



Gail Frances Pena

February 9, 1941 - November 29, 2025

Gail Frances Pena, “Granny” passed away at home in Citrus Heights, California on November 29, 2025, after 4 weeks in the hospital due to an aggressive infection requiring surgery that led to a minor stroke and kidney failure. She was 83 years old. Gail was born to Floyd Royal Fink and Lilian Fern (nee. Steuck) February 9, 1941, in rural Melvin in the upper west corner of Iowa. She was the 4th of 5 children. Her early years were spent on the family farm, learning in a two-story school for all grades and worshipping at the Lutheran Church. As an early teenager, Gail moved with most of her family to Orangevale, California, where her father, two brothers and eventually, she would be employed by Aerojet. Her sister Colleen, already married with two children remained in Iowa.

Gail graduated from San Juan High School in 1960 and married Donald Vance Coffey with whom she had two children, Steven Dale Coffey and Mechelle Rene Coffey. Don always said Steve was their first wedding anniversary gift, as he was born 3 days before. After their divorce, Gail eventually moved to Citrus Heights, where she would live the remainder of her life. On December 25, 1985, Gail married the man of her dreams, Nestor Pena and gained a step-son, Johnny Albert Pena.

As a young woman she started to work at McClellan AFB as a typist. Throughout her career she held several positions including working in the fuel tanks, aircraft maintenance, as Quality reviewer and as a team building facilitator. Gail and Nes were able to drive into work each day together and stay closely connected with sons Steve and John “Spoof” who also worked there. They were all involved in the softball team and bowling league with other co-workers and friends. After nearly 3 decades, Gail was able to retire from the Department of Defense at McClellan AFB before it closed.

As a working wife and mother throughout the 60’s and 70’s, family was very important to Gail. She made sure her children were involved in activities, sports, bible study, and family camping trips and vacations. She also took classes at American River College at various times of her life, including Accounting with daughter-in-Law Karen, and Economics with her daughter Mechelle in 1985. Gail, her parents and local siblings hosted Sunday dinners where the cousins bonded and the adults enjoyed penny ante poker. As we all grew older, and she and papa became grandparents, they continued their legacy of imparting the

importance of family time, traditions and making memories. She and papa would jump at the chance to watch their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, play school, teach life skills and provide opportunities to travel and see the country. The family poker games were replaced with trips to Reno and Las Vegas.

Gail loved adventures, during her lifetime, she traveled to Mexico several times, including a monthlong driving trip in the 70's that included Mexico City, Guadalajara and Acapulco. In later life, she enjoyed the Puerta Vallarta area with Steve and Catherine, She and papa traveled to Hong Kong, China and to several European countries with papa's sister Theresa and her family to visit papa's brother Albert and his family. Gail instilled the love of travel with her kids Steve and Mechelle and grandkids, Nick and Braeden with trips to numerous states including to Hawaii, Arizona, D.C., New Orleans, and New York. She found the love to cruise this past year with a trip to Belize and Honduras, and another this past October to the East Coast, including Nova Scotia.

Her husband of nearly 45-years, Nes "Papa"; son Steve Coffey; daughter-in-law Karen Pena; grandson Justin Palace and siblings: Colleen, Dale, Vergil, and Roger preceded her in death. Gail leaves behind daughter and son-in-law, Mechelle (Shelly) and David Palace; Step-son, John (Spoof) Pena; daughter-in-law, Catherine Coffey; Grandsons: Nick Barney and Braeden Pena; granddaughters: Khylia (Justin Tiffany), Brianna (Troy Lawson), Tara Palace, Sarah Palace (Justin); Great-grandchildren: Thomas Slade; and Izzy and Ivy Palace as well as numerous nieces, nephews, and friends from all phases of her life. We will always remember her love for us, and enthusiasm for adventure.

We will be celebrating her life at Murray Family Funeral Chapel in Rocklin, CA, with a viewing on Friday, December 12th from 4 to 7 pm, followed by a service on Saturday, December 13th at 11:00 am. Internment will be on Monday, December 15th at 10:00 am. There will be a luncheon following the service.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 12. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Murray Family Funeral Chapel
4147 Rocklin Road
Rocklin, CA 95677
(916) 824-2737
<http://www.murrayfamilyfuneralchapel.com>

Celebration of Life

DEC 13. 11:00 AM (PT)

Murray Family Funeral Chapel
4147 Rocklin Road
Rocklin, CA 95677
(916) 824-2737
<http://www.murrayfamilyfuneralchapel.com>

Graveside Service

DEC 15. 10:00 AM (PT)

Rocklin Cemetery
4090 Kannasto Street
Rocklin, CA 95677

Tribute Wall

NI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Nick - December 16, 2025 at 12:59 PM

NI

“ 1 file added to the album Service



Nick - December 15, 2025 at 05:58 PM