



# Cherryvale Woman Wants Return Trip to Heaven

**VALVITA JONES**

Article published in the Coffeyville Journal (Coffeyville, Kansas) on August 20, 1997  
of Valvita Jones' personal account contained in Rita Bennett's latest book, *To Heaven and Back*  
Written by Roger Huff, News Editor

*“As chronicled  
in book, a  
near-death  
experience  
carried her  
there once.”*

For many people, one visit to a place is plenty. They are satisfied—or dissatisfied—with what they found and feel no need to return.

At other times one trip can fuel a desire for future visits, making

the person want to return to the place and take in as much of it as possible.

Valvita Jones of Cherryvale falls into the second category. She went to heaven in 1974 during a near-death experience and plans to go again someday.

Jones was born and raised in Coffeyville, graduating from Field Kindley High School in 1966. Her maiden name was Valvita Anderson.

Jones' account of her near-death experience is included in the book, "To Heaven and Back" by Rita Bennett and published by Zondervan Publishing House. The book was due to be released Aug. 1.

"It feels good" to be included in the book, Jones said. "I was flattered. I should say really honored that she would want to put it in the book..."

When Bennett learned of Jones's NDE, she contacted her. Jones appeared on Bennett's television program in 1992 in Washington state.

At the time of her near-death experience, Jones lived in Kansas City, MO. Just three months after having a cesarean section, she went into the University of Kansas Medical Center due to a serious infection in her reproductive organs.

The baby Jones gave birth to in the cesarean was premature and only lived 1 1/2 days. His name was Gabriel, and he is buried in Independence.

A few days after the surgery, Jones was recuperating but took a turn for the worse.

During a fight for her life, Jones took two breaths, then a third very deep breath. She started moving upward and from above observed lifesaving efforts by the medical team.

Jones said she was in what she called the first sky, and met Jesus, who took her through three heavens. In a very short time she was standing before God the Father.

There was a review of Jones' life showing the good and the bad. After the review, Jones said, she felt very unworthy.

Jesus stepped away from Jones, turned sideways and stretched out his arms making a bridge. One arm went to Jones and the other went to God the Father. Jesus' arms were extended making a cross and a bridge between Jones and God the Father.

At that time Jones saw Jesus as her advocate with the Father, as is spoken of in Scripture.

Jesus returned to Jones and the two of them talked for a time before he told her she had to return to earth.

For Jones, the trip to heaven solidified what she already believed.

"Everything I had believed was confirmed," she said, "especially Jesus being the advocate. I know that's for real. That's one of the main things."

Jones does not recall seeing any dead relatives during her experience.

"Unlike many people, I did not see any of my dead relatives or anything like that. If I did, it was erased from my memory," Jones said.

Jones could reach out and touch items during her experience.

"It was very vivid and very real. It was solid. It was tangible. It was real," Jones said.

At first Jones shared her experience with very few people.

She heard of a group for people who had near-death experiences and went to a couple of meetings.

"You feel kind of isolated," she said. "...I went to the group and it was pretty neat. There were some that were really out there."

Many who have related near-death experiences hold to New Age beliefs, Jones said. "I suppose New Age people think their (near-death experience) is as good as anybody else's. I look at mine as part of my belief in God and Christ. A lot of (New Agers) believe 'I am God.' I don't believe I am God. Hopefully, God's Spirit is in me. I believe in the Trinity. I believe that.

"For my experience, I just can speak for myself, it just confirmed everything I believed."

Jones lived 18 years in Seattle and two years in Spokane before coming back to Montgomery County. She lived in Independence for a short time and has lived about 18 months in Cherryvale.

"It's amazing," she said. "Since I've been here, I've spoken to maybe four people that have had near-death experiences."

There are times Jones feels led to tell others about her experience.

"It didn't just happen for me to keep silent about it. If I feel like someone needs to hear it, I'll tell them about it," Jones said.

"When I think people are ready for it, I share it. It's just like the Holy Spirit lets me know in my head 'hey, you need to share this with them.'"

Thus far she has usually shared the experience in a one-on-one setting.

"Maybe it's time for that to change," Jones said. "I certainly don't mind sharing it."

Jones was not terribly materialistic before her experience, but she is even less so now.

"It did help me step back and look at life. (It made me) look at the little things in life and not take them for granted," Jones said.

The experience gave Jones a better understanding of unconditional love. It has also given her more boldness in sharing her faith.

"I already had a personal relationship with Christ as far as I was concerned but after that happened...mmm," she said.

Jones was not given any specific direction during her experience.

"It was like he said just before I returned that he had a work for me to do."

While Jones is not sure what that work is, she believes her children are part of it.

She and her husband have a grown son, Manuel, who lives in Marysville, WA, and grown daughter, Monique, who lives in Kentucky. They also have four adopted children, Kelsey, 9, Jesse, 7, and twins Michael and Michelle, 4. There is also another little girl, Keziah, 2 who they hope to adopt.

In addition to giving those small children a home, Jones said she has a gift in helping those who are dying and has also "helped mothers bring their babies into the world."

Jones is quick to say her near-death experience was positive.

"Yes. Yes, without a doubt. It was a good experience. When it began, I didn't feel worthy of being there. ...It's just like Jesus was so reassuring. I just felt so much love until you don't worry about anything else. Nothing at all."

The experience left Jones with a sense of the reality of heaven.

"I've been there and I have seen it and I know it is so," she said. "I know it is real. I know heaven is real. I know God is real. I know Jesus is real."

Jones said anyone with questions may call her at (316) 336-2591.