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In Memory of Maxine Hedrick

OCTOBER 20TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Maxine Hedrick passed on to heaven on October 20, 2023. She was born Evelyn Maxine Warren on December 15, 1931 in Parma, Missouri where she lived until she achieved her goal of moving to Dexter in 1971.

Altha and Estel Warren raised their spunky red-headed daughter, alongside her paternal grandmother, her sister Dixie and her baby brother Larry, who was 15 years her junior. In subsequent years, Maxine became a mother figure to Larry.

Cherished childhood memories included coming home from school to eat fresh grapes from their arbor, and of Saturday evenings, when Estel would fiddle, Altha would “chord” the piano, and friends would come over to square dance. She was an unbeatable Chinese checkers player because her dad taught her the best opening moves; she never varied from that strategy and loved winning.

The Warren’s simple country home was up the lane from the Hedricks. Maxine attributed her romance with Russell to the fact that she would run to the road when she heard his car so that he would have to stop and talk with her. Maxine and Russell married when Maxine was 16 years old, just before her senior year of high school. Regarding their relationship, she said, “If he doesn’t like me, it’s his own fault because he raised me!” They were married just short of 60 years before Russ passed away in 2008.

After nine years of marriage, Renee was born. After another six years, Russell’s joyful words, that Maxine loved to echo, rang out: “Maxine, we have a son!”. Alan’s birth made the Hedrick family complete.

Mrs. Hedrick had a long career as an elementary teacher during which she touched many lives. After completing high school as salutatorian, two correspondence courses and a promise to continue her college education, she was permitted to teach. Her first job was at Boyt School in Frisco, a one-room school encompassing all eight grades. The next year, she stepped up to a three-room school at Maple Grove where she co-taught with Russell and Mrs. Conatser. By pursuing summer and evening courses, she proudly earned both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees. She returned to the classroom after Alan

was born; after teaching a few more years in Risco, she finished her career teaching second grade in Parma. Mrs. Hedrick is beloved to many former students and to a group of young teachers in Parma, whom she mentored.

Maxine was a member of Dexter's First Baptist Church where she sang alto in the choir. Participating in the annual Christmas pageants, under the direction of Maria Chamberlain absolutely thrilled her. The fellowship that she experienced cooking Wednesday night meals and serving as a greeter at Sunday services fulfilled her. She was active with both her Sunday School class and Joy Club, attending and organizing clever outings such as overnight road trips to interesting towns, costume parties and monthly potlucks.

Maxine and Russ enjoyed RV travel and spent a number of winters in Florida and Arizona. They engaged openly with people and made life-long friends through these adventures. In the RV parks, Maxine launched into new activities such as round dancing, water aerobics and ceramics.

Maxine loved being Nane - helping raise Zach and Morgan gave rise to the best times of her life. She deeply appreciated that Tracy and Alan shared the boys so unselfishly. Together with Carmen and Tom, the four grandparents formed a cohesive bond and became an unceasingly supportive family unit. Nane served lots of biscuits and gravy to the growing Hedrick boys and their friends. Eventually, Maxine became known as Nane to scores of people around town.

Maxine was a fierce caregiver to Russell during his extended post-stroke recovery. Losing him and facing life as a widow was not a welcome transition, but Maxine's positive attitude and desire to 'see and be seen' propelled her. Her friendships with Marilyn Tuley, Marjean Mayer and Betty Guinn sustained her. Longtime neighbors Janie & Dennis Smelser, Ruth & John Pruitt and Deana & Don Jones helped her feel secure staying alone in the family home on Bridle Road.

Maxine eagerly adapted to texting as a mode of communication and kept it up into her nineties, to the astonishment of many. To express how important connecting with each member of the family multiple times each day was, she liked to say, "I wouldn't take a million dollars for this phone!" She never went to sleep without texting "I love you" to each one of us.

Maxine summoned her courage and made her own decision to relocate to Central Gardens at the age of 87. She lived happily there until after her 90th birthday. Upon moving to Cypress Point, she would say to Renee & Alan, "This is my home now; I am happy, and I hope you are, too." Her positivity will always resonate in our hearts and souls.

Maxine was preceded in death by her husband; her parents, sister and an infant brother; her step-father, Nathaniel Lewis and his children, Bob, Carlton & Rose; her Hedrick sisters-in-law, Wanda & Pat and recently, Carmen Love.

Our family will never be the same without her, but we are committed to honoring her deepest desire which is to stay close to each other. Maxine's immediate family includes Renee & Pierre Sauvaget, Alan & Tracy Hedrick, Zach Hedrick & Erin Daugherty, Morgan & Tamela Hedrick, Russell Thomas Hedrick, Evelyn Love Hedrick (her namesake) and Larry & Diane Warren. Michael & Milly Boyt, Tom Love and the Warren/Lewis/Hedrick extended families share our loss because Maxine was, indeed, "a dandy".

Please remember Maxine by reflecting on her daily prayer, "Lord, put someone in my path today that I can help". The world will be a better place.

Memorials may be made to 18Fore Life, c/o Scott Kruse, 705 Laurie Circle, Dexter, Missouri 63841.

Visitation will be held at Mathis Funeral Home in Dexter on Monday, October 23, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Funeral services will then be conducted in the Mathis Funeral Home Chapel on Monday, October 23, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. Interment will follow in the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield.

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