

## Gary Mule Deer Biography

Gary Mule Deer was born Gary Clark Miller in 1939, in Deadwood, SD, and grew up on a ranch near Spearfish. He was the first of four children of grocer and cattle rancher Bruce, and Lola Miller. Gary graduated from Spearfish High School in 1957 and attended Black Hills State University for five years, but found his calling was music. Practicing guitar and some Johnny Cash songs, he sang at local bars, then formed a group, Gary Miller And The Vaqueros, that played at the Spearfish Pavilion and area venues. He headed for Denver, then Los Angeles, lucky to join a popular Folk group, The New Society. Always spotting mule deer on road trips in the tour bus, Gary picked up the nickname Mule Deer, and it stuck. Adding comedy to his act, he next became part of a popular comedy duo, Muledeer and Moondogg, that opened for many rock groups like The Dooby Brothers and Earth, Wind and Fire, and were regulars on the CBS TV show The John Byner Comedy Hour and The Midnight Special.

In 1975 Gary went out on his own as Gary Mule Deer, finding success as one of the new young comedians, appearing at the Comedy Store, on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson, on Steve Martin specials, as comedy co-host of Rock Concert on NBC for four years, a regular on Make Me Laugh, and a judge on The Gong Show. He starred, along with Jay Leno, on the very first HBO Comedy Special. His comedy act always included music, both funny parodies and classic country, especially Johnny Cash music. He now added 200 lbs. of props, gaining him a reputation as not only one of the brightest comedians, but as one-of-a-kind.

By 1980 Gary was sharing the stage in Las Vegas, Reno and Lake Tahoe, with music icons like Roy Orbison, Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra, The Beach Boys, and Rick Nelson. He became popular with the country world, working with the stars of country music like Merle Haggard, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, and Roger Miller, with whom he appeared regularly in Las Vegas. He made 100 appearances on The Nashville Network, including a stint as a regular on Hee Haw in 1991. He continues to be a frequent and popular performer on the Grand Ole Opry today.

Gary has achieved national prominence, his career spanning five decades. He has made over 350 television appearances including The Tonight Show and many visits to The Late Show With David Letterman. He performed at Carnegie Hall in 2009 and has had his show filmed at the Colonial Theatre in MA for a PBS special. He has enjoyed often bringing his comedy and music

show to the theaters of Royal Caribbean big ships for 20 years, as well as to performing arts theatres like The McCallum Theatre in Palm Desert, CA. Since 1997 he has appeared as Special Guest with the Johnny Mathis show and a 24- piece orchestra, in just about every major theatre in the U.S., and Royal Albert Hall in London. In 2003 Gary performed his show at the Independence Day celebration at Mt. Rushmore Memorial.

Gary's music is equally as enjoyed and respected as his well-known comedy, his singing and guitar playing a part of his show. He has a music CD out, including some of Nashville's finest musicians who have been eager to record with him as his "Duck and Cover Band". Gary's accomplishments, musical talent and ability to make people laugh are impressive, but just as important is his clean humor. It is healthy and family-friendly, in a world of too much off-color and mean-spirited humor. He is universally well liked. Someone at an event commented recently that Gary was the nicest person he had met in show business. Gary Mule Deer is one of the most played comedians on the clean comedy channels of Sirius XM Satellite Radio.

An avid golfer, Gary has been able to give to many charities for years, by donating his performances at major charity golf events across the country, including The Duke, for Duke Children's Hospital, Arnold Palmer's Champions For Children, The Canon Classic For Missing And Exploited Children, The Frank Sinatra for Barbara Sinatra's Children's Center for abused children, Alice Cooper's tournament and Christmas Pudding concerts for the Solid Rock Christian Foundation for kids, Dennis James Classic for United Cerebral Palsy, Vince Gill's Vinny for First Tee golf programs for kids and The First Tee Open at Pebble Beach. He has donated his show to events for the Ara Parseghian Foundation for Nieman Pick Disease, St. Jude Hospital, The Parasol (multi-charity) Foundation in Reno, NV and the Starkey Hearing Foundation. He received a Walk of Fame Star from the Make-A-Wish Foundation for donation of his show and his fundraising efforts.

Gary hosted a fundraising golf tournament in Spearfish for seven years to benefit the Artemis House shelter for abused women and children. He is very supportive of the High Plains Western Heritage center in Spearfish, donating a fundraising show nearly every year, and the sound system in their theater. He has also performed two benefit shows at Black Hills State University.

Some honors Gary has received are an induction into the Spearfish High School Fine Arts Hall of Fame in 2006, an Outstanding Alumnus award from Black Hills State University, and being honored in 2008 as one of 125 Accomplished BHSU Alumni who have achieved prominence and distinction in their careers.

Gary and his first band, The Vaqueros, were first year inductees into the new South Dakota Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in May of 2009.

Gary and his wife Nita, who co-managed his career in Los Angeles, were married in 1997 and now have a home and office in Spearfish. Gary is still touring as much as ever and Nita coordinates his busy schedule with his production manager and clients and producers around the country. At the top of his form with his comedy, singing and guitar playing, Gary receives standing ovations from audiences and the respect of legendary status among his peers. He is very grateful for everything in his life, including a loving family, and friends all across the country too numerous to count.