



Jean Marie Hill

March 2, 1943 - December 20, 2025

Jean Marie (King) Hill passed away peacefully at her home in Dickinson, North Dakota, on December 20, 2025, surrounded by her loving family at the age of 82.

Born on March 2, 1943, against the backdrop of World War II, Jean seemed to inherit the grit of that era from the very start. She was the fourth and final daughter of Charles Edward King and Martha Electa (Gifford) King. Arriving well after her sisters Lora, Margaret, and Ila—who were already 20, 17, and 15 upon her birth—she was the baby of her family but had the unique opportunity to grow up alongside many of her nieces and nephews, who were almost more like younger siblings. Though separated by years, the King sisters shared a profound closeness and a lifelong bond that beautifully endured throughout their lives.

She was raised and educated in Glendive, graduating from Dawson County High School with the Class of 1961. She worked various jobs in her youth and early adulthood, from Frosty's to The Rose Theater to JCPenney to MDU.

She met her sweetheart, Otis Hill, at a dance in Glendive. He didn't just steal her heart—he swept her completely off her feet. They both knew instantly that they had found their forever. They skipped the long courtship, trusted their instincts, and eloped just six weeks later on May 17, 1963, in Buffalo, South Dakota, in the back of a local hardware store. Together, they built a beautifully

blessed and abundant life and raised their darling daughters, Marti and Cara. Their marriage was a love story that endured through every move, every challenge, and every season of life.

With Otis' work in the Bureau of Land Management, their life together was filled with travel and adventure. Rather than settling in just one place, they embraced the opportunity to call several different communities home over the years: Miles City, Montana; Burns, Oregon; Las Vegas, Nevada; Cañon City, Colorado; and Grand Junction, Colorado. Each new relocation was a chapter of its own, where they made lifelong friendships and memories. Jean possessed a wonderful ability to create a warm home wherever they went. These frequent moves granted them ample opportunity for adventure, enriching their lives with diverse experiences before they returned home to Glendive, Montana, in the summer of 1995, where they spent Otis' final years together before his passing in August 1999.

Glendive remained home to Jean for 26 years before she made her final move to Dickinson, North Dakota, in September 2021 to be close to her grandchildren.

Jean worked as a paraprofessional for the Special Education Department—a deeply rewarding role where she built a meaningful 20-year career. She thoroughly enjoyed her work and cherished her friendships with her coworkers. She held a deep and lasting affection for her very special students. Her time working in special education wasn't just a career but a true labor of love. She found profound fulfillment in pouring her heart and energy into their care, growth, and happiness.

Above all else, Jean found her truest calling in being a grandmother. "Grandma" was without a doubt her absolute favorite name—a title she wore with immense pride as she helped raise both of her cherished grandchildren.

She taught them by example, demonstrating the power and beauty of kindness and the value of hard work. She was actively involved in their lives and supportive of all they did—an ultimate provider, always there to help through any hardship, a trusted sounding board, a source of wise advice, and a steady calm in any storm. She always knew the right thing to say, and to her grandchildren, “home” was wherever Grandma was.

She was always a (mostly) willing accomplice in her grand- and great-grandkids’ shenanigans, forever first in line for a good laugh and a fun time—whether she was ready or not. Through all the mischief and silly memories, Jean’s playful heart taught us all the priceless lesson of never taking life too seriously.

She had a special heart for animals and filled her home and life with four-legged friends. Her house was never quite empty, never quite quiet, and always full of love thanks to the companionship of countless beloved dogs and cats who were truly members of the family and whom she welcomed through her doors over the years.

Jean was a woman who knew exactly who she was and what she liked, never feeling the need to pretend otherwise. This refreshing authenticity extended to every part of her life, including her thorough enjoyment of her cigarettes—a habit she would have happily continued if the “dang doctors” hadn’t stepped in and forced her to stop. She lived with a rare, honest confidence; she didn’t waste time on pretense, preferring instead to be entirely herself, quirks and all. Whether she was holding a hand of cards or sharing a laugh with a friend, she brought a grounded, unapologetic honesty to everything she did.

The best times were spent gathered around Jean’s kitchen table, where she found her greatest joy in life’s simplest pleasures. Whether working through a crossword puzzle, spending hours lost in her favorite romance novels, or

catching up during long chats on the phone, she contentedly embraced the quiet moments, always sipping on a cup of coffee. Jean treasured the simple pleasure of looking out the window, hosting lively family gatherings, and simply being surrounded by the good company of those she loved. That love for good company extended outside the home, too; playing bridge and catching up with the gals at “Old Lady Coffee” was a highlight of her week, where she made the best of friends while sharing endless laughter and lifelong memories.

She was equal parts stubborn and loving, funny and wise, feisty and dependable. Her quick wit could light up any room, and she delighted in teasing those she loved. She could make you laugh when you least expected it, tell you exactly what she thought whether you asked or not, and somehow still make you feel completely loved at the same time. She had a generous spirit and a gift for making anyone feel like an old friend, leaving an indelible mark on every life she touched.

As the proud matriarch of her family, Jean poured a lifetime of unconditional love into everyone she touched. She was a powerhouse of strength, yet possessed a remarkably gentle soul. With elegant grace, she wrapped her loved ones in comfort and safety. Her passing leaves an irreplaceable void; she truly was everything to her family.

If there is one thing Jean will be remembered for, it is the legacy of love she gave so freely and so completely. A woman of grace, unwavering composure, quiet strength, and fierce independence, she was a constant source of comfort, wisdom, and laughter. She made everyone around her feel welcomed, valued, and profoundly cared for. Her impact is immeasurable, and her legacy will live on through the countless lessons, cherished memories, and enduring love she leaves behind. She is deeply missed and will be lovingly remembered always.

She leaves behind a family who misses her deeply: her daughter, Cara (Darren) Hill-Thompson of Dickinson, ND; granddaughter, Sammi (Scott) Murphy of Dickinson, ND; grandson, Jeremiah Thompson of Dickinson, ND; six great-grandchildren: Landen King Murphy, Taylor Rae Murphy, Lincoln Edward Murphy, Skylar Marie Murphy, Elliott James Murphy, and Emilee Jean Murphy, all of Dickinson, ND; as well as many other family members and friends whom she treasured dearly.

Jean was welcomed into Heaven by those who preceded her in death: her loving parents, Charles and Martha King; her beloved soulmate and husband, Otis; her radiant and kind-hearted daughter, Marti; her three older sisters, Lora, Margaret, and Ila; four nieces, Linda, Lornea, Wendy, and Sheila; two nephews, Billy and Frank; as well as many dear friends.

Jean was cremated according to her wishes. A memorial service celebrating her life will be held on Saturday, June 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at Dawson Memorial Cemetery's on-site chapel in West Glendive.

In true Jean fashion, the family asks that you remember her not only with tears, but with laughter, good stories, strong black coffee, and, of course, a cookie or two.

In lieu of traditional flowers, the family kindly requests houseplants that can later be shared among our homes, serving as a living reminder of her deep roots, beautiful life, and the boundless love she gave us.

Upcoming Events

Memorial Service

JUN 27. 10:00 AM (MT)

Dawson Memorial Cemetery
2816 West Towne Street
Glendive, MT 59330

Tribute Wall

JM

“ Beautiful tribute to a beautiful lady💕💕💕 Bill and myself were so fortunate to have known Jean and call her family Lots of great memories and that contagious smile will be remembered always
Joan and Bill Murphy

joan and bill murphy - 7 hours ago



“ Jean your smile will always be on my mind!
Loved working with you in education! Rest peaceful my friend.



Toni Goroski - Yesterday at 04:13 PM

CP

“ I worked at DCHS when Jean was there. She was always so sweet and great to visit with! Cherish those many fond memories!

Cherise Patterson - Yesterday at 03:27 PM

TP

“ Sammy,
In high school I saw her everyday when I went to high school. I will miss her.

Tyler Pust

Tyler Pust - Yesterday at 03:08 PM