



Leo Avery Gher

August 23, 1945 - September 30, 2025

IN MEMORY OF:

Leo Avery Gher

Serving Location:

CRAIN PLEASANT GROVE-MURDALE FUNERAL HOME

31 Memorial Drive, Murphysboro, Illinois

Leo Avery Gher, 80, passed away peacefully at his home on Lake Chautauqua in Murphysboro, Illinois, on September 30, 2025.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, on August 23, 1945, Leo was the son of Walter A. and Laurene E. Gher. He is survived by his devoted wife, Nan; his daughters, Julianna Johnson (Erik) and Krista Kirn (Jamie); and three beloved grandchildren, Troy Brown, Jackson Kirn, and Grace Kirn. He is also survived by his brother, Robert (Bob), and nephew, Alex.

Leo grew up in the Chicago area, where he attended Catholic schools before earning two degrees from Southern Illinois University Carbondale. He carried his lifelong passion for learning into his love of reading and writing. Ever a proud Saluki, Leo supported and helped produce many sports programs at

SIUC.

Leo's career was defined by a dedication to education and media. He worked in broadcast radio and television management before becoming a full-time faculty member in the Department of Radio and Television at SIUC. During his tenure, he was honored with two Fulbright grants, which allowed him to work internationally, assisting emerging democracies in developing and managing independent media. He also founded the Global Fusion Conference for communication professionals and authored numerous academic papers.

After retiring from the University, Leo continued to share his talents as a consultant, teacher for SIUC's Learning in Retirement program, and as a writer. He published two novels, numerous poems, and was a proud member of the Illinois Poetry Society.

Faith and fellowship were central to Leo's life. He was an active member of Epiphany Lutheran Church, where he served as Treasurer and on many committees. Known for his love of family and friends, Leo delighted in hosting gatherings, recounting travel adventures, and raising a glass in good cheer.

A Memorial Visitation will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 2025 from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM at Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home. An additional visitation will be held on Wednesday, October 22, 2025 from 10:00 AM until 11:00 AM at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Carbondale with a Funeral Service following at 11:00 AM with Pastor Brian Coffey officiating.

A Private Inurnment will take place at Pleasant Grove Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Southern Illinois or Epiphany Lutheran Church.

The cremation of Leo Avery Gher will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Pleasant Grove Memorial Park

31 Memorial Dr.
Murphysboro, IL 62966
(618) 687-1145
crain@crainsonline.com

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

OCT **21**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (cst)

Crain Pleasant Grove-Murdale Funeral Home - Old 13
31 Memorial Dr.
Murphysboro, IL 62966
(618) 687-2500
crain@crainsonline.com

Memorial Visitation

OCT **22**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (cst)

Epiphany Lutheran Church
1501 W. Chautauqua
Carbondale, IL

Funeral Service

OCT **22**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (cst)

Epiphany Lutheran Church
1501 W. Chautauqua
Carbondale, IL

Tribute Wall

JV

“ JoAnn Volz purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Leo Avery Gher.



JoAnn Volz - October 20, 2025 at 11:00 AM

TF

“ The Duggins Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Leo Avery Gher.



The Duggins Family - October 15, 2025 at 09:04 AM

JW

“ So sorry to see this news. Leo brought tremendous notoriety to SIU and helped with my higher education teaching career. He was my faculty mentor, a good friend, and will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with Nan and the family.

Jim Wall - October 04, 2025 at 05:15 PM

KK

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Krista Kirn - October 03, 2025 at 03:41 PM

KK

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Krista Kirn - October 03, 2025 at 03:25 PM

TC

“ I don't remember ever meeting Leo but, Nancy (Nan) sure spoke about him with pride and love. He sounds like he was a wonderful person. Blessings to you all, Nancy. Love you, Tulane

Tulane Crutcher - October 03, 2025 at 12:47 PM

LC

“ I am so very sorry to learn this. Leo was one of the best. Lynda Clemmons

lynda clemmons - October 03, 2025 at 12:25 PM

JK

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jackson Kirn - October 02, 2025 at 07:00 PM