

Gerald "Jerry" Rydell,

Jerry was born October 15, 1942, to Bernie and Dorothy Rydell in Rosholt, SD. He spent his childhood in Rosholt and Fairmount, ND, attending country school and graduating from Fairmount High School in 1960. After high school, Jerry explored different career paths but soon returned to what he loved most—farming in Fairmount alongside his family.

On July 2, 1971, Jerry married the love of his life, Cathy O'Keefe. Together, they raised their four children in Fairmount, ND, where they built a life centered on family, adventure, and community. Jerry and Cathy were known for their spontaneous travels and especially cherished their time at their favorite place, Lake Havasu.

In his later years, Jerry started his own business, Rydell Pilot Car, which allowed him to combine his love for driving and meeting people. His work took him across the country, and he was proud to see his business grow. Jerry's signature van with its flashing lights became a familiar sight to many as he navigated the open roads. Whether driving for work or cruising through the countryside to check on fields, Jerry was happiest on the road.

Jerry was passionate about racing, attending over 1,000 races throughout the Midwest and beyond. He passed this love down to his children and grandchildren, even cheering on two who began racing themselves. His love for sports extended to cheering on the Minnesota Vikings and enjoying simple moments playing pinochle on his iPad.

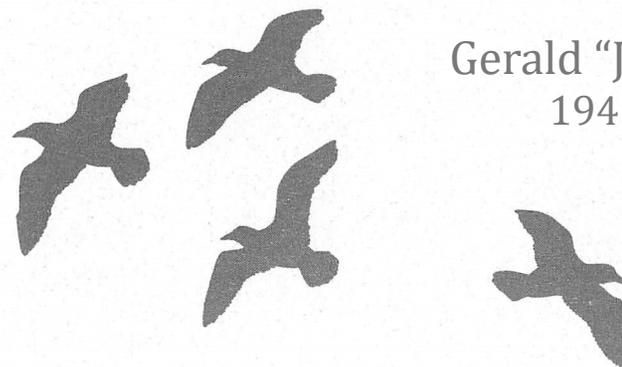
Known for his boundless energy, kind heart, and ever-present smile, Jerry never stayed in one place for long. He lived life to the fullest, remaining active and engaged up until his final days. His zest for life and deep love for his family leave a legacy that will forever be cherished.

Jerry is survived by his children: Greg (Kathy) Goodijohn, Kris (Jack) Braun, and Kay (RJ) Lick; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; sister Valerie (Stan); brother Dean (Joan); and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Cathy; his son, Steve; his parents, Bernie and Dorothy; his sister, June; and his brother-in-law, Keith.

"Always on the go, always with a smile -
Jerry lived life in the driver's seat."

Gerald "Jerry" Rydell
1942 - 2025



Going Home

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free I'm following the path God laid for me. I took his hand when I heard him call I turned my back and left it all. I could not stay another day to laugh, to love, to work or play. Tasks undone must stay that way. I found that peace at close of day. If my parting has left a void then fill it with remembered joy. A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss, ah, yes, these things I too will miss. Be not burdened with times of sorrow I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow. My life's been full, I've savored much, good friends, good times, a loved one's touch. Perhaps my time seemed all too brief, don't lengthen it now with undue grief. Lift up your hearts and share with me God wanted me now:

He set me free.



Gerald "Jerry" Rydell

Born

October 15, 1942 | Breckenridge, Minnesota

Passed Away

January 8, 2025 | Lincoln, Nebraska

Age

82 Years | 2 Months | 24 Days

Memorial Service

11:00 AM

Friday, January 17, 2025
Vertin-Munson Funeral Home
Wahpeton, North Dakota

Officiant

Colette Barton

Music

"Wind Beneath My Wings"
"Amazing Grace"
"Dancing In The Sky"

Urn Bearers

Jerry's Grandchildren

Interment

Fairview Cemetery | Wahpeton, North Dakota