



Carolyn Joan Gray

December 6, 1945 - September 6, 2025

Carolyn “Joan” Gray, 79 of Keystone, passed away peacefully surrounded by her family Saturday evening, September 6, 2025, at Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne. She was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Her life was marked by dedication, compassion and quiet strength.

She was born on December 6, 1945, in Wells County to Donald and Francis Irene (Hinshaw) Williams.

Joan graduated from Petroleum High School in 1964 and earned her nursing degree from Ball Memorial School of Nursing in 1967. She devoted 28 years of compassionate care to patients at Wells Community Hospital and later served the community for 7 years at the Wells County Health Department. A woman of strong faith, Joan was a member of the Reformed Church. She was known for her kindness, her unwavering love for her family and her competitive spirit during games of Pegs and Jokers – her favorite pastime. Joan was the devoted wife of Galen Gray and the cherished mother of Dawn Ertel of Olathe, Kansas, and Gay Lynn (Preston) Bartlett of Cleveland, Ohio. She was a proud grandmother of Karlie (Kyle) Nations, Connie Gray, Ryan Bartlett and Evan (Alex) Zaremba, and a loving great-grandmother to Graham Nations, Lilah Nations and Keeley Bartlett.

She is survived by her husband, Galen of Keystone, her daughters, Dawn Ertel and Gay Lynn (Preston) Bartlett, her three grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren, along with her siblings, Nancy Williams of Carmel, Becky

(Barry) Penrod of Bluffton, Mike (Tracy) Williams of Indianapolis and Jeff (Sandy) Williams of Phoenix, AZ.

She was preceded in death by her granddaughter, Brett Bartlett, whom she held dearly in her heart, her parents, and her siblings, Helen (Ray) Cale, Theodore "Ted" (LuAnn) Williams and Tom Williams.

Joan's presence brightened every room, and her legacy will live on through the countless lives she touched. She will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, from 4 to 8 P.M. and for one hour prior to the service at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home. Funeral services will take place on Thursday (Sept. 11) at 10:30 A.M. with Dr. Bryson "Gene" Bell officiating. Burial will follow at Stahl Cemetery. Memorials may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital or Shriners Hospital for Children and may be directed through the funeral home.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Lemler family of Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton. Friends may share online condolences with the family at www.thomarich.com.

Cemetery Details

Stahl Cemetery

3191 E 700 S
Bluffton, IN

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 10. 4:00 AM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Visitation

SEP 11. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Funeral Service

SEP 11. 10:30 AM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Tribute Wall

BH

“ *Our sincere condolences,
Bob & Bonnie Harris.*

Bonnie Harris - September 13, 2025 at 11:23 AM

MR

“ *Hi,
Joan and I attended Ball Memorial School of nursing together and
since have met at our reunions. I will never forget when she came to
my mother's funeral in Warren, In. I was so touched by her surprise
visit, I cried. Prior when my grandfather was at Wells Co. hospital,
she would check on him and update me as I was living in Georgia.
She always had a happy loving manner ready to help others at any
time. I know you are too grateful for happy memories with Joan.
God Bless.
Hugs, Marilyn Rettig*

Marilyn Rettig - September 12, 2025 at 01:26 PM

LB

“ *Joan was a wonderful coworker at Wells community Hospital. She
was kind and considerate to everyone.*

Linda Bricker - September 10, 2025 at 01:56 PM

FC

“ *Family Eye Care planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Carolyn Joan
Gray.*

Family Eye Care - September 10, 2025 at 01:26 PM

FC

“ *Family Eye Care purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of Carolyn Joan Gray.*



Family Eye Care - September 10, 2025 at 01:26 PM



“ *Janet Lambert lit a candle in memory of Carolyn Gray*



Janet Lambert - September 10, 2025 at 10:58 AM

VJ

“ *Valerie Wilson Jackson lit a candle in memory of Carolyn Gray*



Valerie Wilson Jackson - September 10, 2025 at 03:17 AM

CM

“ *I worked at Wells Community with Joan. She was a really nice person. Know she will be missed. So sorry for your loss!*

Cindy Monticue - September 10, 2025 at 02:00 AM

JR

“ I worked at Wells Community Hospital when Joan did. She was always smiling and such a kind lady with a big heart.

Jane Russell - September 09, 2025 at 01:16 PM

DS

“ I remember Joan as a sweet, kind lady with really nice kids. So sorry to hear this, she will be missed!

Diana Sell - September 08, 2025 at 10:46 PM

GH

“ So sorry for your loss! I worked at Wells Community Hospital for several years with Joan. She was a great nurse and so much fun to be around! May God Bless you with you with precious memories to bring you peace and comfort.

Glennis (Schoeff) Henly

Glennis Henly - September 08, 2025 at 08:45 PM

ZA

So sorry to hear your loss of Joan. Remembering her fondly and the times we spent together enjoying each other's company. Sending a prayers for you and your family. Dan and Rose

Zonda Anderson - September 11, 2025 at 06:09 PM

AR

“ I was saddened to hear the news about Aunt Joan but so thankful she's at rest in our Savior's arms. It is so hard to lose your mother; praying for all of you. Sending love and hugs to Uncle GB, and my cousins Dawn and Gay Lynn and families. Love, Amy (Jones)
Richard

Amy (Jones) Richard - September 08, 2025 at 05:08 PM

PK

“ Galen and family, please accept my heartfelt condolences to you on the loss of Joan. I am as so sad to hear of her passing. She truly will be missed. Pegs N Joker’s night won’t be the same without Joan. I so enjoyed her spunk and sass with you while playing the game . I pray for peace and comfort in the days ahead. In Christian Love, Peggy



Peggy Kite - September 08, 2025 at 03:06 PM

SD

“ Galen & family
I am so very sorry for your loss. Joan was a wonderful lady. She will be missed. Thoughts and Prayers for her family. ❤️

Sandra Davis - September 08, 2025 at 03:06 PM

DG

“ We are so saddened to learn of Joan’s passing. Joan and Darlene worked together at the Wells Community Hospital and then again for many years at the Wells Co Health Dept. Many good memories when we were all together. Joan will will be missed The Gray family will be in our prayers. Dan and Darlene Gerdom

Dan Gerdom - September 07, 2025 at 06:07 PM