

You were an Amazing Mom -You gave of yourself so freely,
and there was a quiet kindness in the way you did it.
You walked in the grace of God with a gentleness that made
those around you feel loved and valued.
God truly gave you a special heart...
one that nurtured, understood, taught, and loved---
not only in words, but by example too.
Thank you for everything Mom -
for doing more than you were ever asked to...
for giving more than you ever needed to...
and for being all that God called you to be with such a sweet spirit.

*A woman who
fears the Lord
is to be praised.*

Proverbs 31:30

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a Mother
**HOLDS HER
CHILDREN'S
HANDS FOR A WHILE
& their Hearts
Forever**

Doris "Dorey" Irene Bjerke Gross, age 89, Clark, formerly of the Crocker vicinity, the widow of John Gross, died in the Fay Wookey Assisted Living Center unexpectedly on Friday, November 5, 2021. Dorey will long be remembered for her words: "You are loved and appreciated."

She was born at home in her Grandpa and Grandma Warwick's bed on April 18, 1932, to Carl and Olga (Warwick) Bjerke southwest of Lily, SD. Soon after she moved with her family to a farm on the banks of dry Cottonwood Lake.

She was baptized at Our Saviors Lutheran Church and at the age of 3, started Sunday School there. Her mom was always so proud that Dorey and her brothers and sisters had perfect attendance all the years they attended there.

Dorey attended the Husher Country School until the 5th grade. At the age of 10, the Bjerke family moved to the Loken farm seven miles south of Crocker. She then attended Southwest Woodland Country School through the 8th grade. Grades 9 through 12 were spent attending Augustana Academy in Canton, SD. She graduated from there on May 26, 1950. The family attended Crocker Lutheran Church where she was confirmed. The perfect attendance continued in Sunday School. It was so important to her mother that one time she even loaded all seven kids on the Allis Chalmers and took them to Sunday School.

She studied and received her teaching certificate from Northern State University. She taught at the Hemmingson School from 1950-1951 and the next year taught at the Crocker School.

In February of 1952, John and Dorey were married in a play, "Little Clodhopper" that was put on in the Crocker School. On July 21, 1952, she married John in the American Lutheran Church at Webster, SD, for real life. They were married for 52 years before John went to heaven to wait for her there.

When they were first married, they lived with John's folks, Bill and Tomina Gross. Cindy was born while they lived there. They soon moved to the Audus farm south of Crocker for the next ten years. David, Sherry, Kathy, Nancy, Danny and Doug were all born in the next seven years. In 1962, they sold the farm and moved to Minneapolis, MN for a short time and then out to Maple Plain for the next five years. She worked for Tonka Toys. What a great job for a mom of seven farm kids. They had the greatest farm toys, trucks, cars, and animals – all made by me – that a kid could want. They attended the Armstrong Community Church, making lifelong friends. Armstrong was a church that greatly influenced all their lives, and they would all carry the morals and values they learned there for the rest of their lives.

In 1967, the family moved to the Buer Dairy Farm at Atwater, MN. John and the kids milked the cows and Dorey worked at Molenars Plastics for a short time. Another great toy source for her kids. On February 1st 1969, she began a 25-year career at the Willmar State Hospital, retiring in February 1994.

She received the highest commendation from her coworkers and WRTC on her retirement with words like "supportive, kind, generous, positive, and genuine" describing her. She worked with the most challenging of clients, offering them tough love but genuine support.

After retirement, Dorey and John moved to Osseo and would later move in with their youngest son Doug and his family. In 2001, John and Dorey moved back to South Dakota. John was a resident of Clark Care Center as he suffered from Parkinson's Disease. Almost every day, Dorey would go there to feed and spend time with him.

Dorey always enjoyed working on arts and crafts and loved to make Teddy Bears especially. Most of her grandkids have those precious treasures that Grandma made. She also loved to quilt. She helped make many quilts with the ladies at Crocker Lutheran Church. They have gone to many needy people.

She was the greatest cheerleader for her kids and grandkids. They were truly her pride and joy. She was a wonderful wife, an excellent mother, a terrific grandma, and super great grandma. She renewed her membership in the Crocker Lutheran Church when she moved back to South Dakota. She really enjoyed quilting, circle, WELCA and all other activities there. She also enjoyed attending Bible Studies and other activities at all the other churches in Clark and Bradley. She was a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, the American Cancer Society, Clark County Historical Society, 60+ Dining, and Senior Citizens where she loved to play cards. She was also a member of the Sons of Norway in Watertown. She did many hours of volunteering at Clark Care Center, Wookey's Assisted Living and Roetells Assisted Living.

Survivors who are grateful for having shared in her life are three sons, David Gross and wife Barbara of Colorado Springs, CO, Dan Gross and wife Montana and Doug Gross and wife Laurie of Big Stone, SD; four daughters, Cindy Swanson and husband Paul of Maple Grove, MN, Sheryl Downes and husband Rick of Lake Preston, SD, Kathy Eisenbacher and husband Steve of Spicer, MN, Nancy Gebhardt and husband Laine of Osseo, MN; 14 grandchildren, 6 step-grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, 11 step great-grandchildren; special friend Gina Cassidy of Colorado Springs, CO; one sister, Roxy Streckuss and husband Dale of Mansfield, SD, one brother-in-law, Bill Schaeffbauer and wife Evie of Sioux Falls, SD, three sisters-in-law, Elva Bjerke, Sharon Bjerke, Lillian Gross and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her husband, her mother-in-law and father-in-law, 2 grandsons, Matthew Downes and Precious John Eisenbacher, brothers Kenny, Dunk, Jim, and Little Joey, sisters Faye Johnson and husband Johnny and Becky, brothers-in-law Carl and wife Laura, Tom and wife Ruby, Bud and wife Wilma, Ray, Art and wife Joyce, Elmer and Gordy and wife Marcella, and baby Henry, a sister-in-law, Adeline Loterbauer and husband Herb.