



## John Lynn Rife

November 1, 1943 - October 9, 2025

Funeral services for John Lynn Rife, 81, will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, October 17, 2025, at the First Baptist Church in Torrington, Wyoming, with Julie Newman officiating. Burial with military honors will follow at Valley View Cemetery. John passed away on October 9, 2025, in Torrington, Wyoming. Visitation will be held at the Colyer Funeral Home on Thursday, October 16, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m., and the casket will be open at the church prior to the service. Memorials may be given to the First Baptist Church. Arrangements are under the direction of the Colyer Funeral Home, and condolences may be shared with the family at [www.colyerfuneralhome.com](http://www.colyerfuneralhome.com) Life and Legacy - John was born on November 1, 1943, in Torrington, Wyoming, to Ted and Gladys (Harris) Rife. He graduated from Torrington High School, where he ran track and earned numerous medals and awards. In March 1963, John enlisted in the United States Army and was deployed to Vietnam as a Hawk Missile Pulse Acquisition Radar Technician. He received several honors, including the Sharpshooter Medal (Rifle M-14), the Vietnam Service Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal. He was honorably discharged in 1965 and served in the Army Reserves until 1969. After returning home, John attended Eastern Wyoming College and went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Wyoming. His career as a Mechanical Engineer with Texas Instruments reflected his lifelong love of learning and innovation. Known for his inventive mind, he earned multiple patents and was widely respected for his skill as a designer, welder, and problem solver. A Lifelong

Love - On November 17, 1960, John and his friend Jeris were “dragging Main” in his 1955 Studebaker when he saw Sharon Kay (Brown) walking with three of her friends. One of the girls called out, “John!” and he stopped the car in front of the bowling alley. He called out to Sharon, and they began talking. Before long, he asked if they would like a ride in his car. That first conversation led to their first date — a hayride with the Baptist Youth Fellowship. From that evening on, John and Sharon saw each other often and quickly became high school sweethearts. They loved dancing, football games, Drive-In Theatres, Wyoming Theater and competing at Cheyenne and Scottsbluff Dragway with their 1955 Studebaker, building a bond that only grew stronger with time. After John enlisted in the Army, the couple became engaged on September 9, 1963, and were married on June 1, 1964, at the First Baptist Church in Torrington. Their honeymoon doubled as a trip to Fort Bliss, Texas, where John was stationed. Following his military service, John and Sharon returned to Torrington to complete their studies at Eastern Wyoming College, then moved to Laramie, where they both earned bachelor’s degrees — John in Engineering and Sharon in Education. The couple eventually settled in Dallas, Texas, where John began his career with Texas Instruments and Sharon taught business at Richland Junior College. Together, they built a beautiful life grounded in faith, hard work, and love. They were blessed with two children, Shawn Edward and Shanna Britta, and together founded Rife Enterprises, LLC, followed by Rife Vineyards, the first certified organic vineyard in Texas. In 2017, John and Sharon moved to Falcon, Colorado, where they continued their business ventures while embracing time with their growing family. A Man of Many Talents -John’s passion for learning never faded. In his later years, he found immense joy in sharing projects with his grandchildren and his son, Shawn. He was always ready to lend a hand, offer advice, or teach a new skill. His unique talents, encouragement, and laughter made every “crazy project” better. He loved helping others thrive, learn, and grow — and that was one of his greatest gifts. He also cherished visiting his daughter Shanna and

her family, enjoying their shared love of travel, hiking, gardening, museums, and adventurous food. Above all, John delighted in watching his grandchildren grow up — taking pride in their education, creativity, and accomplishments. His curiosity and joy were contagious, and his legacy lives on through each of them. Family - John is survived by his devoted wife of 61 years, Sharon Kay (Brown) Rife; his sister, Donna (Mike) Vick; his son, Shawn Edward (Tania) Rife; his daughter, Shanna Britta (Vinnie) Mellnick; and ten beloved grandchildren: Khaylen Rife (20), Kallie Rife (18), Cole Rife (16), Lucy Mellnick (15), Maddox Rife (14), Addison Rife (12), Lillian Mellnick (12), Jade Rife (10), Layla Mellnick (8), and Ivy Rife (4). He was preceded in death by his parents, Ted and Gladys Rife. John will be remembered for his unwavering faith, his joyful heart, and his generous spirit. He lived life with curiosity, laughter, and purpose — always eager to lend a hand, share his knowledge, and celebrate the people he loved most. His legacy of devotion to family, service to others, and steadfast love for the Lord will continue to inspire all who knew him.

# Cemetery Details

## Valley View Cemetery

30th Avenue  
Torrington, WY 82240

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **16**. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (MT)

Colyer Funeral Home  
PO Box 20 / 2935 Main  
Torrington, WY 82240  
(307) 532-2320  
colyerfuneralhome@gmail.com

## Funeral Service

OCT **17**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (MT)

First Baptist Church  
2241 Main St  
Torrington, WY 82240  
(307) 532-2760

# Tribute Wall

SR

“ 1 file added to the album Family Flowers



Sharon Rife - December 30, 2025 at 12:36 PM

SA

“ Sarah A. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lynn Rife.

Sarah A. - October 20, 2025 at 01:07 PM

LF

“ Lee Brown and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lynn Rife.

Lee Brown and Family - October 17, 2025 at 11:03 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Lynn Rife.



October 17, 2025 at 11:03 AM

LI

“ Love, Cole, Maddox, Addy, Jade, and Ivy planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lynn Rife.

Love, Cole, Maddox, Addy, Jade, and Ivy - October 16, 2025 at 10:34 AM

LI

“ Love, Cole, Maddox, Addy, Jade, and Ivy purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of John Lynn Rife.



Love, Cole, Maddox, Addy, Jade, and Ivy - October 16, 2025 at 10:34 AM

LI

“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Lynn Rife.



October 15, 2025 at 04:28 PM

DD

“ Dan, Dana and David planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lynn Rife.

Dan, Dana and David - October 15, 2025 at 02:20 PM

DD

“ Dan, Dana and David purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of John Lynn Rife.



---

**Dan, Dana and David** - October 15, 2025 at 02:20 PM

BD

“ Bob and Nelda Dickerman planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lynn Rife.

---

**Bob and Nelda Dickerman** - October 14, 2025 at 03:17 PM

BD

“ Bob and Nelda Dickerman purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of John Lynn Rife.



---

**Bob and Nelda Dickerman** - October 14, 2025 at 03:17 PM

MW

“ Sharon and family. To my cousin, John, who was often called Johnny, in our growing up. I send the love of a cousin and many memories of families together. Your mom was my dad, Lafe's youngest sister. You used to keep them posted on your lives when you were raising your family in Texas. That was so appreciated. Love to the family. Marion Harris Weickum, Rupert Idaho

---

**Marion Harris Weickum** - October 14, 2025 at 02:03 PM

TP

“ Tony and Norma Porter purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of John Lynn Rife.



---

**Tony and Norma Porter** - October 14, 2025 at 01:19 PM

TP

“ Tony and Norma Porter planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John Lynn Rife.

---

**Tony and Norma Porter** - October 14, 2025 at 01:19 PM