



Deanna Mae Martens

April 8, 1937 - February 13, 2025

Deanna Mae Martens, age 87, of Dassel, died Thursday, February 13, 2025, at Lakeside Generations in Dassel. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Dassel with Rev. Janine Olson officiating. The interment of the urn will be held at the Ellsworth Community Cemetery in rural Darwin following the service.

A time to gather with the family will be held one hour prior to the service at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Dassel.

The Johnson Funeral Home in Dassel is in charge of the memorial arrangements.

Deanna Mae Martens was born April 8, 1937, near Brainerd, Minnesota to a woman named Bernice Eklund and was given the name Joan Ethel Eklund. She passed away on February 13, 2025, in Dassel, Minnesota.

Shortly after her birth, Harold and Sigrid Martens adopted her. The family lived on a farm in Ellsworth Township and later moved to Darwin where her father operated the lumber yard and then the Darwin grocery store.

Deanna, known as "Skip," was a member of the large and fun-loving Martens family from Ellsworth Township. She grew up with best friends/cousins Patty

Martens Sandstede and Darlene Sellen Lind, and they raised their children together. Deanna remembers having a lot of fun with aunties, uncles, and cousins. She was a family historian.

Deanna attended elementary school at the district 24 schoolhouse (where her mother, Sigrid had been a schoolteacher) and then moved to District 42 in Darwin. She graduated from Dassel High School. Deanna attended Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato and Macalester College in St. Paul. She worked at the Star Tribune writing want ads and birth announcements. Deanna loved to play Trivial Pursuit and usually won most games. She was an avid sports fan – especially baseball and hockey – and tracked statistics in her head. She had an intelligence surpassing most people and became a member of Mensa.

Deanna was engaged four times! When she went out with a guy a couple of times they would propose. She would tell them she could not cook or clean, but they persisted. She married Clarence Hoversten in a ceremony at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ellsworth. Together they had three children: Kenneth, Robert, and Grace.

After the passing of her first husband, she married Lewis Martens with whom she shared a quiet companionship until his passing.

Later in life, Deanna searched for her birth family and found that she came from an interesting line of people originating in Uppsala, Sweden. Her birth grandparents were Julia and Herman Eklund. Julia's mother was Sarah Place who married a man that homesteaded in Hutchinson. Deanna's ancestors arrived in Boston in 1635, and some ancestors can be traced as veterans in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Notable ancestors include one who was second in command to George Washington, one who was jailed for speaking against the king and one who was a judge in the Salem witch trials. Other ancestors were anti-slavery and helped with the underground railroad.

Deanna was community minded and had many friends. As a young woman she was close friends with Joanie Brooks, Nancy Rutherford, and Yvonne Porth. The four of them were inseparable and if you saw one, you saw the other. They loved to sing and formed a quartet. She was an integral member of the Dassel community and worked at the Dassel Lakeside Nursing Home until her retirement. She volunteered for many hours for the Dassel Area Historical Society and was an active member of Gethsemane Lutheran Church. She served a brief time as a city council member.

Deanna was preceded in death by her parents Sigrid and Harold, and both husbands. She is survived by her brother James Martens and his son Joseph of St. Petersburg Florida; her children Robert of Utah, Kenneth of Wisconsin, and Grace Carlise of Minnesota; and grandchildren, Autumn, Corey, Carver, Zachary, Tela, Devin, Darren, and Dean; several great grandchildren, and many cousins.

Cemetery Details

Ellsworth Community Cemetery

Darwin, MN

Previous Events

Time to gather with family

MAY 3. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Gethsemane Lutheran Church
221 Atlantic Ave E
Dassel, MN 55325
office@glcdassel.com
<http://www.glcdassel.com>

Memorial Service

MAY 3. 11:00 AM (CT)

Gethsemane Lutheran Church
221 Atlantic Ave E
Dassel, MN 55325
office@glcdassel.com
<http://www.glcdassel.com>

Tribute Wall

GH

“ Grace Hoversten lit a candle in memory of Deanna Mae Martens



Grace Hoversten - May 05, 2025 at 02:05 AM

GP

“ I remember her as a kind lady who was also very smart, she loved Jeopardy and could answer all the questions.

Grady Purtilo - May 02, 2025 at 11:46 AM