



Gail Palencia Johnson

December 13, 1937 - August 23, 2023

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Our beloved mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother Gail Johnson entered into the presence of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on Wednesday, August 23, 2023. She passed away peacefully with her family by her side at Woodwinds Hospital in Woodbury, Minnesota due to complications from a stroke after a long struggle with dementia. She was 85 years old.

Gail was born to Fred and Palencia Parish on December 13, 1937, at Swedish Hospital in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her parents divorced when she was very young. She grew up in south Minneapolis with her mom, her step-father, and her brother Clint Anderson. She attended Minnehaha Elementary School and Nokomis Jr. High. She lived most of her adult life in the south metro, specifically the Burnsville area for that last 20 years. However, the home where she grew up must have meant a lot to her because as the dementia got worse, she would say she just wanted to go home. When we would ask where she thought that was, she said south Minneapolis, and she even told us the specific address even though she lived there 70 years before.

Gail married Rich Johnson in January 1954. They had 4 children together; Shelly, Lori, Randy & Lon. They were later divorced but remained friends until

his death in 1980.

Gail was not afraid of hard work. After her divorce she often worked more than one job at a time to support her family. She has worked for several companies over the years but her favorite employment was her last one with Northwest Airlines (now Delta) where she retired after 15 years of service in 2005. She liked the people she worked with, she liked the work and most of all she appreciated the travel benefits and she took full advantage of them. She loved to travel. She was always planning her next trip; it was her favorite thing to do.

Gail embraced life and had many hobbies in addition to traveling; reading, quilting, and photography until Macular Degeneration made it too difficult for her to see well enough to do them. She liked to volunteer for many things. To her, it was important to help and serve; especially those that were less fortunate than her.

She loved her family and was proud of them. Always interested in what they were doing. She treasured long-standing friendships with family friends, co-workers, neighbors, her "club" of junior high girlfriends, and her very dear friend Sandra Hutchison.

Gail is loved and she will be missed very much but we know someday we will see her again in Heaven.

Gail was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by four children; Shelly Carney, Lori Myers, Randy (Roxanne) Johnson, Lon (Becky) Johnson, 11 grandchildren; Corey Carney, Marcus (Sara) Graves, Jessica (Ryan) Striker, Angela (Nate) Miller, Ryan (Kryssia) Johnson, Alexa Carney, Holly (Nate) Lechner, Paige (Jake) Lindsey, Calvin Johnson, Helen Johnson, and Claudia Johnson, & 11 great-grandchildren; Maddox Graves, Hazel Striker, Sawyer Graves, Caleb Striker, Nicholas Carney, Hadassah Johnson, Myka

Miller, Moses Miller, Moses Johnson, Malachi Miller, and Lydia Johnson; and her brother Clint (Diane) Anderson.

Gail had a file that she labeled simply, "After". There were notes about her funeral and other things. This is one of the things she wrote: "To my children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives, and friends, I want to thank you all for having shared in my life."

Funeral service Saturday, September 2, 2023 at River Hills Methodist Church, 11100 River Hills Dr, Burnsville, MN. Service time is 11:00am with visitation one hour prior. Luncheon to follow. Internment following luncheon at Dawn Valley Cemetery, 9940 Bush Lake Rd, Bloomington.

Memorial donation suggestions: Samaritan's Purse and Feed My Starving Children

Cemetery Details

Dawn Valley Memorial Park (Bloomington)

9940 Bush Lake Road
Bloomington, MN 55438

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 2. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

River Hills United Methodist Church
11100 River Hills Drive
Burnsville, MN 55337

Church Service

SEP 2. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

River Hills United Methodist Church
11100 River Hills Drive
Burnsville, MN 55337

Tribute Wall

“ We were asked to think of words describing our mom. There are so many: loving, giving, compassionate, caring, hard-working, generous, encouraging, determined, fair, honest, adventurous, supportive, grateful, humorous, witty, stubborn, and the list could go on. The last word she attributed to herself was adaptable. Mom’s life was not easy but it had purpose and joy. She tried to make the best of her circumstances. She loved her children, cheering us on in our successes and sometimes challenging us to do better. She taught us the value of hard work, encouraged us to make wise choices for the future, and was proud of our accomplishments. She was an example for us as we tried to do the same for our own children. She showed interest in our interests, then the interests of our children and grandchildren. She attended countless concerts, school programs, athletic events, drove us to many functions like choir practice, piano lessons, and scout meetings. She cultivated gratitude in us as she stressed the importance of thank you notes when we received gifts or applied for scholarships or jobs.

Family was incredibly important to her and a great source of joy, which is why she organized family picnics each summer and a Christmas gathering each year. She desired to keep the family connected even though jobs moved many of us apart.

Mom valued friendships and looked forward to being with her “club” of long-standing girlfriends from Junior High who met regularly for most of their lives. It’s amazing to think of friendships lasting 7+ decades. She often developed friendships with neighbors over interests like hospitality, crafts (quilting, crocheting and knitting), cards, books (she managed the library at the Parkway for years)... And her longest friendship was with Sandra who was like a sister to her (their moms were best friends). Many summers were shared together and lots of great memories made.

Mom was generous with her time by serving as an election judge, volunteering at flu clinics, and putting together Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. She encouraged others to do so, too. She was generous with her money, giving to numerous organizations because of the compassion she felt for the needs they addressed.

She encouraged not only her family but friends as well to buy animals through World Vision or Samaritan's Purse. She wanted the grandkids to grow in compassion for the needs of others and she got great joy when she told the family what they were able to provide for needy families.

As a mother, she passed on her faith to her kids by teaching us prayers at meals and bedtime, valuing going to church, Sunday School, VBS, and serving behind the scenes on altar guild. She was a pray-er, especially for her family and for tragedies she'd hear about. Later in life she joined Bible study groups and those gals meant a lot to her. She grew in her faith in Christ, reading her Bible regularly and devotionals, too.

I miss Mom, not only as a mom, but as a dear friend. We traveled together to the Alps, the Canadian Rockies, California, the North Shore, and several times to Alaska. We grew closer this last decade as we spent more time together, and I think it's her friendship that I will miss the most. We talked nearly every day and spent time together shopping, playing cards, talking about life and family, and watching movies together.

I'm grateful to God for having her as my Mom. I hope to be a blessing to my family as she has been to us. Lori

Lori Myers - September 02, 2023 at 06:51 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gail Palencia Johnson.*



August 31, 2023 at 04:26 PM

AM

“ Grandma Gail always made me feel valued. When I was little, she was prepared with Dominos, Legos, Battleship, and the peg game tin for her grandkids. She didn't mind when we would play with her cow stuffed animal collection, and she had her VCR ready to play *The Sound of Music* or *Mary Poppins*.

When she would visit us, Grandma encouraged me in the activities I did and also felt comfortable using sarcasm to call out my bad attitude when I would try to get out of dishes or trumpet practice. She tried to come to each major life event and support us as much as possible.

I'm so thankful that God gave me Grandma Gail as my grandma. It's going to be hard to not have that steady presence in my life, someone who wants good things for us, someone who is always for us.

I will never forget one of the last times I talked with Grandma before her health problems worsened. She had come over to my house for a party, and she told me that she admired how I set up my house. As she repeated the compliment several times, I felt so loved and encouraged because I knew she said it genuinely and because her opinion really mattered to me.

In the hospital, I told her some of these memories and that I'm so thankful that God put her in my life. As I was talking to her, she teared up, and at that point, she wasn't able to speak much, but when I told her I loved her, she moved her lips and seemed to be trying to say what she had said so many times: "I love you."

Angela Miller - August 31, 2023 at 12:17 PM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gail Palencia Johnson.



August 31, 2023 at 12:57 AM

VI

“ One day I went over to Gail’s apartment to help her clean the needles on her Keurig coffee pot and brought her chicken chow mein from David Fongs. She love David Fongs and she said you didn’t need to do that and than she smiled. Love that lady and miss her.

Vicky - August 30, 2023 at 08:17 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Gail Palencia Johnson.



August 30, 2023 at 02:41 PM