



Helen Louise Krueger

August 8, 1944 - September 6, 2026

Wichita, Kansas

Helen Louise Krueger died in Wichita on September 6, 2026. She was eighty-two. Born there on August 8, 1944, she grew up knowing the plant whistle as a clock. Her mother packed lunches. Helen learned a line the way other girls learned a recital: you stand in one place, you do not drop what you are holding, and you go home tired.

She spent twenty-nine years inspecting aircraft parts, first as a helper, later as the woman who could hear a bad fit before the gauge admitted it. She did not call herself an engineer. She called herself careful, which she treated as a moral category. When the company changed names she kept the same locker and the same thermos. Younger women came to her because she would tell them if a supervisor was bluffing.

She married Stan Krueger in 1966. They bought a bungalow that needed storm windows and a daughter who needed a ride to band at hours no one should be awake. Stan drove a city bus. Helen kept the bowling league and the rule that you do not start eating until the person who cooked sits down. After the line slowed she worked a bakery counter at dawn and still brought kolaches to the plant picnic as if she had never left.

Friends remember a woman who shoveled more than her own walk, who could name every Senator of 1985 if you made the mistake of doubting her, and who sat on the porch in October as if the block were a committee. She loved a Friday fish, a clean alley, and the prairie when it looked like steel. She died in Wichita, the air city she refused to narrate as a punch line. The parts still move. She would have liked that the work outlasted the shift.

Services

A service in Wichita, then a hall with coffee. A gift to a trade-school scholarship is welcome.

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