



Evelyn Anne Vandusen

December 21, 1933 - December 14, 2025

Mable Annie Evelyn Bird, lovingly known as Evie, was born on December 21, 1933, in Thessalon, Ontario. At seven years old, the family moved to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, where she enjoyed her mom's fried potatoes and bologna every school day for lunch. At sixteen, Evie was working at the Alpha Grill when the love of her life, Elmer "Van" Charles VanDusen, walked in wearing his military uniform. She never could resist a man in uniform! They married a year later and started to grow their roots and family in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

Evie was always known for her strong work ethic, but maybe more so for her kindness, care, and love she showed to each of her coworkers and customers. If you ever met Evie, you remembered her, or at least the hug that she gave you!

She took great pride in the many years of service she had in the many places that were lucky to have her. Lockview Restaurant, Kresge's Department Store, Walmart, Rite Aid, and the Sault Evening News.

Evie had a special way of being that let everyone know that she loved and cared for them. This was made so very apparent by the visitors, messages, and gifts. We've heard more than a few times: "Everyone says that their mom is the best, but yours really is!" She really was the best.

The loved ones left behind are filled with pride, knowing that they are a part of her and that she will live on through them.

Her husband, Elmer, predeceased her on January 10, 1988.

She was also predeceased by her parents, John and Gertrude Bird; brother, Leslie; and sister-in-law, Betty.

Evie is survived by her three daughters, Brenda (Sonny) Goodchild of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Wendy (Dan) Shields of Clarksville, Michigan, and Rhonda (Spencer) Payne of Gaylord, Michigan.

Grandchildren; Jason Goodchild, Tianna (Chris) Kellar, Justin Goodchild, Nicholas Goodchild, Travis Shields, Trisha Shields, Stephanie (Evan) Morgan, Heather (Jared) McCleave, and Annalise (Austin)Wilkinson.

Great Grandchildren: Kingston Keller, Cohen Keller, Cruz Kellar, Gibson Goodchild, Jason Fox, Ethan Fox, Enley McCleave, Kingsley Morgan, RiverLynne Morgan, Willow Morgan, and Walker Morgan.

Nieces and Nephews: Beth (late Neil) Phieffer, Lynne (Fausto) Pighin, Ronnie Bird, and Donna Bird.

In her later years, Evie always looked forward to attending her out-of-town appointments with her three girls, and they would laugh and laugh and laugh. She always enjoyed Englebert Humperdinck and treasured his sweaty "neckerchief" which she kept safe in a Ziploc baggie next to his framed picture at her bedside. Whenever we hear his name, we will smile and think of her.

Evie's sense of humor and laugh were one of a kind, the kind that was

infectious. You could find her in a crowded room if you just listened for a moment. We're confident that those reading will hear that laugh and laugh at the memory. Sweet Evie.

On her last days, Evie proved to be her feisty self with winks and smiles for the men in her life, and a clear indication that she would NOT be eating that slop, but found relief and joy out of a cold taste of Pepsi.

In the end, December 14, 2025, just shy of her 92nd birthday, Evie was surrounded by the loving presence and touch of her three girls while listening to Josh Grobin's "You Raise Me Up." Mom, you raise us up. The brightest light of our lives is gone.

From Evie...

"Love yous all...toodaloo".

Donations in her name to Hearthside Assisted Living, 1501 W. 6th Avenue in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, would be gratefully appreciated!

Per Evie's wishes no services are being held at this time.

Evie's final resting place will be at Oaklawn Chapel Gardens in Bruce Township, Michigan.

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements. Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

Obituary as submitted by family.

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens

15264 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Tribute Wall

PH

“ Just one of the many shy folks your Mom gave the gift of a brighter day while doing shopping and visiting the many localities she served in the Soo. She was always so cheerful and helpful. A bright spirit. Bless you all.

Pat Hakala - December 24, 2025 at 07:52 PM

RS

“ Evelyn, I enjoyed every minute working with you at Kmart and I always look forward every December to the Christmas party that we would have with our dear friends Shirley, Joyce, you and me we always had a hoot you are missed, but you were in such a better place And I know that I will be reunited with you. I'm sure heaven has a brighter place right now because you were there may God bless your family and maybe they feel his comfort every day as they mourn your loss. Miss you and love you your friend always Robert.

Robert Salinas - December 24, 2025 at 03:21 PM

SB

“ Evie was my first boss at Kresges. ❤️ I started there when I turned 16, worked with her and her best bud Ms. Betty. Oh my! They were fun. She so loved her girls and was so proud of all of you. Praying God's comfort, peace and JOY for a life well lived and the “knowing” that you girls were blest with a fantastic mom. Rhonda, I still remember you liked ice in your milk. 😊 Smile and be grateful for God blessing you, the 3 of you with this angel you called Mom. Sherry

Sherry Bertram - December 24, 2025 at 09:38 AM



Sherry, I still put ice in my milk! My mom sure was a hoot! Her and Betty are just reminiscing together up there in heaven! Their laughter can be heard from down here for sure! Take care and bless you and your family!

Rhonda Payne - December 27, 2025 at 10:08 AM

CS

“ *I worked with Evie at Kmart and she was my next door neighbor at Lake Superior Estates. I loved that gal! She always had a smile and a kind word. Such a beautiful soul. RIP Evie.*

Carlinda Sibbald - December 23, 2025 at 06:58 PM

WB

“ *I remembered her when I was a kid. Me and ma would walk 2 miles to town to shop around. We'd always go to ss kresskees. Ma would look for kids clothes and I'd be back by the fish, turtles, and birds. We'd have our lunch there. Hamburgers and fries with a pop. Thats when I first met her. She was a very nice lady. I later saw her at Walmart working with books. I said hi. She remembered me. I'd always make a point to talk to her. Yeh, she was very nice like my ma and my aunt Florence payment, and my grandma Irene. The 30s seem to have had the nicest people. I was wondering what happened to her. She had that special touch of an angel like my ma and a few others that will never be replaced except with me. Lol. No, im very nice too. We seem to know each other spiritually. Very sad. I'll be able to visit her now. She's buried at Oakland like my ma is. Thats very nice.*

Wallace bosley - December 23, 2025 at 05:14 PM

JB

“ I have quite a few fond memories of Evie from my earliest childhood years. She worked with my mom (June) at Kreske’s and later on Kmart. She was always the sweetest gal to us kids. Sending prayers out to her family.

Jocque Benoit - December 23, 2025 at 11:10 AM

CG

“ I will never forget Evie, how could you? When i worked at Walmart, we always seemed to find each other and talked non stop! She always mentioned her family and how they were spending time together; especially with Brenda. She was an infectious person and shared that with everybody Very sad to hear of her passing and sending prayers and comfort to her family. Love you Evie, Carmela Gady

Carmela Gady - December 22, 2025 at 10:22 PM

CN

“ I’m so glad I got to see her over the summer, I’ve known her since I was a little girl and she worked at Kmart with my mom. Her smile would always light up the room. She will be greatly missed and so will her hugs. Until we meet again. 🌸



Caroline Neal - December 22, 2025 at 08:55 PM

DL

“ Evie as I called her. Worked at Walmart in the book department many years. She was always my favorite lady. I loved chatting with her she made me laugh and like I was her daughter. She will be missed but never forgotten. Love you Evie. R I P God bless. 🙏

Donna Link - December 22, 2025 at 08:37 PM

DG

“ I worked at Kmart with Evie. She was the sweetest lady with the best laugh, and always had a hug for me. She definitely will be missed. The obituary was beautifully written. Deepest condolences to her daughters and extended family.

Diana Gunckel - December 22, 2025 at 07:58 PM

RT

“ What a wonderful friend!! She had the best smile, hug and laughter!! She will truly be missed but remembered very dearly!! I'll be blowing you a 💋!!

Ruby Timchuck - December 22, 2025 at 06:29 PM

RJ

“ She was The Most beautiful person that graces this Earth! God placed a little something special in her and she was never stingy with it. She shared that "special something" with everyone she came in contact with. I am so blessed to have called her friend and was always filled with joy to exchange hugs. Even my children and grandchildren were touched by her. What a beautiful legacy she left you girls. Much love to you all!

Ronda Johnson - one of the Payment girls who grew up just down the street on 8th Ave.

Ronda Johnson - December 22, 2025 at 04:41 PM