



IN LOVING MEMORY OF DIANNE SWANSON

Born to Mary (Barnett) and John "Jack" Christie
November 12, 1953 ~ Lloydminster, SK, Canada

Passed Away Peacefully
September 4, 2025 ~ Sidney, Montana

Memorial Services
Saturday, September 13, 2025 at 1:00 pm
Zion Lutheran Church ~ Fairview, Montana
Luncheon to Follow

Officiating
Bill Buckley

Urnbearer
Elaine Christie

Honorary Urnbearers
Dianne's Beloved Family and Friends

Ushers
Kenny Kilen Gary Schoepp

Music
Marsha Proulx Peggy Kopp

Final Resting Place
St. Peter's Lutheran Cemetery
Richland County, Montana

Arrangements By
Fulkerson Stevenson Funeral Home
Sidney, Montana

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



DIANNE SWANSON
NOVEMBER 12, 1953 -
SEPTEMBER 4, 2025



"IF IT CAN BE DONE, IT SHOULD BE DONE RIGHT."

Dianne Marie Christie Swanson of Girard Community was born November 12, 1953, to Jack & Mary Christie of Kitscoty, Alberta. She passed away peacefully at Sidney Health Center on September 4, 2025, surrounded by her family and friends.

Dianne grew up on the family farm near Kitscoty, Alberta with her parents, grandparents and 6 siblings. She started school at a little one room schoolhouse close to the farm called Kinnaird, so named by her Grandpa Christie. The remainder of her education was at Kitscoty School. She graduated with honors in 1971 and went on to finish a year of education at the University of Alberta.

A summer job offer took her to Jasper Alberta where she soaked in the beauty of the Canadian Rockies between shifts at the Waffle House. A frequent flyer construction worker named DeWayne fell in love with both the food and the waitress; they were married May 4, 1974.

Dianne & DeWayne made their first home in Calgary where they welcomed their son Jason. When Jason was four months old the family returned to the Swanson family farm in the Girard Community near Fairview and Sidney. Son Christopher and daughter Mary were both born in the USA, and stepchildren Brenda and Scott completed the Swanson family. They had a full & busy life together until DeWayne's passing in 2001.

In time, Dianne met & fell very much in love with Bernie Connor. Together they built a peaceful paradise that everyone who has lived at or visited the farm has enjoyed. To see them together was to witness unconditional love, mutual respect, and true happiness. Dianne and Bernie were together until Bernie's passing in 2011.

Her family was Dianne's world, and no matter whether home was Girard, Downey, Chester, Billings or back to Girard, Dianne found work to support them. She worked as a Dispatcher for the Sheriff's Department, travelled highways and back roads across six states doing property management work, & served customers in various food establishments. Always Dianne would find joy and purpose in her work, and always she lived by her guiding principle that if it's going to get done, it's going to get done right.

Dianne found her calling when she entered the newspaper business. From typesetter to ad sales rep to reporter Dianne poured her heart into making sure the final paper was one she was proud to sign her name to, no silly typos or spelling errors

allowed. Any story "By Dianne Swanson" was guaranteed to be a good one, and RoundUp readers relied on her work to get the honest scoop on happenings in their communities.

Being a mom & grandma meant everything to Dianne, and she embraced both the work and the fun. She was the cool mom who took the boys to Metallica in Billings in 1988, and Mary to Fleetwood Mac in Bozeman in 2004. The kids knew all the words to every Neil Diamond and Creedence Clearwater Revival song, & a million others, and they were sung with gusto. New flowers in the spring and Montana sunsets were gifts to be celebrated with grandkids. Dianne despised the word ain't, because it ain't a word, education mattered. Honesty and integrity & responsibility were just built into her moral code. She taught the lessons of life with patience, commanded respect, and could give that cross look to any kid who had it coming, then follow it up with a warm loving hug.

No matter where Dianne lived, people benefitted from her work to make her community a better place. She joined Sidney Kiwanis in 1997 and served in several leadership roles. She accepted the gavel as President in the 2006-2007 year and was so excited to travel to Montreal with her sister for the international convention. She did everything from selling sporting event tickets to serving pie and beer, many times volunteering any able-bodied family member to work alongside her. This summer, despite her health challenges, she found a way to still make her two banana cream pies, and to show up for her favorite job of cutting the pies, cause we all know they had to be cut right.

Dianne loved to lose herself in a good book. She joined the local book club, where all her fellow reader friends enjoyed her unique insights. Her bookcases at home were all full and reflected her love of learning and the fun of a good yarn.

As a Fairview Chamber member Dianne offered her ideas and willing hands to make Fairview a better place to live. She volunteered for so many local projects, but maybe her favorite work revolved around the Fairview Bridge.

Since her arrival in Girard, Dianne has been a treasured part of the community, serving on the hall association, cemetery association, and Homemakers Club. She lived her life by the last line of the Homemakers Collect- "And O Lord God, let us not forget to be kind." Whether making apple pies, cleaning highway trash, or baking butter tarts for a potluck, she was in on it all.

Dianne was a treasured and trusted friend who always had time to visit. She truly cared about the people in her world. The coffee pot was always on, neighbors were welcome, fresh baking or garden produce was shared, grief fell on collective shoulders and joy was more joyous for the sharing. She was

feisty and had her opinions, but they were only voiced if they would not offend. She had a way of making people she met feel seen, heard, valued, and worthy of dignity and respect.

There were only a handful of states that Dianne did not see in her lifetime. From travel with DeWayne for work, to celebrating Mardi Gras in New Orleans to journeying with Zion Luther Lites to Washington DC, Dianne embraced it all. Her dream of seeing Scotland became a reality, and she and sister Elaine would hit the roads every couple of years for a new adventure to explore new places and see people who were important to her. The best trips had no reservations, and no set-in-stone itinerary. She said they could ding around and make a two-hour trip last 12. She loved to learn the history of a place, experience the local people and the food, and had a steel trap memory to share the stories years later.

Dianne's favorite time of day was morning. It was her time for a fresh cup or three of coffee, a snuggle from the cat, a challenging crossword puzzle, a chance to watch the world wake up, think without interruption, maybe weed the garden and flowers. She could have a day's work in the kitchen or her beautiful yard done before anyone else was even awake.

Heartache and adversity have been unfortunate realities in Dianne's life. She carried herself through it all with courage and gritty determination. She endured because she found a way to smile, offer a kind word to others on her worst days, to find joy and beauty and purpose in this world, and to listen and help others without judgement or expectation. Her grace and her gratitude for the gifts life gave her has been for so many people an inspiration.

Dianne is survived by her daughter Mary Bradley and grandchildren Malcom and Katie; grandchildren Eli, Eden and Julia; stepson Scott Swanson, stepdaughter Brenda Kringen and grandchildren Marissa and Charity Eberling & great-grandchildren Landon and Kendall; brothers Brian (Chris), Hugh (Lorie), Alan (Cheryl), Sisters Maxine Byrt (Jim), Kathy Jeffrey (Wayne), & Elaine Christie; nieces & nephews Sarah Lynn, Jennifer, Ian, Kim, Tana, Robbie, Thomas, Davis, Michael, Tenille, Matthew, Amelia & all her great nieces & nephews. This list would not be complete without including her closest and lifelong friends Pam Kilen and Bill Lewis.

Dianne Swanson was predeceased by her husband DeWayne, sons Christopher and Jason, second love of her life Bernie Connor, parents Jack & Mary Christie, and parents in-law Albert & Eva Swanson.

A heartfelt thank you to all Dianne's medical teams at the Billings Hospital & Sidney Health Center for your kind and compassionate care, and to all her friends and extended family who supported her in every way possible.