



## Gary R. Sprague

On the afternoon of July 23rd, Gary passed away at the Serenity House in Tomah, WI, surrounded by family. Gary was 71 years old.

Gary was born May 2, 1944, to Hersil and Lorraine Sprague in Dupree, SD. At that time, the Sprague family resided in the Cherry Creek area just outside of Dupree. The family later settled north of Mud Butte where Gary attended country school and then

graduated from Newell High School in 1962. After high school, Gary attained a pilot's license and began flying crop dusting planes and also perfected the art of sheep shearing. In May of 1971, he married Nina Donahey. Gary and Nina lived in various places around Newell but finally bought a farm 2.5 miles east of Newell on Old Highway 212 where they raised 4 children; Letha, Amy, Toby, and Shelly. Gary kept his children busy; making sure they had cattle, sheep, and pigs to show at the 4-H county fair, horses to ride in the high school rodeo, and cars to run up and down the road to town as dad would say. He achieved this by taking pride in his work and always aiming for perfection. For example, Gary could stack the tightest, most symmetrical haystack you have ever seen! Even though Gary worked hard his entire life, he always found time to have a little fun. He enjoyed shooting league pool, playing cards with his children and grandchildren, hunting, and has been known to enjoy a drink or two at the local bars, often entertaining folks with his "little ditties" and maybe telling a tall tale or two. Gary enjoyed socializing and would give the shirt off his back to all his friends and family. Gary retired from the Belle Fourche Irrigation District in 2010 where he was a heavy equipment operator. Gary spent the last 8 months of his life in Tomah, WI, to be closer to family stating he was "warm, full, and happy." Gary told many treasured stories of his adventuresome life to his grandchildren which they will surely retell to their children someday.

Gary is survived by his son, Toby Sprague of Brooklyn, NY; 3 daughters, Letha (Roger) Pettera of Wilton, WI, Amy (David) McCarthy of Tomah, WI, and Shelly (Matthew) Ruder of Dublin, OH; 3 grandchildren, Derek Limpert, and Skyler and Madison McCarthy; 2 brothers, Dale (Ruth Ann) Sprague of Mud Butte, SD, and Lyle (Kim) Sprague of Nisland, SD; 2



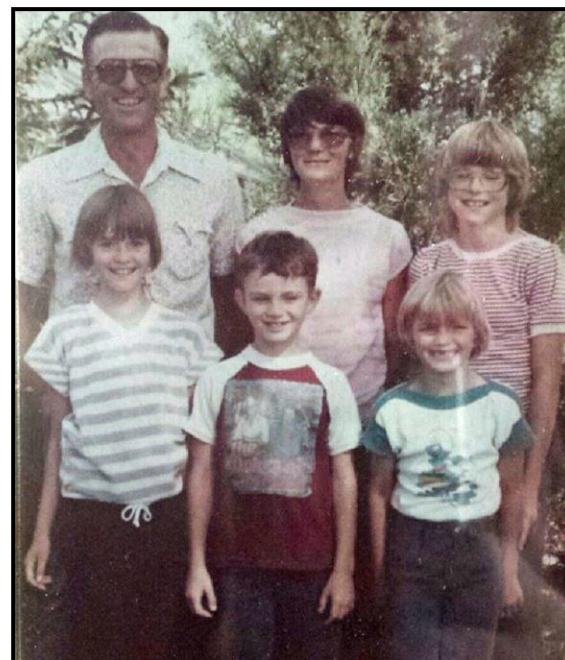
sisters, Pearl (Calvin) Geis of Belle Fourche, SD, and Nancy (Casey) Barnum of Lander, WY; brothers-in-law, Roy Anderson of Sturgis, SD, and Benjamin Alvarez of Albuquerque, NM; sister-in-law, Mona Peters of Rapid City, SD; brother-in-law, Gary (Connie) Donahey of Newell, SD; along with many cousins, nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

Gary was preceded in death by his wife, Nina; brother, Lou John Sprague; sisters, Shirley Anderson and Carol Alvarez; parents, Hersil and Lorraine Sprague; in-laws, Robert and Dena Donahey; and brother-in-law, Marvin Peters.

A memorial will be established for Gary. Donations can be sent to 21773 Fleming Ave, Tomah, WI 54660.

A special thank you to Tomah Memorial Hospice Serenity House, Tomah Memorial Hospital, and his evening nurse, Nikki, for making Dad feel respected and comfortable. Also thank you to Sue and "Joe" for taking time to provide Dad with apple pie and goodies; Michelle for joking around and making him laugh; and the neighborhood for all the support throughout Gary's stay in Tomah.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.kinkadefunerals.com](http://www.kinkadefunerals.com).



*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch at the NVN Senior Center following the committal service.*

*We thank you for your presence and condolences.*

*In Loving Memory Of*  
**Gary Ralph Sprague**

***Born***  
May 2, 1944  
Dupree, South Dakota

***Died***  
July 23, 2015  
Tomah, Wisconsin

***Funeral Service***  
Wednesday, July 29, 2015, at 2:00 p.m.  
Newell Evangelical Church  
Newell, South Dakota

***Clergy***  
Pastor Tom Martin

***Accompanist***  
Marty Jump

***Soloist***  
Vonda Mahaffey

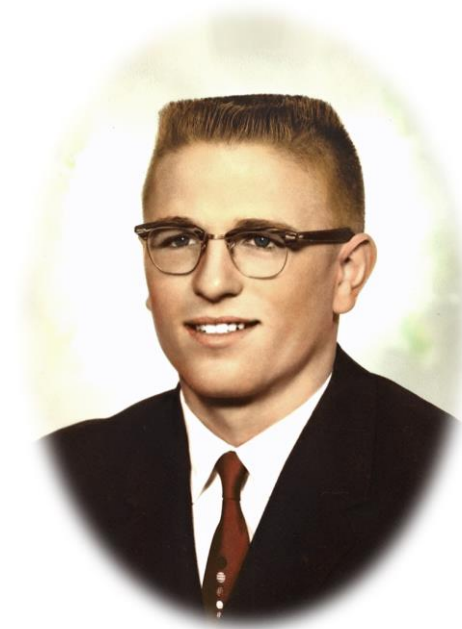
***Musical Selections***  
"The Old Rugged Cross"  
"In The Garden"  
"Amazing Grace"

***Pallbearers***  
Kurt Simon ~ Darren Schuelke ~ Don Trohkimoinen  
Gilbert Wood ~ John Schwede ~ Jim Schmidt

***Honorary Pallbearers***  
All Family And Friends

***Interment***  
Hope Cemetery  
Newell, South Dakota

*In Loving Memory Of*  
**Gary R. Sprague**  
**1944 ~ 2015**



***The Legacy***

*When I die, give what is left of me to children.  
If you need to cry, cry for your brothers  
walking beside you.  
Put your arms around anyone and give them  
what you need to give to me.  
I want to leave you with something,  
something better than words or wounds.  
Look for me in the people I have known and loved.  
And if you cannot live without me,  
Then let me live on in your eyes, your mind,  
and your acts of kindness.  
You can love me most by letting hands touch hands  
And letting go of children that need to be free.  
Love does not die, people do.  
So when all that is left of me is love...  
Give me away...*