



“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

- John 14:1-4



# *Celebrating* THE Life OF *Mildred Carstensen (Dockstader)*



## **Memorial Service**

Friday, May 8, 2026

11:00 AM

First Lutheran Church

Pipestone, Minnesota

## **Officiating**

Rev. Velda Maine

## **Scripture Readings**

Psalm 23

John 14:1-4

## **Organist**

Dr. Paul Henriksen

## **Congregational Hymns**

"One Day At A Time" - Insert

"In The Garden" - Insert

"Amazing Grace" - Hymn 779

## **Inurnment**

Union Cemetery

Flandreau, South Dakota

Arrangements By  
HARTQUIST FUNERAL HOME  
[www.HartquistFuneral.com](http://www.HartquistFuneral.com)



It is with profound sadness that the family of Mildred Merle (Schliinz – Dockstader) Carstensen announce her passing. Mildred passed away peacefully on Monday 27 April 2026 with family members by her side; she was 97 years old.

Mildred was born in Flandreau, SD on August 8, 1928, to Harvey Henry Schliinz and Leola Merle (Duncan) Schliinz (Bessler); they lived on a farm six miles NE of Flandreau. Mildred was baptized on Mother's Day, May 12, 1929, at the Second Presbyterian Church in Flandreau. By Mildred's fifteenth birthday, she had five siblings: Donald, Verone "Boots", Janet, Conway, and Karen. Life on the farm was very challenging in the 1930s & 40s, it was difficult work, and Mildred learned that hard work pays off, no matter what you do in life.



Mildred attended Vance #34 Moody Co. Elementary Country School from 1933–1941, and she graduated from Flandreau HS in 1947. During those school years Mildred acquired many skills and hobbies; she took piano lessons on Saturdays in Flandreau. During her HS years Mildred also worked part-time at the Rexall Drug Store in Flandreau. Her Grandmother Minnie Schliinz taught her how to crochet, Grandmother Ida Duncan taught her the art of embroidering, and her mother taught her how to cook and sew. Mildred enjoyed and pursued all of these pastimes throughout her life.

After graduation, Mildred continued working at Rexall Drug; she met and began dating Dean DeForest Dockstader, also a Flandreau native. Mildred and Dean became engaged and were married on October 14, 1947, in Sioux Falls, SD at the Presbyterian Church in the Minister's Manse. Mildred continued to work at Rexall Drug, and they moved to a house on West Bridge Street in Flandreau, next door to Dean's Grandparents, Benhart and Anna Julson. Mildred and Dean had many relatives in and around the Flandreau area and spent a great deal of time with them. Their first son, Ronald, was born in 1948, and their second son, William, was born in 1949.

The family moved to Pipestone, MN in 1952; Mildred and Dean's third son, Rock, was born in 1955. During the years the family lived in Pipestone, Mildred kept busy caring for her family, doing the housekeeping, and working (at different times) at Juba's Grocery Store, Pipestone Laundry, and Okay Dry Cleaners. Mildred and Dean loved to go dancing on Saturday nights at the Playmor Ballroom in Pipestone and the Japanese Gardens Dance Pavilion in Flandreau. The years Mildred & Dean lived in Pipestone were very gratifying and teeming with social and family activities.

In 1968, Mildred, Dean, and Rock moved to Twin Cities suburb Crystal, MN. Dean drove city bus, Rock was in 8th grade, Ron was in the US Army, and Bill was working and living in Minneapolis. A short time later, Mildred began working for Cook Paints in Minneapolis and later for TEL-SEL Company. Mildred and Dean also managed the apartment complex where they lived and spent many winter weekends ice fishing at Mille Lacs Lake. Mildred cherished the years they lived in the "Twin Cities", they were blessed with a vigorous social life and many friends.

They both retired in 1987 and moved back to Pipestone to be near Mildred's Mother and other family members. They lived on one of the Uilk farm sites, three miles west of town on Highway 30. Mildred and Dean became close friends with the Uilk families. Mildred loved to entertain guests at their home and never missed an opportunity to celebrate special occasions with their extended families. Mildred and Dean took Amtrak trips to the West and East coasts; they also liked to take sightseeing drives to National Parks and visited with relatives and friends along the way. Mildred was always on the go, she loved caring for her beautiful flowerbeds, gardening, reupholstering projects, playing her piano/organ, hosting coffee/tea parties, and attending/organizing social gatherings that took place year-round.

Dean passed away on February 16, 1997; he was 73 years old. Mildred stayed on the farm site and took on even more activities; she wasn't about to sit at home all day. Mildred began running errands for elderly people, she drove them to their doctor appointments, picked up and delivered their medications and groceries. Mildred also did housecleaning, and any other odd jobs that needed to be done for her elderly friends. Mildred loved to paint and wallpaper, she was very good at it, and many residents in Pipestone hired her to do those tasks in their homes. Her work ethic was second to none, and her cooking/baking skills were 5-STAR. Mildred's caring and generosity for others, endeared her to many people in the community.

On Valentine's Day 2002, Mildred and "Tom" George Thomas Carstensen were married at the First Lutheran Church, and she moved into Tom's home in Pipestone. During the early years of their marriage, Mildred and Tom traveled to many states in the US and went on several cruises. Mildred was an active member of the First Lutheran Church and participated in many of the Church Circle duties and activities.

Mildred was also a member of Eastern Star at Calumet Chapter 13 and The Red Hat Society; Mildred loved to socialize with her peers, friends, and family. Mildred spent a great deal of time tending her beloved flower garden(s); her flowers, shrubbery, and garden-art took on a new meaning at their home in Pipestone. It was her pride and joy.

Tom passed away on December 21, 2022, he was 90 years old. Mildred and Tom felt blessed and thankful to have shared their lives together for twenty wonderful years. Mildred continued to live in their home and remained active in the church, tended her flower gardens, and socialized with her family and friends.



In September 2025, Mildred moved to Falls Landing. She liked her new apartment and made many new friends. Mildred's physical health continued to decline so she moved to the Pipestone County Hospice House on March 12, 2026, where the wonderful hospice staff took loving care of her until she passed.

Mildred is lovingly remembered by her sons, Ronald Dockstader-Gilbert, AZ, William (Debra) Dockstader of Sioux Falls, SD, Rock Dockstader of Pipestone, MN; grandson, Joshua Dockstader (Stephanie Borah) of Tea, SD; great-grandson, Dean Thomas Dockstader; sister-in-law, Marlys (Erickson) Schliinz of Flandreau, SD; siblings, Janet (Schliinz) Jensen of Omaha, NE, Conway Schliinz of Baltic, SD, Karen (Schliinz, Gullikson) Oberle of Tea, SD; stepchildren, Gloria (Craig) Beckner of Banner, WY, Gayle (Mike) Robinson of Maple Grove, MN, Tom (Kim) Carstensen of Buffalo, MN, Doug Carstensen of Tabor, SD, Brother-in-law, Charles (Janet) Carstensen of Rochester, MN; step-grandchildren, Bonnie (Sheldon), Angie (Jason), Bob (Lauren), Joe (Aimee), Emily (Brian), Shelly, Levi, and Lexi; and many nieces, nephews, step-great-grandchildren, and friends.

Mildred was preceded in death by her parents, Harvey and Leola Schliinz; her mother- and father-in-law, Etna (Julson) & William Dockstader; step-father, Harry Bessler; husband, Dean Dockstader; brother, Donald Schliinz; in-laws, Hank Jensen, Fred (Marlyce) (Dockstader) McKellips, Ruby (Holland) Schliinz, Elmer (Nyla) (Carstensen) Prinsen, Bill (Sandra) Carstensen, and Chuck Oberle; husband, "Tom" George Carstensen; daughter-in-law, Elizabeth (Bisson) Dockstader; and sister, Verone "Boots" (Gerald) (Schliinz) Merrill.