

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Gross, L. W. Joe Senator \_\_\_\_\_  
Lowell Mount Ayn, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 27 Oct 1925 Fort Morgan, Colorado

2. Marriage (s) date place

Helene Hammann 20 Feb 1945

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business \_\_\_\_\_

B. Civic responsibilities Mason; Eastern Star; American Legion;  
Shriners; VFW.

C. Profession Insurance agent; owner and administrator of nursing  
home

4. Church membership Methodist

5. Sessions served 69<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 1981-1982

6. Public Offices

A. Local Mount Ayn City councilman; Ringgold County Hospital board of trustees

B. State Elected in 1978 to the Republican State Central Committee for 18 years. Board of  
Director of Iowa Health Association 14 years; Iowa State Board of Health 6 years

C. National \_\_\_\_\_

7. Death Aug 2004 Mt Ayn, Iowa; Buried Rose Hill Cemetery, Mount Ayn, Iowa

8. Children Joan (Mrs. Larry Brown); Jack; Jayne Ann (Mrs. Joe  
Rivers - predeceased her father)

9. Names of parents \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Education

Educated in the schools of Arispe, Iowa  
graduating in 1943.

## 11. Degrees

## 12. Other applicable information

- Republican*
- He grew to maturity in Arispe, Iowa
  - Military service - World War II - U. S. Navy
  - After the war he joined the Iowa Highway Patrol and worked for 16½ years.
  - He then began work as an insurance agent
  - He purchased a nursing home and was the administrator 10 years.
  - He built the Mount Airy Health Care Center in 1975 and was administrator until May 1989



**L. W. JOE GROSS**  
Mount Ayr



L. W. Joe Gross, the second son of Lester and Opal Gross, was born October 27, 1925 at Ft. Morgan, Colorado. Joe grew to manhood in the little town of Arispe, Iowa, where he had many fond memories of his childhood and classmates. He graduated from Arispe High School in 1943.

Soon after graduation, Joe entered the U.S. Navy, serving during WWII and served aboard the USS CAPPS (a destroyer) in the South Pacific engaging in eight major campaigns. He was awarded seven Bronze Stars for the battles engaged in. Joe was honorably discharged from the Navy on March 16, 1946.

After returning home from WWII Joe joined the Iowa Highway Patrol and worked for them for 16 1/2 years with assignments in Osceola, Chariton and Mt. Ayr. After resigning from the Highway Patrol he became an Insurance Agent and during this time he also purchased the Sunny Slope Nursing Home and was the Administrator for ten years. He then built a new facility "Mt. Ayr Health Care Center" in 1975 and was the Owner/Administrator until his retirement May 1, 1989.

Joe was always interested and active in Republican Politics. In 1978 Joe was elected to the Republican State Central Committee from the 5th and 3rd Congressional Districts and served the Republican Party of Iowa with honor and distinction for 18 years (longer than any other member has ever served on this committee). Joe was elected to the Iowa House of Representatives serving in 1981 and 1982 and chose not to seek reelection. Joe was active in the Iowa Health Association and served on their Board of Directors for 14 years. Governor Branstad appointed Joe to two-three year terms on the Iowa State Board of Health. During his tenure on the Board of Health he made many health policies that are in effect today, helping the people of the State of Iowa.

While Joe was still in the Navy, he returned home on a convalescence and rehabilitation leave for two weeks and married his high school sweetheart, Helen Hammans, also of Arispe on July 20, 1945. To this union three children were born: Joen, Jack and Jayne. Joe was always very proud of his children and took a keen interest and supported them in their endeavors.

Joe was always active in his community, having served two terms on the Mt. Ayr City Council (during his tenure on the City Council he headed a committee to build the Judge Lewis Swimming Pool); he served on the Ringgold County Hospital Board of Trustees and headed the committee to build the new addition onto the hospital. He was an active member of the Masonic Lodge having served as Worshipful master of Chariton Lodge #63 at Chariton, Iowa and Faith Lodge #179 in Mt. Ayr. Joe was a District Lecture for the Grand Lodge of Iowa and he conducted over 100 Masonic Funerals for his lodge and surrounding lodges. He served as Worthy Patron in the Order of the Eastern Star, with his wife Helen as Worthy Matron

and also served as Worthy Patron when his daughters Joen and Jayne were Worthy Matron and also served as Worthy Patron for Editha Obermierer when her husband was killed in a tragic auto accident. Joe served as Rainbow Dad when Joen and Jayne were Worthy Advisors for the Mt. Ayr Rainbow Assembly. Joe was also awarded the Grand Cross of Colors for Rainbow Girls. Joe was a Cub Scout leader when son Jack was a member of the Cub Scouts. He was also an active member of the Methodist Church having served as a Lay leader and Lay Speaker, served on the Administrative Board and many committees. He was also a Past Commander of the Mt. Ayr American Legion Post #172, a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Des Moines Consistory, Za-Ga-Zig Shrine and a past president of the South Central Shrine Club.

Left to mourn his passing is his beloved wife, Helen of Mount Ayr; his oldest daughter, Joen Brown and husband Larry of Mount Ayr; his only son, Jack Gross and wife Marlene of Des Moines; son-in-law, Joe Rivera and his wife Jennifer of Boone, IA; grandchildren, Dustin Brown, T.J. Brown, Melanie Gross, Jason Gross and wife Athamandia and Joey Rivera; great-granddaughter, Lucy Jayne Gross; brother, Richard Gross and wife Betty of Diagonal, IA; uncle, Sidney Gross and wife Catherine of Osceola, IA; nieces and nephews; other relatives; and a host of many friends. Joe was preceded in death by his parents; his youngest daughter whom he grieved for every day, Jayne Ann Rivera; and brother, Arlyn Gross and his wife Maxine.

Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Friday, August 6 at the United Methodist Church in Mount Ayr. Burial, with military honors provided by Ringgold Post #172, will be in Rose Hill Cemetery. There will be a Masonic Service at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday followed by the family receiving friends at Wilson-Watson & Armstrong Funeral Home in Mount Ayr. There is a memorial fund established in his name.

*The Des Moines Register, Des Moines,  
Iowa, Wed, Aug. 4, 2004,  
p. 7B, col. 1*