



Valeria J. Hitt

February 15, 1924 - April 24, 2017

Valeria Jean Hitt, former resident of Boulder Junction, died April 25, 2017, in Atlanta. She was born in Hammond, Ind., Feb. 15, 1924, the daughter of Dr. William Edward and Henrietta Caroline Nichols. Her father was a country doctor and was 52 when she was born. She remembered that when she was little, her father would hold her on his lap and read her poetry. Thus began her love of words, reading, and books. Growing up, Valeria acquired the nickname "Nick" from her last name, or "Larry" because as a child she could not quite manage her entire given name Valeria. She attended and graduated from Hammond High School where she was active as a thespian and wrote for the high school paper. During these years she also studied voice and learned to play the violin. She entered Northwestern University to major in speech, and then transferred to Purdue to study animal husbandry. Larry once again changed her major when she was introduced to the skills of dehorning cattle and castrating pigs! She graduated in 1946 with a degree in chemistry and worked in a chemical plant pipetting acids during the war. Following the war, she married Robert George Hitt and they lived in Madison. Eventually Valeria was a full time mother of four children, yet she took courses in millinery and tailoring and put these newfound skills into use designing stylish hats and outfits. She was also an active Girl Scout leader for her two daughters and she sang in the choir at their church.

When her son John went to kindergarten, Valeria began to work as a librarian

at Crestwood Elementary School in Madison, a job that matched her love of reading. The family moved to Macon, Ga., in 1963, and then relocated to Atlanta in 1965. Larry attended Clark Atlanta University and earned her masters in library science. She continued her career as a librarian working in Gwinnett and DeKalb counties and in the City of Atlanta and City of Decatur Schools at elementary, middle and high school levels. During her retirement, Larry attended Georgia State University earning specialist degrees in photography and writing. While in Atlanta, Larry changed her social name once again to Val, a more acceptable Southern name. During these years in Atlanta, Bob and Val traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe with Elder Hostel and were featured on the magazine cover twice. Everywhere they went, they would stop the car by the side of the road to identify the flowers blooming there. They served as park volunteers in Sitka, Alaska for two summers, where Val learned to shoot a shotgun in case of a grizzly attack!

Val and Bob had four children, Carolyn J. Patton of Monticello, Ga., Roberta A. Miller of Atlanta, Dr. John A. Hitt of Stillwater, Minn., and William O. Hitt of Atlanta. In addition, they have 11 grandchildren, Wesley Miller of Atlanta, S. Alexander Miller of Washington, D.C., Nicholas Miller of Washington, D.C., Spencer Miller of Atlanta, Jeffery Patton of Kingston, Canada, David Hitt of Sioux Falls, S.D., Kirtley Compton of Stillwater, Nathaniel Hitt of Des Moines, Iowa, Nicholas Hitt of St. Cloud, Minn., Alexandra Hitt of Minneapolis, and William Grant Hitt of Atlanta. Valeria had two step-grandchildren, Alex Copp of Boulder, Colo., and Nathan Simmons of Glenwood City. Val also had a sister, Marianne Kimball of Three Rivers, Calif., now deceased, and has one nephew, Richard Kimball of LaHaina, Maui.

Val and her husband, Bob, lived in Boulder Junction for many years. They were both members of the Community Church in Boulder Junction. Val was always active in learning about the Northwoods, taking multiple courses

through local class offerings. She adopted Bob's love of the outdoors becoming an avid canoeist and anthophile. She served as a lake monitor on Edith Lake for over 20 years measuring for lake clarity to support scientific studies. She built a floating loon nest platform and spent several summers restoring an old Algonquin canoe. She was a lifelong learner and was active in the Boulder Junction Library, the Northwoods Ski Club, the Lovely Ladies and Habitat for Humanity.

Val's request was for memorials to be addressed to Habitat for Humanity Northwoods Wisconsin, P.O. Box 5, Minocqua, WI 54548.