



Carolyn Marie Mahon

September 8, 1937 - May 30, 2026

Princeton - Carolyn Marie Mahon, 88, of Princeton, Illinois passed away peacefully on May 30, 2026 at Liberty Village surrounded by her loving family.

Carolyn was born on September 8, 1937 in St. Peter, Illinois to Walter Knauer and Vera (Jasper) Knauer. She was baptized, confirmed and married at St. Peter Lutheran Church, attended St. Peter Lutheran School and graduated in 1956 from La Grove High School in Farina, Illinois. She attended Eastern Illinois University and began her teaching career at Trinity Lutheran School in Springfield followed by St. John's Lutheran School in Chester.

She moved to Princeton in 1964 and focused on raising her young children. She started teaching again in 1969 at Gingerbread House Nursery School where she continued working until 1979. Carolyn attended night school at IVCC in a pilot program offered by Illinois State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Education in 1979. She began teaching 5th grade science in the Princeton school district until her retirement in 2001. She was an active member of Delta Kappa Gamma since 1989; and after retirement, was a substitute teacher and tutored for many years. She left a lasting impression on countless students and families. Some know her as "Witchiepoo" from Gingerbread House or recall making a heart t-shirt in her science class, but all remember her kindness and passion for teaching.

A faithful member of First Lutheran Church in Princeton for 62 years, Carolyn lived her faith through service. She was a member of Rebekah Circle and volunteered as a church council member, Sunday School teacher and Vacation Bible School teacher. She served on various committees over the years, including the Call and Evangelism Committees. She cherished her church and church friends.

Carolyn embraced life fully and found joy through time with family (especially her grandchildren), friends and colleagues. She was in her element when she was interacting with others. Witty, caring, inquisitive and perceptive, no one was a stranger to her. She enjoyed antiques, bowling, playing bridge, and board games, especially Scrabble.

She is lovingly survived by her son, Thomas (Carol) Mahon of Grove City, Ohio; her daughter, Dena (Dave) Bagger of Champaign, Illinois; four grandchildren, Zach Mahon, Kate (Ryan) Sharp, Josh Bagger, and Joe Bagger; and one great-grandchild, Miles Sharp.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Walter and Vera Knauer; her sisters, Arminda Damery and Patricia Kuta; her brother, Eugene Knauer; and her former husband, C. Dean Mahon.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to First Lutheran Church of Princeton and/or Bureau County Senior Center.

A visitation will be held Friday, June 5, 2026 from 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. at First Lutheran Church in Princeton, Illinois.

Funeral services will follow at 11:00 a.m. with Pastor Bill Shields officiating. Graveside services will follow at Oakland Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Dave Bagger, Josh Bagger, Joe Bagger and Ryan Sharp.

Online condolences may be left at www.norbergfh.com.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Norberg Memorial Home, Inc. & Monuments.

"Her life was a testament to faith, service, education, and love. Carolyn's kindness, wisdom, and devotion to her family, church, and community will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by all who knew her."

Cemetery Details

Oakland Cemetery

Park Avenue
Princeton, IL 61356

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 5. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Lutheran Church
116 N Pleasant
Princeton, IL 61356

Funeral Service

JUN 5. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM.

First Lutheran Church

Graveside Service

JUN 5. 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (CT)

Oakland Cemetery
Park Avenue
Princeton, IL 61356

Tribute Wall



“ Carolyn will be missed it was so nice to have known her at first lutheren churchso sorry for your loss

Marilyn Borri - June 04 at 07:04 PM

DB

Thank you

Dena Bagger - June 14 at 11:19 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.



June 04 at 02:46 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Carolyn Marie Mahon.

June 04 at 02:46 PM



“ Diogenes and Lynne Arrieta purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.



Diogenes and Lynne Arrieta - June 04 at 09:25 AM

KK

“ I was extremely lucky to meet Dena and then her mom at the important age of 11 years old. She was fun, funny, generous, feminine, smart, adoring and, in short, AMAZING!!! I always called her the Amazing Mrs. Mahon because she showed me how a mother could be a supportive friend, always cheering us from the sidelines, ready with helpful encouragement and needed admonishment, depending on what was called for for a blossoming young lady! She was ALWAYS there for Dena and, by virtue of our friendship, very often for me. Her example as a mother has helped me especially to raise my two daughters and now granddaughter to be kind and to appreciate beauty. She herself was a high school beauty queen type, first class. Lots of love to Dena, Tom and their families.

Katie Keener - June 03 at 11:25 PM

DB

❤️😊❤️ So many great times

Dena Bagger - June 14 at 11:20 PM

AN

“ Abby and Don Perry & Jeff and Anne Neher purchased the Beautiful Dreams for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.



Abby and Don Perry & Jeff and Anne Neher - June 03 at 01:13 PM

AN

“ Abby and Don Perry & Jeff and Anne Neher planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Carolyn Marie Mahon.

Abby and Don Perry & Jeff and Anne Neher - June 03 at 01:13 PM

DF

“ *David, Michele & family, Matt & family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.*



David, Michele & family, Matt & family - June 03 at 10:28 AM

NM

“ *Natalie, Jeremy, Levi & Olivia McCoy purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.*



Natalie, Jeremy, Levi & Olivia McCoy - June 02 at 10:20 PM

WN

“ *With love from her nieces and nephews purchased the Bright and Beautiful Spray for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.*



With love from her nieces and nephews - June 02 at 10:04 PM

SB

“ *Sally Mahon and her boys purchased the Vivid Recollections for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.*



Sally Mahon and her boys - June 02 at 04:37 PM

TP

“ Carolyn (and Dean) were friends of our parents for many years and had several things in common (USDA and teaching). Carolyn always had a great smile and laugh and was so easy to talk to. Sorry for your loss, Tom and Dena.

Tim Pretzsch - June 02 at 01:12 PM

DB

Thanks, Tim. My mom and dad really respected your parents. Tom and I have many fun memories of them as well.

Dena Bagger - June 14 at 11:22 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.



June 02 at 07:35 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Carolyn Marie Mahon.

June 02 at 07:35 AM

BP

“ Becky and Keith Porter purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Carolyn Marie Mahon.



Becky and Keith Porter - June 02 at 06:20 AM



“ *This loss has hit me hard. I don't really remember a time that Carolyn was not in our family's life. I loved it when she would stop by to visit my Mom. She always had a story to tell. She lived her life fully doing things she loved to do. She had a wonderful laugh. I hope she knew what light she brought to people. She was a great friend to my Mom, which means so much to me. I'm so sorry for Dena's and Tom's family loss. Love, Noelle Massey*

Noelle Rumler - June 01 at 07:32 PM

DB

Thanks for the nice note, Noelle. Our moms had a special friendship and she cared deeply for all of the Massey family.

Dena Bagger - June 14 at 11:29 PM



“ *Sad to hear this. My sincere condolences to Tom and Dena. I talked to Carolyn quite a bit in January at Bounce Back in Liberty Village. She sat at the same table for meals as my mom.*

Mike Ballatti - June 01 at 07:23 PM

BK

“ *I was saddened with the news of Carolyn's passing. I worked with her at Washington Middle School for a few years. She was a wonderful teacher who showed compassion for her profession, students, fellow teachers, and community. She was my friend and I remember her fondly.*

Brent Kopp - June 01 at 07:19 PM

NH

Carolyn always brought a smile to my face. She was warm funny and insightful. I worked with her for a short time at Regan Middle school but found time to see her socially. I Wish I had more time with her.

Nancy Huber - June 01 at 08:07 PM

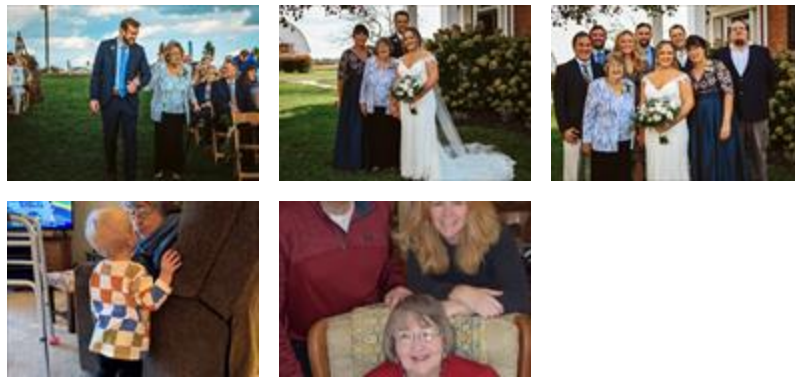


“ I knew of Carolyn through Dena. Reading her obituary, I see she taught at Gingerbread preschool. There's a good chance she was one of my teachers there. The claim to fame with our families is that Carolyn and my mom, Carolyn, were in the hospital together. My mom was having me, and Carolyn had Dena a few days later. Those were the days were you stayed 5 days after the birth of a child. I always remembered that story from my mom. Prayers and peace to the family as you grieve the loss of your mom.

Linnea Campbell - June 01 at 04:13 PM



“ 15 files added to the album Mom's



Tom Mahon - June 01 at 03:56 PM

BB

“ I taught with Carolyn at Washington Middle School from 1987/88 until she retired. We became friends and got together for breakfast frequently. As a special education teacher, I always knew that my students would do well in Carolyn’s science classes. She provided them with the means to succeed! Even after retirement we got together monthly with other Logan retired teachers. I feel blessed to have taught with her and become her friend. I learned a lot about her Dena and Tom and heard many stories about her grandchildren. I’m sorry I won’t be able to attend her funeral as I am out of state on vacation until Sunday.

Betty Baznik - June 01 at 03:00 PM

JF

“ Mrs Mahon was always a kind and positive impactful teacher and is still one of my favorite teachers! Glad I had the pleasure of her shaping and guiding young souls!

Jennifer Flsher - June 01 at 01:47 PM