

IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
*James B. Gesswein*

**WHO WAS BORN**

December 20, 1943 - Milbank, South Dakota

**AND CALLED TO HIS ETERNAL HOME**

June 29, 2025 - Milbank, South Dakota

**FUNERAL SERVICE**

Thursday, July 10, 2025 - 10:30 a.m.

Emanuel Lutheran Church  
Milbank, South Dakota

**OFFICIANT**

Rev. Chris Davis

**MUSICIAN**

Nancy Meyer, Organist

**CASKET BEARERS**

Mike Mach | Al Mathiason | Vincent Yamara  
Norm Giesen | Mark Leddy | Jim Berkner  
Bob Paulson | Dave Hystad | Kevin Wherry

**HONORARY BEARERS**

Milbank Fire Department  
Milbank Area Hospital Staff

**MILITARY HONORS**

South Dakota Army National Guard  
740th Transportation Company

**INTERMENT**

St. Lawrence Cemetery - Milbank, South Dakota

**APPRECIATION**

Jim's family is grateful for your attendance at this service. Your expressions of kindness and love are deeply appreciated. Following the graveside service, please join Jim's family for a time of food and fellowship in the church dining room.



Isaiah 40:31

But they that wait upon  
*the Lord*  
Shall renew their strength.  
They shall mount up with  
*wings* as eagles,  
They shall run, and not be weary;  
*And they shall walk,*  
and not faint.

*Please use this QR code to  
access Jim's obituary, slide  
show, & online guestbook.  
Mundwiler Funeral Home  
Milbank, South Dakota*



IN LOVING  
*Memory*



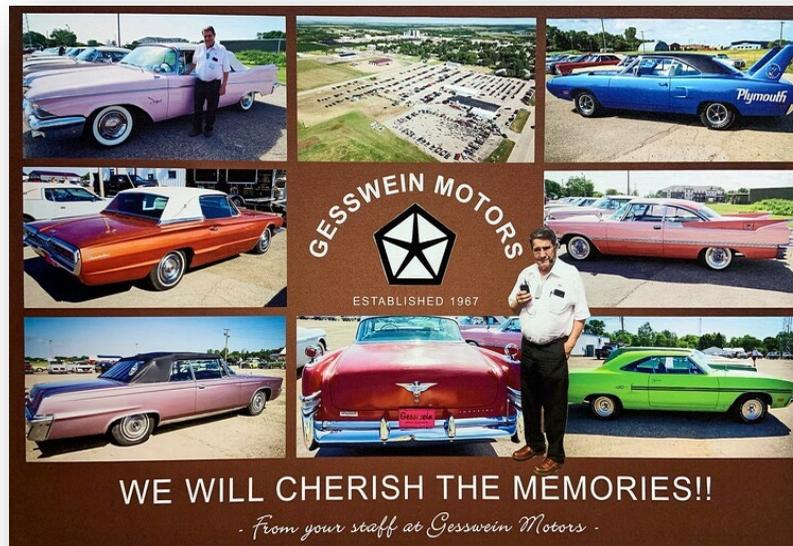
*Jim Gesswein*

1943 - 2025



**J**ames Bernhardt Gesswein was born on December 20, 1943, in Milbank, SD, to Arthur and Wylah (Shaw) Gesswein. He graduated from Milbank High School and proudly served in the Army National Guard from 1964 to 1970. On June 21, 1973, he married the love of his life, Sue Dornbusch Heilman. Together, they built a life rooted in family, hard work, and dedication to their community.

A true entrepreneur at heart, Jim began selling cars as a teenager alongside his father and then founded Gesswein Motors, which became a cornerstone of the Milbank business community. With more than 60 years in the automobile industry, he sold new, used, and classic cars to customers across the country. He didn't just sell cars, he built lifelong relationships, earning the trust of countless loyal customers across the region. His leadership and personal touch made Gesswein Motors more than a dealership; it became a symbol of service, commitment, and hometown pride. Jim was deeply grateful to the employees and customers who supported his dealership throughout the decades.



Beyond his business, Jim was passionate about his hometown. He was a strong supporter of Milbank and worked to ensure that the community he proudly called home thrived and remained strong. His philanthropic efforts left a lasting imprint on the place he loved. His service included leadership roles with the Grant County Economic Development Corporation, Whetstone Valley Snowmobile Association, and the Minneapolis Dealer Council where he served as president. He also served as president of the National Chrysler Dealer Council. He was a member of the Milbank Volunteer Fire Department from 1964 to 1974.

One of his most lasting legacies was in healthcare. As president of the Milbank Area Hospital Foundation for 20 years, Jim's vision and leadership were instrumental in guiding the hospital through various transitions. Through his unwavering dedication, he helped to ensure that the quality of care remained accessible to the community he so deeply cared for.

While his business and community work were deeply important to him, Jim held his role as a family man above all others. His greatest joy in life came from the love he shared with his wife of 51 years, Sue, and their three sons: Jimmy, Kevin, and Tim. He was fiercely proud of each of them and cared for them with unwavering devotion. Jim also cherished the bond he shared with his brothers: Art and John. Art, the oldest, remained a trusted advisor and daily confidant, often discussing cars, life, and family during their near-daily

conversations. John, the youngest, worked side-by-side with Jim and was one of his most trusted partners in business. Their unique blend of brotherhood and partnership was a constant in Jim's life and a source of great pride.

Jim also enjoyed the great outdoors and found joy in snowmobile racing, hunting, waterskiing, and boating. His adventurous spirit and zest for life were evident in all he did.

Jim Gesswein is survived by his wife, Sue of Milbank, SD; sons: Kevin (Kelly) Heilman of Tucson, AZ; Tim Heilman of Watertown, SD; and James "Jimmy" Gesswein of Milbank, SD; brothers: Art Gesswein of Shakopee, MN; and John (Judy) Gesswein of Milbank, SD; as well as step-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents.



*He will be remembered for his steadfast leadership, generous heart, and unwavering commitment to Milbank. His impact on the community will be felt for generations.*

***"Gesswein Motors...It's Worth The Drive"***