



## Gretchen Ann Sylvester

August 7, 1936 - December 21, 2020

Gretchen Ann Sylvester, 84 year old resident of Little Falls, MN, passed away Monday, December 21, 2020, at the Cedar Crest Estate in Silver Lake, MN. A memorial service will be held on January 16, 2021, at the Shelley Funeral Chapel in Little Falls, MN, at 11:00 AM. A visitation will be held from 10:00-11:00 AM on January 16, 2021, at the Shelley Funeral Chapel in Little Falls. MDH Guidelines will be followed, and a facial covering will be required to attend. Memorials are preferred to the American Lung Association.

Gretchen Ann Irgens (Sylvester) was born on August 7, 1936 in Glenwood, MN to the late Harold and Maxine(Flaten) Irgens. She was baptized, confirmed and married at Glenwood Lutheran Church. Gretchen graduated from Glenwood High School in 1954 and continued teaching education with BS degree from Moorhead State University and a Master's Degree from Bemidji State University in 1978. She taught at Lincoln Elementary in Little Falls for most of her life and retired in 1995. Gretchen was an active member of First Lutheran Church in Little Falls, MN along with Alpha Delta Kappa and many other local social groups.

This amazing woman lived a full life. High school days were packed with babysitting, studying, cheerleader, band and voted Homecoming queen. Went to college for a teaching degree, married, taught school, raised 2 children and always active in school, church and many extracurricular activities. Playing

Bridge was one of her favorite pastimes. She moved to many towns while being married but finally settled in Little Falls, MN. One of the most important facts about Gretchen was her ability to remember people by face and name. Everywhere she went she would run into someone she knew. Whether in a foreign country or different state or town, Gretchen would always ask people their name and be able to make a link to their family of someone she knew. Whether a past student, friend or relative she always knew who, where and when she last met them.

Gretchen's loved to travel and met new friends. She went on many tours which covered the world and opened her home to exchange teachers from Wales and New Guinea. Then she became an exchange teacher herself and spent a whole year teaching in Brisbane, Australia. After retiring from teaching, she continued to travel in USA and Canada. Each year she would travel Minnesota to all the Lutefisk dinners she could attend.

Gretchen is survived by her sister, Gwen Garner of Goodspring, TN; son, Steven Sylvester of Alexandria, MN; daughter, Jill (Scott) Jacobson of Hutchinson, MN; grandchildren, Tara Sylvester and John Sylvester of Texas, Andrew Jacobson and wife Kimberly of Hutchinson, MN, Anthony Jacobson and wife Christina of Greenville WI, Christopher Jacobson of Mankato, MN; three great-grandchildren and four great step-grandchildren, along with several nieces and nephews.

Gretchen is preceded in death by her parents, Harold and Maxine Irgens; stepmother, Ella Berge Gordon Irgens; brother, John Irgens; brother-in-law, Bob Garner and infant son in 1968.

Blessed be the memories of Gretchen Ann Sylvester.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN **16**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

LeMieur Funeral Home of Little Falls  
214 2nd Street SE  
Little Falls, MN

## Memorial Service

JAN **16**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

LeMieur Funeral Home of Little Falls  
214 2nd Street SE  
Little Falls, MN

# Tribute Wall



“ *Lemieur Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



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**Lemieur Funeral Homes** - January 14, 2021 at 09:09 AM

DP

“ *I was an aide at Lincoln School in Gretchen 's 2nd grade classroom. She had a little boy who was very poor. At Christmas the teachers had taken up a collection and the principal went downtown to shop.He bought this little boy a new jacket . After the boy got his jacket he was so thrilled he walked up and down the aisles showing off his new jacket. Gretchen and I sat (she in front and me in back) and the tears flowed from both of us. So touching to see this boy express his joy and happiness with his Christmas present! Diane Pilloud*

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**Diane Pilloud** - July 20, 2024 at 09:09 PM



“ *Gretchen Ann Sylvester*

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January 21, 2023 at 11:59 AM

AB

“ My sympathies to Gretchen's family, Gretchen was a part of our group when we attended Bemidji State one summer to finish our Masters. She was so interesting, kind, and upbeat. We all enjoyed our group gatherings in the summers that followed.

*I just realized today when I read the Record that we missed her memorial service.*

*My condolences to your family.*

*Arliss Johnson Bement*

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**arliss bement** - February 01, 2021 at 08:24 AM

LB

“ So very sorry to hear of the passing of your Mom. My sympathy and prayers are with you. Your Mom was very special to me. Will always remember her smile and laughter. May you keep your memories close to comfort you.

*Linda Sylvester Benson*

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**Linda Benson** - January 16, 2021 at 11:25 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gretchen Ann Sylvester.



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January 14, 2021 at 04:25 PM

LG

“Gretchen and I have been friends for Many many many years, We were both teachers and had many stories to share. Playing bridge, coffee time chats, Happy Hour, Church gatherings and just hanging out. I could always count on Gretchen for knowing what was going on in, out and around town. Gretchen was one of a kind, and I was blessed to have her as my friend. Gone but never forgotten.

Love you Gretchen,

Diane Grosso



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**Leeanne Grosso** - January 14, 2021 at 03:09 PM



“What a surprise to see Gretchen Sylvester's Obituary in the Hutchinson paper. I grew up in Little Falls and was a member of First Lutheran Church. I also was an assistant for summer school at Lincoln Elementary. Though it's been a long time and memories have faded, seeing her picture brought back lovely feelings of being in her presence; of laughter and a love of life. Peace to you and your family at this time of loss.

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**Jill Warner** - January 14, 2021 at 01:33 PM



“ 17 files added to the album *Life Tributes*

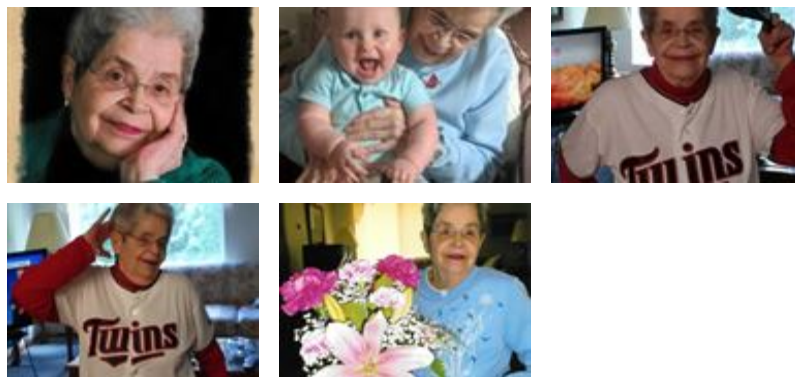


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**Lemieur Funeral Homes** - January 14, 2021 at 09:07 AM



“ 65 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Lemieur Funeral Homes** - January 13, 2021 at 07:52 AM



“ *I enjoyed teaching with Gretchen. She was always very friendly and had a smile for everyone. My sympathy to her family.*

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**Irene Becker** - January 11, 2021 at 02:24 PM

CF

“ *Connie Fenske lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



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**Connie Fenske** - January 11, 2021 at 12:18 PM

BJ

“ *My Condolences to Jill and Steven. I always loved your moms energy and she had a great sense of adventure. I remember her telling me about a trip to Russia. You all had a great Mom!*



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**Brenda Johnson-Hernandez** - January 02, 2021 at 04:36 PM

CD

“ *Sending my sympathies to Gretchen's entire family. Jill and Steve your Mom was a kind hearted woman who opened her home and her heart. It was a privilege to know her all those years ago. -Cindy Doty-Brick*

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**Cindy Doty-Brick** - December 29, 2020 at 03:45 PM

RE

“ *Renee Eich sent a virtual gift in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



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**Renee Eich** - December 29, 2020 at 03:38 PM

BG

“ *Brad Gillingham lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



Brad Gillingham - December 29, 2020 at 08:52 AM

KD

“ *Kim D lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



Kim D - December 28, 2020 at 09:18 PM

DW

“ *I met Gretchen when my Mom lived at Bridgeway, she was a delight everyday. And when I would be over visiting she would ask how everyone was. The place was not the same after she moved. PEACE!!*

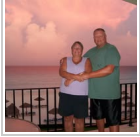


Dolores Wielinski - December 26, 2020 at 11:37 PM

BK

“ *Gretchen got to know me when my wife Fran was at L F care center, I would visit and have coffee almost every morning when she would make the rounds each morning. She liked my homemade horse radish I made once a year. She was so easy to talk and visit with. It was about 3 years now that I seen her. My condolences to you all.*

Bob Koetter - December 25, 2020 at 04:00 PM



“ Gretchen was a good friend to my mother at Bridgeway. I also worked with her at school. She was a fun spirited person . She will be missed.



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**Sharon Radl** - December 24, 2020 at 09:19 PM



“ Patty Mallak lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester



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**Patty Mallak** - December 24, 2020 at 10:50 AM



“ Karen Haaland sent a virtual gift in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester



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**Karen Haaland** - December 24, 2020 at 08:53 AM



“ Nancy Waldvogel lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester



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**Nancy Waldvogel** - December 24, 2020 at 08:10 AM

NW

*Our mother Dorothy Waytashek was also at Bridgeway and Gretchen would stop in and Visit with mom. And also when mom had to move over to the nursing home. Even if Gretchen just saw one of us, she would stop us and ask how mom was doing. She was a very sweet and caring lady!*

Nancy Waldvogel - December 24, 2020 at 08:13 AM

DG

*I was so surprised to hear of Gretchen's passing. She taught our middle son at Lincoln Elementary. After that we became friends and kept in touch until she left town. She will be missed. Our Sympathy to you all. Love from the Michael and Diane Gohl family.*

Diane Gohl - December 27, 2020 at 12:42 PM

MR

“ *Mary Jo Retka lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



Mary Jo Retka - December 24, 2020 at 07:57 AM

AD

“ *Ann Doble sent a virtual gift in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



Ann Doble - December 24, 2020 at 07:46 AM

MS

“ *Mark & Pam Savage lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



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**Mark & Pam Savage** - December 23, 2020 at 10:29 PM

RP

“ *Gretchen lived across the hall from my dad and mom, Ernie and Dorothy Pierzina, at Bridgeway in Little Falls. She was a delightful neighbor, regularly visiting my parents and being especially supportive of my mother after dad died in December 2017. I'm confident she is now the most active and friendly cheerleader in the heavenly choirs!*  
*Rest in peace, Gretchen.*

*Bro. Robin Pierzina, O.S.B.*

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**Robin Pierzina** - December 23, 2020 at 09:28 PM

CH

“ *Cathy Hebig lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



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**Cathy Hebig** - December 23, 2020 at 08:21 PM

HB

“ *Heather Barthel lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



Heather Barthel - December 23, 2020 at 05:25 PM

DO

“ *DonnaKuklock lit a candle in memory of Gretchen Ann Sylvester*



DonnaKuklock - December 23, 2020 at 04:44 PM

JW

“ *Gretchen always had a Smile on. Continue smiling in Heaven. Enjoyed teaching with you! Jean*



Jean Weis-Clough - December 23, 2020 at 04:25 PM

DJ

“ *Gretchen was a wonderful teacher. She always remembered my mother and my aunt as they were also from Glenwood. Again a small world we all live in. God bless her families. May she rest in peace.*



Debbie Jelinski-Harakel - December 23, 2020 at 03:26 PM

NK

“ *What a nice lady! I got to know her when my dad was at Bridgeway. My dad was a milkman in Little Falls and knew your family for many years. My deepest sympathies to all of her family. She lived a very adventurous life!*

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**Nona Koester** - December 23, 2020 at 02:22 PM

BP

“ *Gretchen will always be remembered for kindness and sweet smile. May she rest in peace.*



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**Bruce & Deb Pederson** - December 23, 2020 at 12:46 PM

KB

“ *Mrs Sylvester taught all five of our children at Lincoln School. She was loved by all of them! Love Jim. Heidi. Heather, Cookie and Amy!*



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**Kathy Barthel** - December 23, 2020 at 11:35 AM

AE

“ *She was a sweet woman. So friendly and kind to my mother Gladys Hokanson. Our sympathy.*

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**Ardyce Eckblad** - December 23, 2020 at 10:41 AM