



June Anderson

July 1, 1928 - September 27, 2025

'Ice cream is happiness'

Celebrating the life of Grandma June

By Mike Gears

After asking hospice nurses to help with her hair and makeup because "tomorrow she was going to a party in the next room," June Lorraine Anderson finally made it there.

She passed away peacefully in her sleep early in the morning on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2025.

Grandma June, as she was lovingly known by all, was an only child born to Charlie and Thora Raade on July 1, 1928, in Minneapolis.

Her birthday was always a bit of a sore spot for her due to her name. "I should have been a Julie," she was often heard saying. Nevermind that her name had little connection with the months when pronounced "yu-na" by Norwegians, of whose heritage she proudly claimed.

She spent her formative years in south Minneapolis in a house on Longfellow

Avenue. It was here that she met her lifelong friend, Irene Hegge. In fact, during a celebration for June's 97th birthday, Irene pointed out that the two of them had been friends for more than 90 years. June often would say that Irene was "the sister that I never had."

A few years after graduating from Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, while working as a receptionist at Jones Press, June met the love of her life, George S. Anderson, at the Prom Ballroom. After George returned from serving in the Navy during World War II, the couple married in 1950. Dancing was an activity that June and George continued to love, and they often went out to the Medina Ballroom with friends.

It was George for whom "the Boss," as he would call her, was putting on lipstick that day in late September, anticipating their reunion. In fact, June passed away just a few days after what would have been their 75th wedding anniversary. George passed away in 2002, and those who knew him wouldn't be surprised to hear: "For cryin' out loud, woman, what took you so long?"

The couple moved into their first home in St. Louis Park, where their first daughter, Diane, was born in 1951. With the addition of daughter Joyce in 1956, June and George moved their family to another home in St. Louis Park: the three-bedroom rambler on Pennsylvania Avenue that will always remain a special place to all who knew them.

June also worked for a time as a receptionist at JCPenney, worked as a homemaker, and gave occasional piano lessons; but it was her role as a caregiver that she embraced the most. Among the many things she did for Diane and Joyce when they were growing up, June served as a chaperone on school trips to Spain and Hawaii.

Then, as her mother and father aged and moved from the Longfellow house to

a duplex nearby, June provided love and support with daily visits and nightly phone calls.

"Say goodnight to everyone. Kiss. Kiss." was how she would end these conversations - with the "kisses" being two quick smooching sounds.

Grandma June also took care of her grandsons, Mike and Jeff, watching them before and after school nearly every day. And, that home on Pennsylvania Avenue provided them with food, friends, love, and a fantastic tree to climb. Trips with Grandma June to Ridgedale, Texa-Tonka, or Knollwood often ended with Baskin Robbins ice cream, Fanny Farmer fruit slices, Star Wars action figures, comic books, baseball cards, or Transformers.

Being under Grandma June's watchful eye also prompted life lessons. Among the most famous of which was that smoking was "ishy," because cigarettes "tasted like hot garbage." Every grandchild and great-grandchild received this advice.

Caregiving continued to be June's calling. When George became unable to walk and unable to work, June supported him and tended to his medical needs as well as going back to work as a receptionist, this time for H&R Block. She also helped Joyce during her battle with cancer.

Family meals at their Pennsylvania Avenue home - often tater-tot hotdish, spaghetti with potato chips on the side, meatloaf, or Kentucky Fried Chicken - concluded with desserts such as lime jello with pears, orange jello with mandarin oranges, cherry jello with fruit cocktail, or pudding "in a cloud" of Cool Whip.

Often when some of the foods mentioned above would mix together on

Grandma June's plate, she could be heard saying that it was fine, because "it all mixes in your stomach anyway."

June's favorite food, however, was ice cream. In fact, among some of the last things she ever said were "ice cream is happiness" and "I need chocolate ice cream!" She did in fact get some ice cream then, which brought her comfort and helped her sleep.

Perhaps this is not surprising, since during her long life, on many a night, Grandma June was found fast asleep on the couch in front of the television after the nightly news, having just finished a dish of neapolitan ice cream. This was her favorite flavor, even though often earlier in the day her grandsons had eaten most of the chocolate (and sometimes vanilla) out of the container.

Grandma June would have gone so far as to say that she needed her ice cream, because she didn't like to drink milk. So, this is how she "got her calcium." This is also somewhat ironic, because George spent the better part of his working days as a deliveryman for the Franklin Creamery, delivering milk to homes in the Twin Cities area.

June's heartbreak at losing Joyce in 1995 and George in 2002 was alleviated by the births of her great-grandchildren: Emily, Ben, Raade, Svea and Thora. While she was still able, June helped Diane babysit whenever she could, because she loved them all so much.

June moved into Aquila Commons in St. Louis Park in 2012, where she received love and support from Diane and her husband, Wayne, before a fall necessitated a move to Presbyterian Homes in Bloomington in 2022.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Charlie and Thora Raade; her husband, George; her daughter, Joyce, and her son-in-law, Wayne Barron.

She is survived by her daughter, Diane Barron; grandsons and their wives, Mike and Lisa Gears, and Jeff and Michelle Gears; her great-granddaughter and husband, Emily and Oscar Hernandez; her great-grandchildren, Ben, Raade, Svea, and Thora Gears, and her lifelong friend, Irene Hegge.

A celebration of life is scheduled from 2 to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 25, at Aquila Commons in St. Louis Park.

Online gifts in memory of June Lorraine Anderson can be made to the Dementia Society of America: www.DementiaSociety.org/donate.

Love you, Grandma June. Here's hoping that the party in the next room has a ballroom for you and Grandpa George to share at least one more dance.

"Say goodnight to everyone. Kiss. Kiss."

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT **25**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (CT)

Aquila Commons
8200 W 33rd St
Minneapolis, MN 55426