

Evelyn Stumpe

Dow | Sunday, September 27 2020

Evelyn Stumpe died September 27, 2020. She was 92 years old.

Evelyn Rose Healey was born September 10, 1928, in Sugar Hollow, near Fieldon, Illinois, to Mildred Wiist Healey and Wesley Healey.

From Fieldon she moved to Alton to live and attend high school, where she graduated in 1946. She met Louis Stumpe, Jr. at a dance in Fieldon. It was love at first sight, plus he had a car. They were married in 1947. Together they had three children ' Katherine, Louis (III), and David. They traveled and lived around the country ' California, Maryland, Alaska, and Georgia ' before finally settling on the family farm in Dow, where she lived for 73 years.



Evelyn was a homemaker who took pride in her family, her farm, and her community. She was as famous for her kindness as she was for her cooking. Many will recall being on the receiving end of her graciousness, generosity, and hospitality, not to mention her delicious pies, cobblers, noodles, and dumplings. She was a robust participant in and supporter of her community. She was a proud and active member of the Jersey County Homemakers Association, where she was awarded Homemaker of the Year; the Tri-County Antique Club, where she was very active and for whom she made hundreds of pies as well as demonstrated the traditional making of lye soap at the club's annual Olden Days Festival and Agricultural Enrichment Program for area schools; and the Jersey County 4-H, where she was a leader for 35 years, helping hundreds of children and young adults learn cooking, sewing, and leadership skills.

In 1981, her family was named Illinois Farm Family of the Year, the first such honor ever bestowed by the State of Illinois.

She was a founding board member of the Jersey County 4-H Foundation, an organization she helped establish after the death of her beloved husband and partner, Louis, whom she worked alongside of, milking cows and farming, for 50+ years. In 2010, she was elected to the Illinois 4-H Hall of Fame.

For 60+ years she hosted Thanksgiving at her farm for her entire extended family and anyone who needed a place to go. All were welcome, and Thanksgiving at Stumpeville averaged 75 people a year, with a room dedicated entirely to pies and desserts. The next day, people knew to show up for her potato donuts. She taught all her grandchildren and great-grandchildren how to make noodles, jams, pies, and more. She taught them kindness, graciousness, generosity, and tolerance. When her grandson opened a restaurant in Washington, DC, she was brought in to teach the pastry chefs how to make a decent pie crust.

Five years ago, one of Evelyn's great-granddaughters interviewed her for a school assignment. Evelyn's own words are a lovely and poetic way to remember her:

"I was raised to believe in hard work. I was raised to be tolerant and kind and as helpful as possible. My parents always told us that working hard and helping other people was a key to happiness, and I believe that to this day. My farm, where I have lived for 70 years, is the most important place to me. My whole family is around me and this land and its history mean the world to all of us. I have absolutely reached my life goals. When I was a little girl, my goal was to get married to a nice man and raise a family of my own. Well, I was married to the most wonderful man, and I have a wonderful family. I think I've lived the most wonderful life. I've traveled the country, been abroad, hosted exchange students, and lived and worked on my family farm for 70 years. I get to see my children, my grandchildren, and my great grandchildren almost every day. I had a wonderful marriage and I have a wonderful family. What more could I want"

She was preceded in death by her parents, Wesley and Mildred Healey; her sisters Juanita Eyers, Nola Healey, and Hazel Johnston; her husband, Louis Stumpe, Jr.; her son, David Raymond Stumpe; and her granddaughter, Gina Stine. She is survived by her sister, Lela Johnson of Godfrey; her daughter, Katherine Stine of Dow; her son and daughter-in-law Louis and Diane Stumpe of Dow; her daughter-in-law, Sally Stumpe of Clermont, Florida; eight grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.

The family will hold a private burial. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Memorials may be made to the Jersey County 4-H Foundation and the Tri-County Antique Club.

Crawford Funeral Home in Jerseyville has been entrusted with arrangements.