



Earnestine Mae Holley

October 14, 1952 - September 2, 2026

Flint, Michigan

Earnestine Mae Holley died in Flint on September 2, 2026. She was seventy-three. Born there on October 14, 1952, she grew up knowing the plant as a clock that did not sleep, and she learned a torque spec before she learned a highway. A fastener, she said, is a kind of promise: it holds, or the whole story comes apart on the road.

She spent twenty-six years on an assembly line that fed cars the rest of the country drove without thinking. She started as a helper. She ended as the woman who could tell, from the sound of a gun, whether a shift would hold. She kept extra gloves for the woman whose morning had already been too long. She would not let a supervisor invent a portion that made the tally a liar. On the mornings a line sat she still opened her locker, because a closed job does not explain itself to a hungry eight-year-old at home.

She married Ellis Holley in 1973. He drove a parts truck and died in 2009. They raised a daughter and a son in a bungalow with a maple that dropped more work than shade. After Ellis was gone she kept his saucer on the drainboard for a season, then gave it to a granddaughter who liked cereal at odd hours.

Neighbors remember a woman who froze extra cornbread in coffee cans and left them on porches after a funeral. She disliked a speech, loved a clean station, and could tell you which year the plant switched from one fastener to the next. She died in Flint, in a city that had always been enough. The line still opens somewhere. Someone else will count the gloves.

Services

A gathering at her church hall in Flint. Friends may bring a covered dish. A gift to a plant-workers' hardship

fund is welcome.

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