



Gail Jo Burjes

November 23, 1944 - January 26, 2025

Gail Burjes passed away on January 26, 2025 at Alton Memorial Hospital. She was born in Topeka, KS on November 23, 1944 to Joseph and Kathryn Kubacka. She grew up in Uniontown, Pennsylvania and graduated from North Union High School. After attending business college, she worked in the business office of Uniontown Hospital. She met the love of her life, Robert Burjes, through a mutual friend and they were married on May 16, 1970.

Gail moved to Alton with Robert, where they started their family. She was a long-time employee of the Alton School District and served as adviser for the Alton High School Student Council. She served in as many volunteer capacities as she possibly could. She served on the board for the Alton Band and Orchestra Builders for many years. She was the consummate “band mom” and could be found in the stands cheering for the Marching 100 during their many competitions and performances, as well as in the audience at orchestra performances, jazz band performances, choir performances, and theater performances. She made it her duty to ensure that the performing arts students and teachers had everything they needed for their programs and performances, resulting in a common refrain: “The easiest way to get something done is to tell Gail Burjes she can’t do it.”

She was one of the founders of the Olde Alton Arts and Crafts Fair, one of the major fundraisers for ABOB. She enjoyed visiting different craft fairs to scout

for new crafters and was always on the lookout for unique artisans.

Gail and Robert served on the board for the Elijah P. Lovejoy Memorial, an organization that awards scholarships to deserving graduates of high schools in the Alton/Godfrey community in honor of Elijah P. Lovejoy, abolitionist and the first martyr of the American Free Press.

In her later years, she enjoyed writing to her many pen pals at Challenge Unlimited and made sure their parties and events had plenty of snacks.

Gail loved her pets and took great pride in her dog Trevor's repertoire of tricks and delighted at the hijinks of her cats Bob Foster and Dexter, as well as her grandcats and granddog.

Gail is survived by her husband Robert, daughters Genifer Brown (Matt) of Swansea, and Sarah Robertson of Alton, sisters Pamela Seighman (Tom) of Uniontown, PA, and Dr. Renee Juhl (Randy) of Glenshaw, PA., sister-in-law Nancy Sorgea of Brighton, and nephews Brian Sorgea (Angie) and Michael Sorgea, niece Tara Balonick (Brian), nephew, Ryan Seighman, great niece, Bailee Sorgea, great nephew, Ashton Sorgea, great niece, Bonnie Balonick, great nephew, Bruce Balonick, great niece, Sophia Seighman, great nephew, Eli Seighman, and her "bonus daughters" Melissa Morganroth Alford, Dawn Weber, Leslie Sanders, and Cat Staton, plus many, many friends.

She is preceded in death by her parents, brother-in-law Frank Sorgea, and sister-in-law Jackie Burjes.

Visitation will be held from 3:00 pm until time of funeral service at 7:00 pm on Monday, February 3, 2025 at Gent Funeral Home, 2409 State Street, Alton, Illinois 62002. A private burial will be conducted at Valhalla Memorial Park in Godfrey.

Memorials may be made in Gail's honor to the 5A's Animal Shelter, Alton Band and Orchestra Builders, or the Elijah P. Lovejoy Memorial.

Gail's family would like to thank the staff at Alton Memorial Hospital, including physical therapist Kari Pinkard, ICU nurses Maria, Emily, and Scott as well as Dr. Masetti and Dr. Kirby for their excellent care and compassion.

Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Valhalla Memorial Park

Godfrey, IL 62035

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 3. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002

Funeral

FEB 3. 7:00 PM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002

Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Gail Burjes had an immense impact on me and my high school experience. I will never forget her sense of humor and enthusiasm for our student council events. I treasure the memories we had and am thankful to have had the pleasure of her mentorship and friendship. I know I was not alone in that experience and admire all she did for the community.*

*All my best to her family,
Corbin*

Corbin Newquist - February 06, 2025 at 03:28 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gail Jo Burjes.*

February 03, 2025 at 08:31 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



February 03, 2025 at 08:31 AM

TF

“ *The Brown & Graves Families purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



The Brown & Graves Families - February 02, 2025 at 06:00 PM

EE

“ *Erickson's, Russo, Elhoffer purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



Erickson's, Russo, Elhoffer - February 02, 2025 at 05:07 PM

YF

“ *Your HB Team and Friends planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gail Jo Burjes.*

Your HB Team and Friends - January 31, 2025 at 10:01 AM

YF

“ *Your HB Team and Friends purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



Your HB Team and Friends - January 31, 2025 at 10:01 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



January 30, 2025 at 01:38 PM



“ *Bob and Family,*

May Gail's laughter, love, kindness, and strength live on forever in your hearts.

*My condolences,
Gail Higginbotham (Boeing Work Friend)*

gail higginbotham - January 30, 2025 at 09:42 AM



“ *Gail was a great woman & if you knew her, you loved her. Some Boeing work friends would meet Gail & Bob at Fast Eddie's every year between Christmas & New Years. Afterwards we'd go back their home to feast on the many treats she made for the Holidays. It was something we truly enjoyed, & Gail loved all the Christmas prep & her happy festive home.*

Tony Russo - January 30, 2025 at 12:10 AM



She LOVED when you guys came over! ❤️

Genifer Brown - January 31, 2025 at 08:34 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



January 29, 2025 at 04:47 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gail Jo Burjes.

January 29, 2025 at 02:45 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



January 29, 2025 at 02:45 PM

AS

“If you went to Alton High, you undoubtedly have memories of Mrs. Burjes. What a lady.

Some of my all-time favorite high school memories came from Student Council - blood drives, goofy meetings, and volunteering in football game concession stands. I think those experiences were a large part of what drove me to become a high school teacher, and for the last nine years, a Student Council Advisor myself. I learned just how much a Student Council Advisor tirelessly does for the school and in Alton, for the entire community.

One of my first years teaching, when I called to ask her about fundraising ideas to send my students to the Student Council summer camp, she responded, “How much is it?” She had a check in the mail that day.

It was full circle that because of her support, my own students at our then-new magnet high school in St. Louis Public Schools were able to have those experiences. She even came to visit them one year and brought cupcakes. Over the last nine years, Mrs. Burjes continued to financially support all sorts of different endeavors for my students - never seeking any recognition.

I'll always be grateful for her support of my school and students, and cherish my memories as a student at Alton High. I will definitely miss all of her random text messages and phone calls in adulthood. Rest easy, Burj! 🕊️

*Alex Schenk
Student Council President
Alton High School, Class of 2011*



Alex Schenk - January 29, 2025 at 01:40 PM

GB

Alex, thank you for sharing these photos! She was so proud of you and told us all about your achievements.

Genifer Brown - January 31, 2025 at 08:32 AM

CP

“ *Chris and Melissa Patt purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Gail Jo Burjes.*



Chris and Melissa Patt - January 28, 2025 at 05:20 PM

CP

“ *Genifer, I'm so sorry to learn of your mom's passing. The only condolence I can offer is that she raised an amazing daughter. My thoughts are with you all. -Chris Patt*

Chris Patt - January 28, 2025 at 05:17 PM

GB

Thank you so much. ❤️

Genifer Brown - January 31, 2025 at 08:35 AM

SL

“ *Ultimate Band mom and great listener! Mrs. B will forever hold a special place in my heart! She was a one of a kind person! She very much cared about everyone and made sure you were always good! I will never forget her compassion and dedication to us “100” kids! Love you Mrs. B and may you rest in peace!*

Sara (Eichorn) Lawrence - January 28, 2025 at 11:58 AM

RB

“ *One of my favorite customers at Shop n Save...always pleasant, patient and likable. RIP Gail!*

ROBIN G BATSON - January 28, 2025 at 11:34 AM