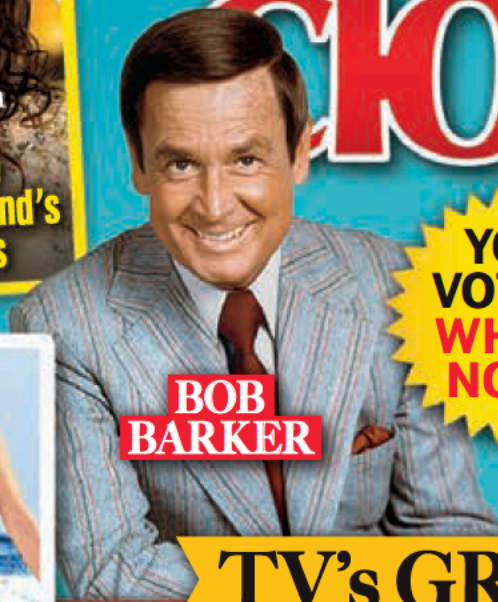


Friends Pay Tribute to 'Coal Miner's Daughter'



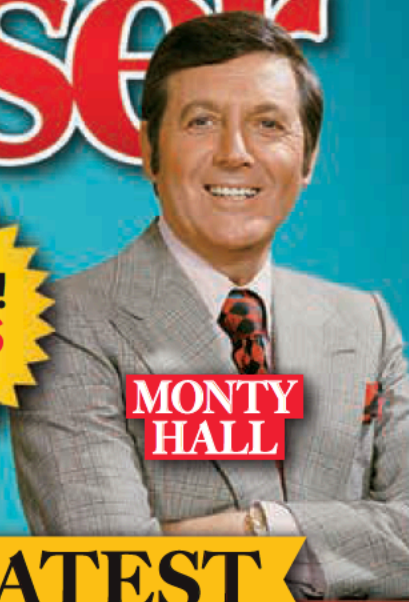
Loretta Lynn  
1932 - 2022  
Inside the  
Country Legend's  
Final Days

# closer



**BOB  
BARKER**

**YOU  
VOTED!  
WHO'S  
NO. 1?**



**MONTY  
HALL**



'Queen of Pinups'  
Bettie Page  
**A TRAGIC STORY  
OF BEAUTY  
& BETRAYAL**

**TV's GREATEST**

# GAME SHOW HOSTS!

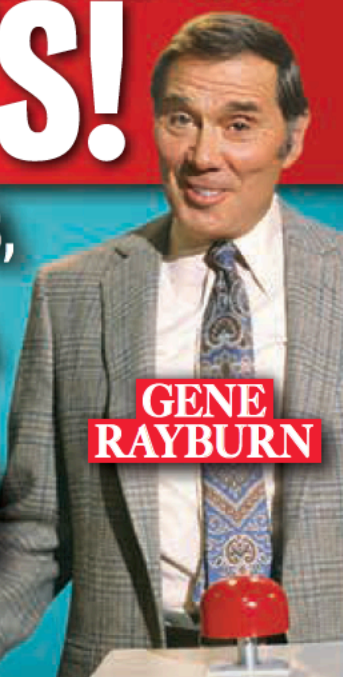


Mae West's  
**EPIC FIGHT  
FOR SOCIAL  
JUSTICE**



**RICHARD  
DAWSON**

**SET SECRETS,  
FAVORITE  
MEMORIES,  
WILDEST  
MOMENTS  
& TOUCHING  
FAREWELLS!**



**GENE  
RAYBURN**

OCTOBER 24, 2022



A360 MEDIA

## BETTIE PAGE

*Her*  
*Amazing*  
**UNTOLD  
STORY**

**SHE ENDURED DIFFICULT  
TIMES, BUT FOUND  
HAPPINESS IN FAITH AND A  
LATE-IN-LIFE COMEBACK**

**B**ettie Page, the raven-haired pinup queen with signature bangs and va-va-voom curves, ditched her stilettos and disappeared in 1957. Decades later, unbeknownst to her, she'd become a pop culture icon. In her 70s and living on a fixed income, Bettie caught wind of her comeback when she saw her picture on a magazine cover at the checkout stand. "I wrote the article, and Bettie spotted it at a supermarket in Ventura County," recalls biographer and friend, Karen Essex, author of *Bettie Page: The Life of a Pin-Up Legend*. "She was stunned about her revival."

Celebrated for her retro style and playful poses in bikinis and in the buff, Bettie emerged as a symbol of rockabilly chic and body positivity in the 1990s, when her likeness adorned everything from T-shirts to lunch boxes. Young women and celebrities, including Madonna, Beyoncé and Katy Perry, copied her look.

It was a long time coming — Bettie's road to fame was always a struggle. Born in Nashville, she endured a painful childhood. "Her mother was very jealous of her, and her father sexually abused her," Essex explains. "In spite of it all,



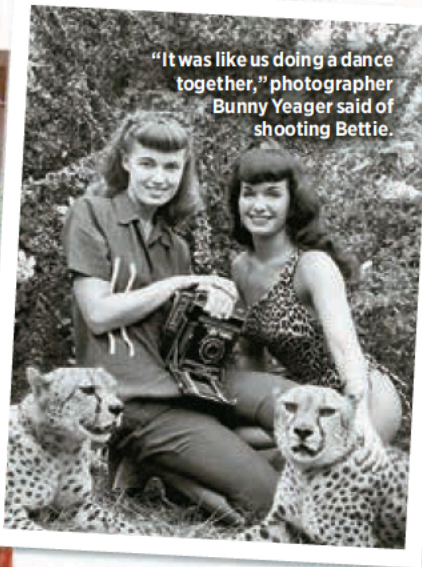




In 1961, Bettie posed for a picture with her mom Edna, sister Goldie and nephew Ron.



Bettie, with *Playboy's* Hugh Hefner, enjoyed her unexpected popularity.



"It was like us doing a dance together," photographer Bunny Yeager said of shooting Bettie.

**"I went and cut the bangs. I've been wearing them ever since. They say it's my trademark."**

—Bettie Page

Bettie graduated high school salutatorian and put herself through college.

Her first post-college job as a teacher proved tricky. "I couldn't control my students, especially the boys," Bettie said. A brief marriage to her high school sweetheart didn't fare much better. "They had nothing in common," Essex says. After the couple divorced, Bettie studied acting in New York and worked as a secretary before a chance encounter kick-started her career. "A photographer approached her on the beach in Coney Island and asked if he could take her picture," Essex says. "It all took off from there."

### **PINUP GIRL**

Bettie modeled nonstop for men's magazines, camera clubs and fashion spreads. Behind the scenes, she designed her own costumes, did her hair and makeup, and cultivated her trademark flair. In 1955, at age 32, she won the title of "Miss Pinup

Girl of the World" and appeared as a *Playboy* centerfold. Offers flooded in, but that same year, Bettie became the target of a Senate-led anti-pornography investigation. "It was very traumatic and triggered her decision to quit modeling and quietly slip away," Essex recounts.

Life outside the spotlight proved challenging, too. Two more marriages fell apart, and Bettie battled mental illness until she found solace in Christian faith. "The thing that brought her back around was religion," Essex says.

Bettie died in 2008, but lived long enough to cash in on her newfound popularity and embrace her legacy with pride. "I want to be remembered as a woman who changed people's perspectives concerning nudity in its natural form," she said. "I don't even believe God disapproves of nudity. After all, he put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden naked as jaybirds." —*Hilary Hattenbach, with reporting by Natalie Posner*