



Beverly Jean Ekola

March 12, 1935 - March 20, 2026

Plymouth, MN - Beverly Ekola (Graton) passed away in her 91st year on March 20, 2026. A child of the Depression and the Iron Range, she built a wonderful and fruitful life in Minneapolis, where she and her newlywed husband settled and raised their family of five children.

Beverly met her husband, Lee, at a picnic in 1955, and they began their 67-year life together when they married in 1956. In 1970, she and Lee founded Ekola Engineering (later renamed Etech and now Kannegiesser Etech), a company that provides automated material handling systems for industrial and institutional laundries. Today, the company employs more than 200 people and installs equipment around the globe.

Throughout her life, Beverly offered care and support to family, friends, neighbors, and employees in both good times and hard times. Her home was a place of welcome for anyone in need. She joyfully expressed her artistic and creative talents through interior design, gardening, and watercolor painting. She also loved cooking and entertaining-often hosting gatherings of 40 or more with ease and delight.

Beverly is survived by her children: Susan Caron, Nancy Ekola, Darlene Nye (Steve), Ali Gohar (Jane), and Peter Ekola (Carita Zimmerman); and by her grandchildren: Jay, Ann, Katie, Loretta, Ben, Emily, and Jack.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Walter and Leona Graton (Buchanan); her sisters, Vivian Palkoner and Faye Hile; her brothers, Peter Graton, Donald Graton, and George Graton; and her granddaughter, Fiona May Ekola.

A memorial service will be held on Monday, April 13 at 1:00 PM at the Lakewood Memorial Chapel (3600 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55419), with a preceding visitation at 12:30 PM. A committal service and reception will follow the memorial service.

Due to severe allergies, we kindly request no flowers or live plants at the memorial service. Thank you for your understanding. Memorials may be made to the Alzheimer's Association (alzheimers.org)

Tribute Wall

KW

“ Sue, Nancy and Peter and the rest of the family, I am so sad to hear of Bev's passing. So many memories from my youth are wrapped up in your family! Feel they were my parents as much as yours. Always welcomed and included in events and cleanup Saturdays. The list goes on... May the memories we hold carry us in the loss. God bless you all!

Kelly Walker - April 13 at 11:39 AM

KC

“ Kevin, Diane, Aaron, Brandi and Cory purchased the Sweet Sincerity for the family of Beverly Jean Ekola.



Kevin, Diane, Aaron, Brandi and Cory - April 12 at 07:27 PM