

Evelyn Bowles leaves lasting legacy in Madison County politics, civic work

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE – **Evelyn M. Bowles, 94**, left a legacy in Madison County politics that won't soon be forgotten.

Bowles, 94, died at 5:42 p.m. Friday at Eden Village Care Center.

She was most known for being Madison County Clerk from 1972-1994, then as an Illinois State Senator from 1994-2002. She was born in Worden, IL., and also served in the United States Coast Guard from 1943 to 1945 in the highly important Intelligence Division.

Evelyn was involved in many clubs and organizations including: St. Mary Catholic Church in Edwardsville, where she served as the first chairman of the Parish Council. She also belonged to the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, Business Professional Women, Daughters of Isabella, Association of American Retired People, American Legion Post 199, Madison County Historical

Museum & Archival Library, SIUE Alumni Association, and Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation's.

Comments from officials in Madison County and Southwestern Illinois on the passing of **Evelyn Bowles**, longtime Madison County Clerk and Illinois State Senator are below:

“Throughout her career as a public servant, Evelyn Bowles put politics aside and did what was best for the people she served. We mourn the passing of a great public servant, of a friend and of a mentor. She will be missed.”

Alan J. Dunstan, Chairman Madison County Board

“Sad news. A pioneer and a force. She didn’t put herself above others. Evelyn provided personal and competent service with humility and respect for those she served. A great loss.”

William Mudge, Judge 3rd Judicial Circuit

“Truly a renaissance woman! She had it all, political dynamo, charm and grace, golfer and performer! I will never forget her renditions of ‘Democrats, Democrats’ sung to the melody of Ja Da! They broke the mold when they made her!”

David Hylla, Chief Judge 3rd Judicial Circuit

“Evelyn was a great lady. She exemplified a devotion to honest and competent public service. God rest her soul.”

William Haine, Illinois State Senator

“I remember when I first met with Evelyn to seek her advice when I was contemplating running for coroner in 2000. She was so straightforward with her counsel; ‘Don’t ever forget why you are in public service for as soon as you do, your supporters will forget why they voted for you. Always remain being the person they voted for. In politics it can

be hard to stay humble and avoid becoming cynical, don't fall into that ego trap and you will do well for yourself and your constituents.'"

Steve Nonn, Madison County Coroner

"So very sad. She was a great lady with class!"

Jay Hoffman, Illinois State Senator

"She always took time to talk and, more importantly, to listen."

Dan Beiser, Representative Illinois Legislature

"It's a sad day in Madison County with the news of the passing of Senator Evelyn Bowles. Her words, 'When you fall down, and you will fall down, what matters most is how you handle yourself in the process.' and 'The County Clerk serves all citizens. We don't care if you're Republican or Democrat, we treat everyone the same. Politics stops at the door,' a position which remains the mantra in the County Clerk's office."

Debbie Ming Mendoza, Madison County Clerk

"Very sad. Evelyn was a true public servant and will be greatly missed."

Tom Gibbons, Madison County State's Attorney