



Evelyn Virginia Tande

1930 - 2016

Evelyn Virginia Tande, age 85, of Alma Center, passed away Friday, May 13, 2016 at Black River Memorial Hospital surrounded by the family that loved her. She was born August 13, 1930 in her Grandparent's house in Merrillan, Wisconsin, to David Samuel Barrett and Estella LaVera Santos Barrett.

Evelyn was born in the midst of the Great Depression and that followed her for many years. She always tried to make sure there was enough food to eat; at times, that food coming at the cost of pride. She sacrificed a lot of that pride for her children.

Her childhood was full of turmoil. Her only brother died in a tragic accident in 1933. That set the tone for an unsettled childhood. In 1943, when she was 13, her mother died. Mom always said she died of a broken heart. As was common in those days, Evelyn was "farmed out" to various family members and neighbors.

She met and married Joe Shoemaker and began a tumultuous life with Joe. Four children were born to this union. They would later divorce and she would marry Fay Tande and have two children.

After her divorce, she set off as a single mother, with small children, no high school diploma, and very little money.

Evelyn always regretted not finishing high school, but at the time, she always said she quit because she was smarter than the teacher. As her children approached high school, she realized she really hadn't been smarter than the teacher and began the journey of going back to high school. It was with great pride she walked across the stage and received her diploma. She then interned at the Jackson County Courthouse and was later employed by U.O.P. Norplex.

After her marriage to Fay, she began a different journey. Fay and Evelyn purchased a motor home and had the opportunity to travel to many states, perhaps even get in a little fishing.

After selling the motor home, Evelyn and Fay purchased the former Ray Esser Tavern and ran it together as "Eleven's Spot". Evelyn also did home health care for a time.

Evelyn had talent most people only dream of having. She sewed most of her young children's clothes. She even made their winter coats. Evelyn would crochet all summer and knit all winter. Her counted cross stitch work was legendary. Many lucky people are proud owners of Evelyn's needlework and she had the voice of an angel, singing in her church choir.

Evelyn was generous to a fault. Many little girls wore dresses made by her when the children were in grade school. She also opened her home to many people who felt displaced.

Evelyn's later years were a struggle as she dealt with COPD, but she never lost her spunk.

Evelyn is survived by her daughters with Joe Shoemaker: Marsha (Duane) Harden of Hudson, Brenda Larson and Sally Jo (Roy) Pokorny, each of Merrillan; her children with Fay Tande: Debra (Bill) Finck of Black River Falls and Dean (Deb) Tande of Alma Center; step-sons, Gerry and Gary Tande; 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; 2 great-great grandchildren; and many other family members.

She was preceded in death by her parents, David and Stella Barrett; her husbands' Joe Shoemaker and Fay Tande; son David Shoemaker; grandson, Travis Pokorny; great-grandsons: Alexander Aguilar and Vincent Pettibone; her brother David Lawerance; sister Dorothy Marie; and many other family members.

Memorial services will be 12:00 noon, Thursday, May 19, 2016 at Jensen-Modjeski Funeral Home (128 S. Hoffman Street, Hixton, Wisconsin 54635) with Reverend Terry Marg officiating. Burial will follow at East Lawn Cemetery in Alma Center.

Friends and family may call from 10:30 a.m. until time of service on Thursday at the funeral home.

Jensen-Modjeski Funeral Home (715-963-2231) is assisting the family with arrangements.