



Robert Roy Rietz

April 3, 1946 - June 7, 2026

Devoted husband and father Robert Roy Rietz of Brookings, SD, and Greenville, SC, passed away June 7, 2026, at the age of 80.

For 35 years, Dr. Rietz practiced medicine in Brookings, SD, first in private practice and then as a member of the Brookings (later Avera) Clinic. He specialized in otorhinolaryngology, and helped countless patients by removing tonsils and adenoids, placing ear tubes, and packing nosebleeds. He especially delighted in treating children and earned a specialization in children's medicine at LeBonheur Children's Hospital in Memphis, TN. He graduated from Creighton University School of Medicine (Omaha, NE) after being recruited as a medical student while concurrently employed as a professor of neurophysiology.

Prior to his enrollment at medical school, he received his PhD in neurophysiology at the University of Tennessee Medical Units (Memphis, TN). He completed his postdoctorate at Emory University (Atlanta, GA). During his medical career, he also earned an MBA from the University of South Dakota.

He met the love of his life, Elaine, in honors chemistry in the second semester of freshman year at the University of South Dakota. They married the following year and welcomed two children – Roy and Tricia – before graduating from college. They spent a year in Creighton, NE, where Robert

taught high school science, before moving south to further his education. Their second “set” of children, Becca and Robin, were born during Dr. Rietz’s time at medical school.

Robert was a witty, devious, charitable soul, who, despite his medical training, spurned exercise because he “didn’t want to waste heartbeats.” Starting in college and for five decades following, he regularly wrote letters to loved ones, a literal treasury of memories.

He leaves behind his wife of 60 years, Elaine (Dewey) Rietz; four children – Roy Rietz (Beth) of Travelers Rest, SC; Tricia Arthur (Don) of Marietta, SC; Becca Kelly (Brendon) of Columbia, SC; and Robin Chudnovsky (Emil) of Washington, DC; twelve grandchildren - Cora, Kevin, and Ruby Rietz; Helen, Rose, Drew, and Kendall Arthur, and Morgan Warner; Roman, Alexander, Liev, and Sabine Chudnovsky; thirteen step-great-grandchildren; and a sister, Janet Rietz of Park City, UT, and her son Jim Tschabrun (Missy) of Park City, UT, and their children Sonja and Bryn. He was preceded in death by his parents, Roy and Yvonne (Young) Rietz, and his sister, Paula Rietz.

In lieu of flowers, please consider:

Buying your wife jewelry for no good reason and hiding it as the prize at the bottom of a cracker jack box,

Adopting a bunny,

Rescuing an earthworm from the dry pavement after a rain,

Treating someone to a hot dog or two.

Or, if something more traditional is desired, please consider donating to the Alzheimer’s Association.

A Celebration of Life service led by Pastor Elise T. Springer will take place at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Greer, SC, 10:30 a.m., Friday, June 19, with visitation from 9:45 until 10:20. A graveside service will be held later in

Vermillion, SD.

Palmetto Cremation Service is assisting the family.

Upcoming Events

Celebration of Life Service

JUN **19**. 10:30 AM.

Redeemer Lutheran Church