



Maurine Henderson Venters

December 5, 1934 - March 23, 2026

Maurine H. Venters passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 23, 2026, at Friendship Village in Bloomington, MN.

She was 91 years old and lived a full, remarkable life. Her legacy lives on in her five children, eleven grandchildren, and the generations who will follow.

She was a trailblazer. After beginning her career as a nurse and earning a Master's in Public Health, she became one of the first women to graduate with a PhD in epidemiology from the University of Minnesota - pushing through discrimination with the grit and determination that defined her. And because three degrees apparently still left her with spare energy, she later added her J.D., proving once again that her idea of "finishing school" was very different from everyone else's.

In public health, she followed the evidence wherever it led, even when it challenged the norms of the time. Her work helped reveal the link between smoking and cancer. Today, whenever I see a "No Smoking" sign, I think of her - someone who insisted on the truth long before the world was ready to hear it.

To honor her love of art and cultures from around the world, memorials to the Minneapolis Institute of Art are appreciated.

She will be deeply missed.