



Greta Mae Woebbeking

May 6, 1944 - September 8, 2026

Sioux City, Iowa

Greta Mae Woebbeking died in Sioux City on September 8, 2026. She was eighty-two. Born there on May 6, 1944, she grew up south of the packing plants when the air still carried the yards on a wet morning, and she never pretended Sioux City was a place you had to apologize for. She learned a kitchen before she learned a classroom: her mother packed lunches for the night shift, and Greta learned that a tray could be a kindness if it arrived hot and on time.

She spent twenty-nine years in a packing-plant cafeteria, first as a helper, later as the woman who ran the line that had to catch people who came in late from a kill floor that had already been working since dark. She knew which man would not eat the peas and which one needed a second milk without being asked twice. Budget cuts came and went. She treated a government commodity cheese block as a problem of seasoning, not a humiliation.

She married Robert Woebbeking in 1966. They bought a small house near the bluff and raised a daughter and a son who still argue, fondly, about who got the last cinnamon roll. Robert drove for a bakery and died in 2010. Greta kept his chair at the table for a year and then gave it to a grandson who needed a place to do homework. She bowled on Thursday nights until her shoulder quit.

Neighbors remember a woman who would freeze soup in old margarine tubs and leave them on porches without a speech. She disliked fuss, loved a clean counter, and could tell you, without looking it up, which year the plant switched from rectangular pizza to the round kind the crews actually ate. She died in the city that had always been enough. The kitchen she left is still feeding people. That would have pleased her more than a eulogy.

Services

A gathering at her parish hall in Sioux City. Friends may bring a covered dish. In lieu of flowers, a gift to a plant meal program is welcome.

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