



Marion Edith Mende

July 28, 1926 - October 23, 2023

Marion Edith Mende, 97 years, passed quietly from this world on October 23, 2023, of natural causes at home in Riverside, Illinois. The second of six children of George Alfred and Janet Fair (Crawford) Slater. She was born on July 28, 1926, on the family farm, south and west of Pickford, Michigan.

Marion was a happy, kind, and caring blonde-haired, blue-eyed girl who, a little shy, was happier in the barn with her beloved father and animals than anywhere else on earth. Her dad passed when she was ten, which put a strain on the young family, yet they persevered during those difficult years, living through the Great Depression as they did, by working together as a team. They became a tight-knit unit liberally dosed with humor, supporting, and encouraging each other, learning, and prioritizing early the bonds of family; very much their legacy.

A natural born caregiver, Marion dreamed of becoming a nurse and for that purpose attended Ferris State University but was called home almost immediately when a family health issue arose. She never returned to Ferris, and during those war-torn years, Marion worked at the War Memorial Hospital as a nurse's aide and as a telephone operator for Michigan Bell Telephone in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

It was at a dance in 1946 where she met Francis Paul Mende, who literally

swept her off her feet. Paul and Marion married the following year on July 5th, and over the next six years produced a family of four girls. Paul worked for Union Carbide while Marion became a stay-at-home mom. A company transfer took them to the Chicago area in the early 1960's then to New Jersey from which place Paul took an early retirement in the late 1970's. They instilled strong family values and provided cherished memories filled with wonderful, crazy people and events.

In the 1980's she and Paul began a second career in California working for ten years in the computer peripheral industry. An unbeatable team, they successfully controlled a multi-million-dollar inventory. After their second retirement ten years later, they traveled the country with three little Papillion pups eventually settling down in Brimley, Michigan; home in the UP once again.

She spent her life making others comfortable emotionally and physically offering whatever support she could, be it food, shelter, healthcare or more. In this way, Marion became the nurse she always wanted to be. She was dedicated to her husband and family. In addition to being an accomplished seamstress, she dearly loved music (to listen, sing along or play the guitar a little), chocolate, the sun (though later in life became allergic to it), grew beautiful peonies and roses with a particular fondness for bleeding hearts, White Shoulders cologne, and the big freighters on the Lakes (though she swam like a stone).

Small in stature, Marion's personality was large on grace and gratitude, embodying a quiet, smiling fairy godmother-like spirit who gave freely of her gifts. Marion's hugs are legendary, and she meant every one of them, bringing warmth and shared joy to those she bestowed them on. She will be remembered for these alone. When she hugged you, you knew you'd been blessed.

Preceding Marion in death were her parents, her husband of 67 years, and three siblings, sister Jane (late Edmund) Carr, Jack (late Evelyn Kennedy) Slater, and Fred (late Sharon Simmons Smith) Slater. Marion is survived by her twin siblings, Bob (Elaine Mattson) Slater of Pickford and Patsy (late John) Sullivan of Dearborn, her daughters Jan (Doug) Reed of Riverside, Illinois, Barb (Mick) Jolley of Round Lake, Illinois, Patsy (Tom) Koenig of Riverside, Illinois, and Paula Kaye (late Paul) Rabidoux of Queen Creek, AZ, and the nephew she cherished as a son, Larry (Julie Lacoursier Walsh) Peterman of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, eleven grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren, six great-great grandchildren, and a treasure-trove of nieces and nephews and their families. Marion will be remembered for all the right reasons. She was an angel on earth and deserving of those wings we assume she's now wearing. She remained kind, her love was great, and it was fierce.

Visitation will be on Thursday, October 26th, 4:00-7:00pm CST with a prayer service at 7:00pm at Ivins/Moravecek Funeral Home, 80 E. Burlington St., Riverside, Illinois. Funeral info at www.moravecek.com or 708-447-2261.

Marion will return to the Upper Peninsula for visitations at Galer Funeral Home 24549 S M-129, Pickford, on Monday, October 30th, from 11:00am-12:00 noon EST with a prayer service at 12:00 noon followed by a procession to Oaklawn Chapel Gardens, 15264 S M-129, Sault Ste. Marie, where a short graveside service will be held prior to interment. All are welcome who would like to express their farewells and visit with the family. Funeral info www.galerfuneralhomes.com or 906-647-3400.

In lieu of flowers, the family would prefer donations to Superior Health Support Systems earmarked for Pennington Home, Pickford, or Hospice of the EUP and Ball Hospice House, Sault Ste. Marie. For more info visit www.shsseup.co

m or call 906-259-0222.

As submitted by family.

Cemetery Details

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens

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

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **30**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Galer Funeral Homes & Cremation
24549 S. M-129
Pickford, MI 49774

Prayer Service

OCT **30**. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Galer Funeral Homes & Cremation
24549 S. M-129
Pickford, MI 49774

Burial

OCT **30**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Oaklawn Chapel Gardens
15264 South M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Tribute Wall



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Marion Edith Mende.

October 27, 2023 at 10:13 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Marion Edith Mende.



October 27, 2023 at 10:13 AM