



Velma June Crookshank

March 19, 1946 - September 4, 2026

Springfield, Missouri

Velma June Crookshank died in Springfield on September 4, 2026. She was eighty. Born there on March 19, 1946, she grew up knowing the creamery as a clock that did not sleep, and she learned a churn before she learned a highway. A pound of butter, she said, is a kind of promise: it has to arrive cold or the whole story is late.

She spent twenty-four years on a line that fed grocery cases before daylight, first as a helper, later as the woman who could hear a tired agitator before the logbook admitted it. She did not advertise. Managers called her because she would scrap a batch even when the truck was already promised. She kept extra rolls for the clerk whose morning had already been too long. She charged a fair hour on the side when a church supper needed more mercy than a price list.

She married Harold Crookshank in 1967. They raised a son and a daughter in a bungalow that needed a new roof more often than the budget admitted. Harold taught shop. Velma packed lunches that could survive humidity. After a bad afternoon she sat in the car with the radio off until her hands were quiet.

Friends remember a woman who brought extra butter to a night shift without staying for thanks, who knew which intern needed a second explanation, and who hummed while she worked as if the vat were a conversation. She loved a late-summer tomato, a clean map of the cooler, and the particular quiet after the last case. She died in Springfield, in the heat she had always preferred to a clean cold. The vats still open. Someone else will count the racks.

Services

A gathering in Springfield in the evening. A gift to a night-shift meal fund or a school breakfast program suits her.

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