautiful photos of the outdoors. She took great pride in caring for her beloved cats and any animal that needed a home. She and Jack started a dog kennel business and personally enjoyed the company of labradors and yorkies.

When Jack passed away in 1986, she stayed on the acreage and loved mowing the lawn, caring for her flower beds, and the company of a host of outdoor animals. She also enjoyed the families of the neighborhood, who were very dear to her. Moving to an apartment in Storm Lake in 2016 and with the assistance of special friends and home health care, Chris was able to live

her quiet life, privately and independently, until her stroke on April 23rd, 2025. She will be deeply missed by the families that knew her, cared for her, learned from her, loved her, and enjoyed her and her stories so much.

Left to cherish the memory of Chris include: her dear cousin Martin Fisher residing in Germany, who shared a childhood with her, the same school classes for many years, and a life-long friendship. Special neighbors and special friends who became family to her.

Chris was preceded in death by her husband, Jack Willfong, her parents, Otto and Hedwig Fischer, Sister Gertrud Fischer Winneden, Germany, 2020. Brother Gerhard Fischer-Berlin Germany, 2024.

# Tribute Wall

CR

“ *CrystalCook lit a candle in memory of Christel Willfong*



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**CrystalCook** - April 28, 2025 at 08:09 PM

PR

“ *Pat Ryherd lit a candle in memory of Christel Willfong*



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**Pat Ryherd** - April 28, 2025 at 10:26 AM

DP

“ *Dorie Pedersen lit a candle in memory of Christel Willfong*



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**Dorie Pedersen** - April 27, 2025 at 06:09 PM

KM

“ *Kay Marvin lit a candle in memory of Christel Willfong*



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**Kay Marvin** - April 27, 2025 at 11:29 AM