



Edna Kay Vanderwerken

April 26, 1940 - July 5, 2026

Asheville, North Carolina

Friends in Asheville remember Edna Kay Vanderwerken, who died on July 5, 2026 at 86. Born April 26, 1940 in Asheville, carrying Indian-American stories that arrived without footnotes. From the start, she treated promises like tools: keep them sharp, do not lend them lightly.

She pruned orchards that had to look inevitable in crates. A prune-saw oilstone decided what left for markets downstate. Colleagues still mention a prune-saw oilstone.

She married Harold in 1965. They kept a house that stayed modest when the neighborhood did not. They raised three daughters through public schools and ordinary weather. After Harold died in 2019, she kept the routines that still made sense: the walk, the garden, the Sunday call.

Neighbors remember a wave from the driveway that meant you were seen. She preferred the hour before a town fully wakes. Asheville was home enough that she never rehearsed an introduction. The extra coffee is still in the thermos.

What remains is not a legend but a practice: showing up, keeping a promise, leaving a place better than you found it. Her life was the kind America is built from and too often forgets to name.

Services

A memorial gathering in Asheville with coffee afterward. In lieu of flowers, a gift to a local workers' fund, clinic, or neighborhood library is welcome.

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