



## Gertrude "GiGi" Gould

July 13, 1929 - March 15, 2021

Gertrude Louella (Johnson) Gould, affectionately known as "GiGi", passed from this life at the age of 91 early in the morning on March 15, 2021 at Helia Healthcare of Benton, Illinois. Her love for others, high spirited energy, and devotion to friends and family will be remembered by all who knew her.

GiGi was born on July 13, 1929 at her family home near Tunnel Hill, Illinois, the daughter of Noah Johnson and Esta Boner Johnson. Born the ninth of fourteen children, GiGi was preceded in death by a beloved older brother, Wilburn Johnson, who gave his life in France for his country in WWII, as well as an infant brother in 1920. Later in life she also was preceded in death by her siblings Verna Johnson, Hazel Vinson, Pauline Webb, Earl Johnson, Mary Lowery, Kenneth Johnson, Billy Gene Johnson, Wanda Thurman, Lawrence Johnson, and Judith Cash. GiGi is survived by one sister, Lona Mae Brooks of Marion, IL.

Her large family lived on a farm and attended the New Salem Baptist Church. Music was always a special part of her life with stories of singing before others with her cousin Alice Simmons being a treasured memory. GiGi started working at the age of eleven picking apples and peaches with her siblings at an orchard nearby.

GiGi met the love of her life, Valgene Gould of Buncombe, at the age of 17. She and her sisters had taken the bus into Vienna to shop when Val happened to spot her across the road at the bus stop in front of the Bob White Hotel while twirling her purse. They were married on December 9, 1946. They

resided on Val's family farm, Tall Tree Hill, for the first few years of their marriage. They had one daughter, Brenda Jean Gould (Rea) and one son, Dennis Michael "Mike" Gould.

The family soon moved to a farm near Tunnel Hill for a few years and later moved to Energy, Illinois when Val took a job at Norge in Herrin. Val and GiGi both had a strong work ethic and with GiGi's support, Val worked long hours with a construction crew. He learned several different trades and eventually started Gould Construction, building several of the homes that are in Energy to this day. GiGi was a homemaker during most of her children's childhood.

Their home was often the hub of activity, inviting neighbors to come over and watch Bonanza on one of the first color television sets in the neighborhood. Together with friend Mildred Hindman Phegley, they planted the Herrin Church of Christ. These early years as the church was growing, were very dear as they developed lifelong friendships with several families. Val and GiGi worshipped at the Herrin Church of Christ until their failing health prevented them from doing so. GiGi was a devoted Christian who loved her church family very much.

Val and GiGi are most well known for their family business, Green Acres Golf Course, which they owned and operated from 1968 until selling in 2004. While Val designed, built and operated the grounds of the course alongside his son Mike, GiGi managed the pro shop and restaurant with their daughter-in-law Jody. Their family made many friends through the business over the years and loved sharing the game of golf with others.

GiGi was known for being fully devoted to her family. Three of her greatest joys were her grandchildren, Michael Cole Gould, Scarlett Rea (Lyons) and Hilary Rea (Remm), whom she spent much time with. One of her favorite events was the Johnson Family Reunion every fall where she loved visiting with her relatives. GiGi was also a very loving daughter-in-law, helping care for Val's parents Faye & Audis Gould in their later years. She was known as a gracious host, opening her home for all family get togethers, among which Christmas was her favorite. GiGi invited anyone and everyone who could

come.

Her love for music may be among her families' most precious memories of GiGi. One of her great-granddaughters recalls her as "always being happy, turning on music and dancing". She always had a stereo nearby with Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and George Jones ready to play, along with many gospel favorites. Even the hardest loneliest days could be cured with a good song that would either bring her to dance or bring her to tears. Her granddaughters and great-granddaughters will forever remember her singing to them "I Love You a Bushel and a Peck" even in her last few weeks of life. GiGi was preceded in death by her husband, Valgene Gould in 2013 after 67 years of marriage, as well as her grandson, Michael Cole Gould in 2018, and an infant grandson Robert Jefferson Rea. She is survived by her two children, daughter, Brenda Jean Gould Rea, son-in-law, Robert Rea of Benton, Illinois, son, Dennis Michael "Mike" Gould and a much loved daughter-in-law, Jody Gould of Florida, as well as two grandchildren, Scarlett Rea Lyons (Kenny Lyons) of Florence, Alabama and Hilary Rea Remm (Paul Remm) of Benton, Illinois and four great-grandchildren Adeline Lyons, Emmalise Lyons, Sarah Hope Lyons, Ariadne Remm and Kai Remm.

A graveside service honoring the life of GiGi Gould will be conducted Thursday afternoon, April 1, 2021, at 2 PM at Vienna Fraternal Cemetery. Interment will follow. Those attending the service are invited to gather at 1:45 PM Thursday, April 1, 2021, at the cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Herrin Church of Christ, 3101 S. Park Avenue, Herrin, Illinois 62948. Donation envelopes will be available at the service.

# Cemetery Details

## Vienna Fraternal Cemetery

N. 6th Street  
Vienna, IL

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

APR 1. 2:00 PM (CT)

Vienna Fraternal Cemetery  
N. 6th Street  
Vienna, IL

# Tribute Wall



“ *Gertrude "GiGi" Gould*

January 30, 2023 at 12:19 AM



“ *My sympathy to the Gould family. I saw this in the paper today!  
Such a friendly and lovely woman! She was also a wonderful golf  
partner.  
We really loved her and her family.  
Frank and Mary Snider*

Frank Snider - April 01, 2021 at 05:00 PM



“ *Mike and Charlie and I loved to visit Gigi and Val. She always made  
us feel welcome and she made over Charlie when he was a little  
tyke. She was so dear to us and will be missed.*

Rhoda Newton - March 31, 2021 at 10:27 AM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the  
family of Gertrude "GiGi" Gould.*



March 31, 2021 at 10:22 AM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gertrude "GiGi" Gould.



---

March 29, 2021 at 08:11 AM



“ There used to be the four of us - GiGi, Val, Fred and me. Oh, what great times we had! Now there is only me. How I miss the other three. GiGi and I were both born in 1929. Their family took us in as a part of their family. My heart is filled with all the love and memories we shared. God bless their children. Love, Liz

---

**Elizabeth Gulley** - March 27, 2021 at 03:17 PM



“ GiGi has always been a very special part of my life! I loved her and cherish my memories with her. She took me in and treated me like one of her own. I loved walking through the field to her house from mine (one that Val built). I knew I would always be welcome and was so welcome into the family that I was a flower girl for family weddings. I honestly didn't know I wasn't related to her for a long time because the Gould's treated me like family. I would spend so much time at her house and at the golf course. She was a second mom/grandma to me. I would always sit with her at church and she would let me write on her check deposit slips. I still love her and always will. She was an incredible woman and her love continues through her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and those of us she adopted into her family. I know she is reunited with Val and I can't wait to see them both again in Heaven.

---

**Wendy Wear** - March 27, 2021 at 09:49 AM



“ No one ever wants to lose an aunt or an uncle. All of mine have been so special. Aunt Gertrude was a wonderful, fun loving lady in my life. I treasured the phone calls from her and our little visits. She is greatly missed. A chapter in my life is now missing. I cling to the memories. I extend my heartfelt sympathies to Mike, Brenda, Scarlett, Hillary and the great grands. God bless you all! <3 Debbie & Bob

DEBBIE HORN - March 23, 2021 at 09:52 PM



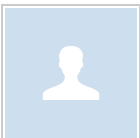
“ i am cousin in Denver and when we went on vacation we made a point to go visit her and Brenda & Mike. Her husband Valgene was more like a brother than cousins. They both were very special. Val would always let us play golf free, and I also loved playing with him .

Roy Newton - March 22, 2021 at 05:17 PM



“ GiGi was the fun mom that we all admired. She remained a special family friend to all of us. Deb Payne and Sandy Bechtel

Deborah Payne - March 22, 2021 at 03:56 PM



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Gertrude "GiGi" Gould.



March 22, 2021 at 01:24 PM

CM

“ *Carol Mullins sent a virtual gift in memory of Gertrude "GiGi" Gould*



---

**Carol Mullins** - March 20, 2021 at 12:00 PM

CM

“ *Loved this woman to pieces. She will be greatly missed. Our deepest sympathy to Brenda and Mike and families.*

---

**Carol Mullins** - March 19, 2021 at 12:10 PM