

Gay Lynn (Drury) Murphy, 80, peacefully passed away on Thursday, January 1, 2026, with family and friends by her side. Gay was born July 7, 1945, to Hayward and Harriet (Pearson) Drury in Madison Lake, South Dakota. She was joined by three younger brothers Hayward Jr "Jay", James "Roger", and David. She moved with her family to Pipestone, MN in 1950. Gay spent her childhood helping raise her brothers and working in the Pipestone Shopper, a print and gift shop run by her mother for many years. Gay graduated from Pipestone High School and earned her teaching degree at Mankato State University in Mankato, MN. Gay taught elementary school in Fairmont, MN, Reliance and Chamberlain, SD, and substituted in Lower Brule, SD.

Gay met a handsome cowboy while working as a counselor at the Medicine Creek Guest Ranch near Kennebec, SD. While working there she also enjoyed trail riding and barrel racing. Jim and Gay were married July 10, 1971, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, in Reliance, SD. Even though a tornado went through town the day before the wedding and tipped over the water tower, the wedding went on without a hitch. Jim and Gay fostered several children over the years. They were blessed with a son, Brian, in 1976, who joined his adopted brother Cephais. Sadly, Brian passed away in 2010. Jim and Gay made their home ranching in Reliance for over 40 years before moving to a beautiful location along the Cheyenne River in Custer County, SD where they raise horses and a few head of cattle (just enough to keep them busy and not officially "retired"), and spend time with the many friends they have met since moving there. Family members have enjoyed the annual Murphy/Burke picnic at their place along the river every July for several years.

While living in Reliance, Jim and Gay were members of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Lower Brule, SD where Gay was the organist, pianist, and vocalist for many years. Gay was an avid gardener and had beautiful flower and vegetable gardens. She helped many people with gardens providing advice and tips, and many of her irises and lilies are blooming in the gardens of several family members. Gay raised Shetland Sheepdog (Ranchland Shelties) and several family members owned her dogs over the years. She loved attending dog shows whenever she had the chance. Gay was also very involved in Girls Scouts and 4-H as a young girl and stayed involved with 4-H with their children for many years and enjoyed teaching dog obedience classes. Gay and Jim are lifelong members of the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association and received the Workhorse Award and the Lifetime Achievement award for their many years of service and support.

Gay spent a lot of time researching genealogy and discovered family history and family members for both her and Jim's families. She even made trips to Denmark and Sweden with her mother where they met several of their relatives. Her interests in genealogy led her to the Lyman-Brule Genealogical Society where she was a member and helped others with their pursuit of family information. Gay valued history, both of family and community, she also volunteered at the Lyman County Historical Museum in Presho, SD.

Gay was diagnosed with psoriasis and rheumatoid arthritis at the age of 15, but she did not let the disease define her and she was able to enjoy several other hobbies including reading, sewing, crocheting, knitting, baking, and hardanger needlework; her crafts were fought over during Christmas gift exchange games and her candied orange peels and zucchini bread were the first to get eaten at family dinners.

Gay is survived by her loving husband Jim; her brothers and their wives, Jay and Cindi, Roger and Sue, and David and LynDea; in-laws Kathleen and Robert Sherrell, Owen and Lois Murphy, many nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews, her very special lifelong friend Bonnie Bartlett and the many, many extended family and friends she has met along the way, too numerous to name.

Gay was preceded in death by their son, Brian, her parents, Hayward and Harriet Drury, in-laws Marion and Claire Murphy, brothers-and-sisters-in-law; Donna Drury, Mary and Paul Burke; and John and Irene Murphy; nieces Danielle Drury and Michelle Goehner.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to their niece, Nicole Murphy, and all the close friends and neighbors who made Jim and Gay part of their community.

# In Loving Memory Of Gay Lynn Murphy

1945 ~ 2025



In Loving Memory

*Gay Lynn Murphy*

July 7, 1945 ~ January 1, 2026

*The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me; Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

**Rosary/Scripture Service**

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Reliance, SD  
6:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 7, 2026

**Funeral Service**

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Reliance, SD  
10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 8, 2026

**Officiating**

Monsignor Michael Woster  
Father Marius Saputra

**Music**

Sister Ramona, TMM  
Sister Grecely, TMM  
Sister Clara Joy, TMM  
Sister Yollie, TMM

**Casketbearers**

John Burke  
Mark Burke  
Jack Smith  
Jeremiah Burke  
Jake Smith  
Jaylen Burke

**Interment**

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Reliance, SD

Please join the family back at the St. Mary's Catholic Church following the committal service for lunch & fellowship.