



Merna M. Conley

November 24, 1927 - June 12, 2024

A Graveside Service for Merna was held on Friday, June 21, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. at Geneva Public Cemetery in Geneva, Nebraska. Pastor Tim Bullock presided over the Graveside Service.

The recorded selection "Unforgettable" was played at the conclusion of the Graveside.

Memorials are suggested to the Geneva Senior Center.

Merna Mae Grossman was born November 24, 1927, in Cowles, Nebraska, to Ralph Wilbur and Nancy Mabel (Thomas) Grossman, along with her twin sister Verna, each weighing in at approximately 3 pounds. Twins were a surprise to everyone except their mother, but older siblings were pleased to help with the care of the tiny babies.

At 3 months of age, she moved with her family to nearby Red Cloud, Nebraska, where her father worked for the State Department of Roads as a maintainer driver. In April of 1939, Merna and her twin sister developed Scarlet Fever, from which her twin passed away at the age of 11 years. Merna recovered and continued at Red Cloud Elementary School through 5th grade when, in the summer of 1939, they moved to Lockwood, Missouri, for her father's employment. She attended junior high and part of 9th grade in Lockwood and then the family returned to Red Cloud where, in 1946, Merna graduated from Red Cloud High School. During high school, she worked at Sid's Cafe and the local grocery store and, after graduation, she worked in the office at the telephone company.

In September of 1947, while visiting her sister in Aurora, Illinois, Merna was introduced to her sister's best friend's brother, World War II veteran Carl Conley. Carl moved to Red Cloud in early 1948 and he and Merna were married on July 10, 1948. They lived in Red Cloud until February 1949 when they moved to Hebron, Nebraska, where they survived the 1953 Mother's Day tornado. Merna worked in the local "dime store" as a secretary and clerk, and frequently helped out at Hebron Floral, which was owned by dear family friends. In February 1954, she moved with Carl and their first two children to Geneva, Nebraska.

Merna worked as an Avon representative and then as an agent for the Lincoln Journal Star. In 1957 they moved into the house Carl built and Merna had their 3rd child in 1961. In 1963, Merna began work at Geneva Elementary School as a teachers' aide, along with playground and lunchroom duty, and later as a library aide. She loved her work. After 30 years, Merna retired from Geneva Public Schools in 1993. She soon began working part-time at the Geneva Public Library and retired for good in 2000.

Merna loved children and was fondly remembered from her years at the elementary school by former students for many years. In the early 1970s, Merna and three friends began a successful quest to ride their kids' old bicycles to every town in Fillmore County, which was covered in the Nebraska Signal newspaper. Merna was active as a member of the United Methodist Church for over 60 years, including circle, extension, and other groups. She was involved in the VFW auxiliary, multiple bridge clubs, birthday clubs, and book clubs, and was a volunteer with the local immunization clinic. Merna was a life-long learner, curious about the world, an avid reader, a traveler, and loved meeting people and hearing their stories. She was kind, nurturing, smart, cared intensely for her children, grandchildren, and friends, and she made the best pies. Her many friends were an important and cherished part of her life. She was proud of her family's history in Nebraska, including her grandfather, Lorenzo Dow Thomas, who helped establish Webster County.

In 2016, following the death of her beloved husband, Merna moved to assisted living in Geneva, where she worked hard to stay healthy and happy, and continued to live her life. In 2022, she moved to Cathy and Paul's home in Lincoln, where she enjoyed spending time on the bike trail, visiting nearby lakes, watching Nebraska sports and old movies, taking drives, and lounging on the deck. She passed away peacefully in her adopted home on June 12, 2024.

Merna was preceded in death by her husband of 67 years, Carl Conley; her parents; all of her five siblings: Veona, Mildred, Lela, Ralph Thomas, and twin sister Verna.

She is survived by her three children and families: Craig and Jean from Washington State, Carol and Steve from Lincoln, and Cathy and Paul from Lincoln; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren; foreign exchange student Birgit Zoerner from Dortmund, Germany; nieces and nephews.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 20. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Farmer & Son Funeral Home

242 N 10th Street

Geneva, NE 68361

(402) 759-3617

<https://farmerandsonfuneralhome.com>

Graveside Service

JUN 21. 10:30 AM (CT)

Geneva Public Cemetery

Geneva, NE 68361

Tribute Wall



“ 20 files added to the album Memories Album



Farmer & Son Funeral Home - June 21, 2024 at 12:31 PM

DH

“ Our sympathy to the Conley family. Merna was such a kind person and a good neighbor to us for many years. Larry and Diane Heath



Diane Heath - June 20, 2024 at 09:40 PM

DP

“ It has truly been a life-enriching privilege to have known Ms Merna all these years. A radiant and genuine lady who brought joy and kindness to everyone she crossed paths with. I admired her from the days of elementary school when she'd keep us wayward rascals in line until her final days. When Cathy & Mary lived in Alaska for a time (Anchorage, Kenai/Soldotna), Merna & I flew up to visit in the summer of 1983 and the stunning scenery complemented by being in her company made it the trip of a lifetime. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."



Don Prater - June 20, 2024 at 07:23 PM

DP

“ 1 file added to the album Photos



Don Prater - June 20, 2024 at 07:20 PM

MD

“ I'm so going to miss my dear friend and second mother. Cathy and Paul, you provided her with the most wonderful loving care over the last 8 years, especially the last 2.5 years in your home. I loved being with the three of you last summer and enjoyed driving around to area lakes and stopping for ice cream. You made her quality of life the best by surrounding her with your love and support throughout the remainder of her life. God speed sweet Merna Mae!❤️

Mary DeLano - June 20, 2024 at 12:05 PM

DB

“ Mrs. Conley was my dear friend and I enjoyed every moment I spent with her. I especially enjoyed having her over to our home to celebrate her birthday. What a sweet, wonderful lady!



Debbie Bullock - June 19, 2024 at 07:28 PM

JS

Merna was a beautiful woman, she always had a smile on her face and shared her love with so many people throughout her life. She was very blessed to have lived the last two and a half years with her daughter Cathy and son in law Paul. She was celebrated daily by their constant love and support. Merna, thank you for the many years of friendship you had with mom, your coffee club ladies are welcoming you with lots of love. Thanks for being a light to so many. Jan and Alan Slepicka

Jan Slepicka - June 20, 2024 at 12:20 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Merna M. Conley.*



June 18, 2024 at 07:11 AM

BG

“ *B and family from Germany planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Merna M. Conley.*

B and family from Germany - June 18, 2024 at 07:11 AM

BT

“ *Barbara Trapp lit a candle in memory of Merna Conley*



Barbara Trapp - June 17, 2024 at 03:25 PM

JJ

“ *John and I loved both of your parents so much and we think of Carl always on his Birthday because he shared it with our daughter. Every time we stopped to see them on our way west Merna would bake a peach pie for dinner for us. Thinking of all of you kids and we will keep you in our hearts.*

john and sally janunas - June 17, 2024 at 11:21 AM

BS

“ *Barbara S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Merna M. Conley.*

Barbara S. - June 17, 2024 at 11:08 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Merna M. Conley.*



June 15, 2024 at 05:24 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Merna M. Conley.*



June 15, 2024 at 04:08 PM

SS

“ *Scott Robinson and Ruth & Rod Schake planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Merna M. Conley.*

Scott Robinson and Ruth & Rod Schake - June 15, 2024 at 04:08 PM

SL

“ *Carol, your mother was such a sweet lady. Our hearts and prayers go out to your family. We are out of state for three weeks. We are sending virtual hugs.*

Love,
Sharon and Jerry Lauber

sharon lauber - June 14, 2024 at 10:51 PM

KS

“ *Sending thoughts & prayers to Craig, Carol & Cathy. Your mother was one of the sweetest, kindest person I know. She will be deeply missed.*



Karla Slezak - June 14, 2024 at 05:27 PM

VO

“ *Oh, the memories of growing up with your family. The fun we had playing so many games together. Creating our own Jetson Family spaceship! Sitting up on the rafters as your dad was building your home. The "mom and kids" trip to Tecumseh to visit the McDonalds. Our moms were like sisters, making your mom like a second mom to me. Cherish the memories! I will miss your mom's visitation and graveside service as I will be out of town for a convention. My prayers are with you Craig, Carol, and Cathy.*



Vicki Ozenbaugh - June 14, 2024 at 10:20 AM

VJ

“ *A beautiful, kind hearted lady!*



Virginia Johnson - June 14, 2024 at 08:52 AM

HR

“ *Holly Rippe lit a candle in memory of Merna Conley*



Holly Rippe - June 14, 2024 at 08:50 AM

CM

“ *I have to tell you, I have such great memories of Merna and her family! My mom and Merna were friends. Carol and I were the same age and spent many hours at that old pool in Geneva. I remember spending nights in your 'house in progress' in Geneva. Many years since I've seen any of you, but you're in my thoughts and prayers. You're so lucky to have had your mom for so long! Remember all the good times. They say you are' t really gone until no one speaks your name anymore, so keep telling Merna stories!*

Coleen McMahon - June 13, 2024 at 11:40 PM

KT

“ *Kent & Rose Theobald lit a candle in memory of Merna Conley*



Kent & Rose Theobald - June 13, 2024 at 10:57 PM



“ *Sandi Renken lit a candle in memory of Merna Conley. Carol and family you will be in my thoughts and Prayers.*



RodandSandi Renken - June 13, 2024 at 07:58 PM

LD

“ Lisa Dondlinger lit a candle in memory of Merna Conley



Lisa Dondlinger - June 13, 2024 at 07:48 PM

DJ

“ Mrs. Conley was a para at the school when I was growing up. Then when I started working at the school, she worked with me. What a wonderful lady and mentor to many! ❤️
Deb Buerer Jenkins

Deb Jenkins - June 13, 2024 at 06:40 PM

LH

“ Linda Heinisch lit a candle in memory of Merna Conley



Linda Heinisch - June 13, 2024 at 05:26 PM

MD

I will miss my dear friend and second mother. Cathy and Paul, your loving care and support for your mom these past 8 years and especially the last 2.5 years in your home brought her immense comfort and peace throughout her end of life. I know you will miss her. Love, Mary

Mary DeLano - June 17, 2024 at 12:47 PM