



## Gay Schmidt

January 24, 1933 - December 25, 2021

Gayleen Mae Schmidt died peacefully on December 25, 2021 in Deephaven, MN; she was 88. Gayleen was born January 24, 1933 in Gladstone, ND. This little town provided Gayleen with cherished stories and recollections; climbing Riley's hill, dancing to 'real music' of the big band era, being taught by nuns in the public school. She graduated from Gladstone High School in 1951. Gayleen attended St. Luke's School of Nursing in Fargo, ND. One fateful weekend on the way to a Bison football game, she met a chemistry student named Roger who was attending NDSU. Roger and his friends convinced the small group of nursing students, they should go for a cup of coffee rather than attend the game. The stage was set for a lifelong romance. Also in those college years, she bonded like sisters with many in her cohort of nursing students, graduating as an R.N. in 1958. Gay and Roger married in January of 1961 at the First United Methodist church in Dickinson, ND. They settled eventually on some acreage in Chanhassen, MN where they lived for 44 years. Here they shared their love of nature, Roger focused on the forestry and Gayleen on the landscaping and critters. Photo albums were filled with racoons, deer, chipmunks, rabbits, etc; her favorites were birds, cats and autumn leaves. Gay was a beloved member of the nearby MN Arboretum. Gay was one of the earliest volunteer Tour Guides at the Arboretum, having led tours when Dr. Snyder, the 1st Arb Director, was there. Here she met her lifelong friend, Mary Schumacher, who was the 1st female tram driver at the Arb. To picture this trailblazing team is to hear Gay and Mary laughing and

teaching, as they joyously shared their love of nature with the community. Gay was a Carver County Public Health Nurse, meeting with people in their homes and assessing their needs. Even after retirement she never stopped caring and looking out for the people around her. Retirement allowed more time for traveling with Roger as they visited almost all of the United States during their time together. Gay's hobbies were traveling, drawing, singing, playing the piano, bird watching and the lost art of phone calls and letter/card writing. She had a giving soul. It is with great joy in her final years that she received visits and collected handmade cards from caring individuals associated with Joyful Companions in-home senior care, who along with her niece-like cousin Donna McKirdy, teamed up to share the journey of Gay's final years at Deephaven Woods Senior Living; going on walks, talking of birds and cats, doing puzzles and sitting by the fire with new pals while reminiscing about her lifetime of dear family and friends. Gayleen is survived by her sister Marlene (Enger) Schurman of Ft. Benton, MT, with niece and nephews; her sister-like aunt Stanlie (McKirdy) Kreitinger of Three Forks, MT; her brother-like uncle Wayne McKirdy of Lisbon, ND and also by many cousins. She is preceded in death by her husband Roger Arland Schmidt and by parents, Casper (Cap) Enger and Irene (McKirdy) Enger Smole. Gay's memorial is Saturday, Jan 15 at 2pm in the Deephaven Woods Senior Living Chapel, 18025 Minnetonka Blvd, Deephaven, MN 55391, masks required. There will be an additional outdoor memorial in summer '22 at the Gladstone Cemetery in Gladstone ND.

Memorials can be given to the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

[www.Wasburn-McReavy.com](http://www.Wasburn-McReavy.com)

Davies Chapel 612-377-2203

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service

JAN 15. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Deephaven Woods Senior living  
18025 Minnetonka Blvd  
Deephaven, MN 55391

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Donna McKirdy - January 08, 2022 at 12:11 PM

PH

Love that picture!

Pam Haas - January 10, 2022 at 01:32 PM

CW

My wonderful neighbor who taught us how to make 3d Holly hobby pictures. I'll always remember her with love ❤️

Colleen Wyers - August 01, 2025 at 06:42 AM

MS

“ Gay ... My cherished friend. I will miss our love of nature together, our walks around the Green Heron Pond & our talks in & about the Arboretum. We toured guided together examining the trees & telling how they too can give. Mary Schumacher

mary Schumacher - January 08, 2022 at 08:23 AM