

Shirley Mae Solberg passed away peacefully on February 7, 2026 at Sanford Medical Center in Fargo, North Dakota.

Shirley Mae Solberg was born on November 9, 1949, to Adolph and Mildred (Hella) Hanson at Mayville Hospital in North Dakota. She grew up on a farm near Mayville, where she developed a lifelong appreciation for hard work, creativity, and community. She was active in 4-H, participating in everything from cattle to sewing. She won the North Dakota 4-H Dress Review and attended the 4-H Club Congress in Chicago. In 1967, she graduated from Mayville High School as class salutatorian. Shirley attended Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where she majored in English, played the flute in a concert band, and was active in student theater. At Concordia she met Larry Solberg. In a remarkable three-day span in 1971, Shirley and Larry were married on May 1, she graduated on May 2, and on May 3 they left for a six-week European honeymoon.

After college, Shirley and Larry lived in Minneapolis, where she pursued a career in the insurance industry. In 1974, they relocated to Fargo. Shirley served as an officer at two Fargo insurance agencies before becoming manager of the Fargo office of Vaaler Insurance, from which she retired in 2007. During her career, she earned A.A.I. and A.R.M. insurance degrees and a C.P.C.U. designation, becoming the first woman in North Dakota to achieve this distinction. Her accomplishments led to her election as President of the North Dakota Chapter of the Independent Insurance Agents Association of America.

Shirley and Larry raised two children, Erica and Sean, and she later cherished her role as "Grandma Shirlys" to five grandchildren, Maia, Michael, Maren, Kai, and Sina. She was immensely proud of her grandchildren and made time for meaningful conversations with them, always asking thoughtful questions and offering encouragement. One of her favorite traditions was baking a birthday cake each year for every grandchild, carefully choosing a fun design.

Shirley loved to cook and entertain. Growing up, she hosted Sunday night dinners where she experimented with new recipes, followed by family discussions and ratings of each dish. She planned and hosted countless celebrations and insisted on cooking whenever the family was together.

She was deeply proud of her Norwegian heritage and loved to point out she was 100 percent Norwegian. Her home was filled with Nordic items, there was always lefse to be found and "Uff da!" to be heard.

Music was a lifelong passion. She enjoyed all genres, from Chicago to Garth Brooks, and loved attending concerts, including WE Fest. She had a love for sewing and designed clothing, including her wedding and bridesmaid dresses. She had a vibrant sense of fashion and loved sparkle, flair, and bright colors-especially hot pink.

An avid reader, she was rarely without a book or newspaper, always insisting on a physical paper copy. She was known for her distinctive beautiful handwriting and was constantly writing notes, cards, grocery lists, to-do lists, and meal plans.

Shirley loved traveling, especially annual trips to Hawaii and Mexico. Some of her happiest places included the Mayville farm where she grew up, Gran Church, and the cabin on Lake Melissa. Shirley loved spending time there with family and friends, enjoying pontoon rides, gardening, sunsets, evenings at the fire pit, and Sunday mornings at Shoreham chapel.

A devoted NDSU Bison fan, Shirley served as President of the Team Makers organization, becoming only the second woman to hold that role. She was deeply involved in raising funds for athletic scholarships and was part of the original all-female "Gold Society," which published a 144 page recipe collection titled Tailgating Traditions. At football games, she could often be heard shouting, "Move those chains!"

Throughout her life, Shirley was involved in many organizations, including Quota Club, Junior League, Fine Arts Club, the Fargo-Moorhead Chamber of Commerce Membership Services, and the Fargo Youth Commission. After retiring, she volunteered for over 30 years at Hope Lutheran Church's library and participated in Stephen Ministry, reading bedside to those who were critically ill. She was passionate about Shoreham Chapel in Detroit Lakes, where she served on the Board of Directors for many years.

Shirley was deeply religious and welcomed Christ into her life at an early age. A kind, loving, caring, compassionate, and genuinely nice person, she was truly a friend to all. She maintained lifelong friendships, especially with her four college roommates.

Known for her encouraging and positive spirit, Shirley rarely complained, even when facing health challenges. In her younger years, she was a very fast walker-often leaving others struggling to keep up-making her later mobility challenges a poignant irony.

Shirley was preceded in death by her parents; her son-in-law, Jeff Stevens; her niece, Marni Heinle; her nephew, Mark Solberg; and cousins, Bruce and Gordon Hella.

She is survived by her husband, Larry Solberg; her daughter, Erica Stevens; her son, Sean Solberg (Monica); her five grandchildren, Maia, Michael, Maren, Kai, and Sina; her sister, Joanne Bye (Glen); her brother, Paul Hanson; and cousins, Karl Hella (Dao), Joy Rabenberg, Jim Rabenberg, and Lana Rabenberg; and many nieces and nephews.

In Loving Memory



Shirley Mae Solberg

November 9, 1949 - February 7, 2026

Take time

Take time to work-
It is the price of success.

Take time to think-
It is the source of power.

Take time to play-
It is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to read-
It is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to be friendly-
It is the road to happiness.

Take time to dream-
It is hitching your wagon to a star.

Take time to love and to be loved-
It is the privilege of the gods.

Take time to look around-
It is too short a day to be selfish.

Take time to laugh-
It is the music of the soul.

Remembering
Ghirley Goldberg

November 9, 1949 - February 7, 2026

Sharing of Memories

Wednesday, February 18, 2026 - 7:00 PM
Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home - Fargo

Memorial Service

Thursday, February 19, 2026 - 11:00 AM
Hope Lutheran Church, North Campus - Fargo

Officiants

Pastor Ben Jacobson and Rev. Tim Cook

Recorded Music

"Color My World"

"King of Love"

"Little Church on the Hill"

All are invited to a reception following the service



**HANSON
RUNSVOLD**
Cremation • Burial