



Shirley M. Gauger

December 7, 1927 - November 11, 2023

Shirley Gauger (nee White) of Minocqua, took the hand of Jesus and left this earthly life on November 11, 2023 to enter Eternal Life with God, her Lord and Savior. She passed peacefully after a long battle with Alzheimer's.

She was born December 7, 1927 in South Dakota to Loren and Sarah White. The family moved to Milwaukee in the early 1930's after losing the ranch in the Dust Bowl. After high school, Shirley attended Northwest Institute in Minneapolis earning a degree in Medical Technology. She returned to Milwaukee, taking a position as a Research Assistant at Lakeside Laboratories. She worked her way up to Senior Research Assistant and into a supervisory position. It was here she met Don Gauger, the man who would be by her side for the next 71 years. While working at Lakeside, her research led her to write a paper on the Pharmacology of Diuretics. She was the first woman to present a scientific research paper at a medical conference in New York. Shirley and Don married on April 25, 1952. Four children completed their family, Roxanne, Wade, Brian, and Carl. They moved to Grafton, WI in 1958 where she became very involved in the community, at her children's school and in her church.

She was a constant presence at St. Paul's Lutheran School, volunteering her time whenever and

wherever needed. She painted the mural of the school's mascot, a panther head, on the gymnasium floor. When it became evident there was a lack of sufficient medical care close to home, she was pivotal in helping establish the Grafton Medical Center and recruiting physicians to staff it. She was the general manager of the facility until 1975. In 1975, she and Don made the trek north to Minocqua and made it their permanent residence. Shirley found employment as a bookkeeper for Howard Young Medical Center during the construction of the hospital. Upon completion of the hospital, Shirley moved on and worked as a bookkeeper and tax preparer for a number of area companies and CPA's. She then ventured into real estate, starting her own agency and selling property and managing rental properties for Lakeland State Bank.

In 1984, just as the real estate market was cooling off, she received a job offer from World Hospitalities as a comptroller. Since the kids were all grown, she and Don decided to move to Texas to explore this new opportunity. Although they were successful in their ventures in Texas, they missed their home and family in Minocqua and returned in 1988.

She continued to be involved in her community, working as a dispatcher and Administrative Assistant for the Minocqua Police Department for 7 years. She retired in 1996 to be a full-time Gramma. She volunteered at her grandchildren's school just as she did at her own children's school. She watched her grandchildren grow into well-rounded, self-sufficient, successful adults. As each grandchild married, she proudly celebrated this milestone with them.

Shirley was overjoyed when she became a Great-Gamma---over and over again. She said this made her life complete.

She is survived by Don, her devoted and loving husband of 71 years, her

children Roxanne (Steve) Gresch, Wade, Brian and Carl (Meg) Gauger. Further survived by 5 grandchildren, Grant (Karah) Hunter, Ben (Emily Milton) Gauger, Shane (Becky) Gauger, Brittany (Eric) Curtis, and Michelle Gauger and 7 great- grandchildren, Lilly, Lacey, Mason, River, Colton, Nico and Vivian. Also survived by many nieces and nephews, her church family from Rock of Ages and a multitude of other friends.

Shirley was preceded in death by her parents and all of her siblings.

The family wishes to extend thanks to the ADRC of Oneida County, the staff at Minocqua Health and Rehab for the exceptional care they gave Shirley during these last few months, and to Compassus Hospice Care for the compassionate support they gave not only to Shirley, but to Don as well, during this difficult time.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

We take comfort in knowing she is again “Dancing on the inside, Dancing on the outside.”

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Rock of Ages Lutheran Church 10441 Hwy 70 W Minocqua, WI. 54548.

Tribute Wall



“ *Sallie Rosenow lit a candle in memory of Shirley Gauger*



Sallie Rosenow - November 28, 2023 at 04:42 PM



“ *So sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts and prayers 🙏. Pray you are doing well.*

Sallie Rosenow - November 28, 2023 at 04:41 PM



“ *So sorry for your loss! Our thoughts and prayers are with you all! Donna & Cubby Butler*

Donna Butler - November 27, 2023 at 05:52 PM



“ *Our condolences to Don and family.*

Tom and Robin

Tom Wipperfurth - November 21, 2023 at 08:09 AM