



Evelyn CeCelia Gutknecht

May 16, 1934 - March 19, 2026

Evelyn Gutknecht, age 91, passed away restfully at Meadows Assisted Living and Memory Care in Spring Green on March 19, 2026.

Evelyn was born in Bear Valley on May 16, 1934, to Harvey and CeCelia (Duren) Phillips. She grew up in the Spring Green area and, from a young age, worked in cheese factories, restaurants, and as household help for Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin. It was in one of those restaurants where she met a dashing young man by the name of Carl Gutknecht. After graduating from Spring Green High School, she and Carl were married on November 5, 1952, at the Evangelical United Brethren Church in Norwalk.

Settling on a farm outside Avoca, she rapidly transitioned into becoming a farmer's wife, and ultimately, a devoted mother to five children. The first few years on their farm, though, had its challenges—no indoor plumbing, no furnace, and a single hand pump for inside water. Such obstacles did not prevent her from making their house into an inviting home where countless family and friends gravitated to the kitchen table for conversation, and, of course, the partaking of enticing selections of homemade goodies.

As her family grew, so did her involvement outside the farm. She was an active lifetime member of the Avoca United Methodist Church, and for decades, held office for the Methodist Women's Society. Evelyn consistently

volunteered for church activities—including abundant Lord's Acre Sales where her breads and legendary pecan pies prompted some fierce competitive bidding. Baking, cooking, and sewing were among Evelyn's favorite pastimes. Her garden was a full-time summer and fall undertaking with the bounty canned and frozen for winter. For several years, she was General Leader of the Circle A 4-H Club, while also teaching members homemaking skills in preparation for the Iowa County Fair. Evelyn never missed a high school athletic or music event in which her children participated.

When their children eventually moved away, Evelyn and Carl's attention focused on their dear grandchildren. Nothing compared to spending time at the farm and in Grandma's kitchen with doting grandparents who listened, guided, and offered their wisdom.

Evelyn radiated kindness, empathy, and selflessness. Together with Carl, they were a well-respected couple impacting family, friends, and community.

Evelyn is survived by sons Gary (Mary) Gutknecht, Richland Center; Baxter (Suanne) Gutknecht, Spring Green; daughters Stephanie (Charlie) DeLong, Clinton; Kathy Gutknecht, Columbus; and Karen (Larry) Kachel, Whitewater. Evelyn's grandchildren include Kira (Marty) Kennedy, Leah (Marty) Grosse, Shannon (Nick) Hagmann, Wesley Gutknecht, Bridget (Mark) Wozniak, Matt (Lexy) DeLong, Jordan (Emily) DeLong, Pete Koehler, Dan Koehler, Cally (Tylur) Lengfeld, and Jourden (Tehya) Kachel, along with 15 great grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Evelyn was preceded in death by her husband, Carl; parents Harvey and CeCelia Phillips; brothers LeRoy (Lance) Phillips, Warren Phillips, and Neil Phillips; sisters Margaret (Fern) Sprecher, Joanne Bohnsack, and Rosie Phillips, infant.

Evelyn's family is forever grateful to Raeann, Kyrie, Diane, and each of the

wonderful staff members at Meadows Assisted Living and Memory Care. Their kindness, compassionate care, dedication, and devotion over the past four years were truly exceptional.

The family would also like to extend their sincere thanks to Agrace Hospice workers Jamie, Dawn, and Grace for their loving and dignified care of Evelyn these past few weeks. Their calming presence, attentive care, and emotional support will never be forgotten.

Funeral services will be held at the Avoca United Methodist Church on Saturday, March 28, with visitation from 10:00 until the time of services at 11:30. Burial will follow at the Avoca Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Evelyn's name may be directed to Agrace Hospice Care, 5395 E. Cheryl Pkwy., Madison, WI 53711 or to the Avoca United Methodist Church, Avoca.

Cemetery Details

Avoca Cemetery

Village of Avoca, Iowa County
Village of Avoca 532-6831

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 28. 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

Avoca United Methodist Church
207 E. Wisconsin Street
Avoca, WI 53506

Funeral Service

MAR 28. 11:30 AM (CT)

Avoca United Methodist Church
207 E. Wisconsin Street
Avoca, WI 53506

Tribute Wall

MM

“ Gary and family. So very sorry for the loss of your mother. Sending hugs and prayers

Marilyn Martin - April 11 at 02:49 AM

CF

“ Condolences to the Gutknecht family. Evelyn was a special lady. She did loads for the church and Avoca community.

Connie Ziebarth Sorg and family - March 28 at 03:04 PM

JS

“ Dear Gutknecht family, we just saw your Mom's, grandmother's death notice in the Richland Center Observer. We are very sorry for your loss. Sounds like she was a kind and loving servant. God bless you as you celebrate her life!

John Schmitz - March 27 at 12:23 AM

JN

“ Kathy , and Gary ,
I am sorry to hear of the passing of your mother, I only met her a few times several years ago.
I know what it is to lose a parent, I have lost both of my parents.
I will keep you and your family in my thoughts and prayers.
Peace be with you,
Jon Nelson

Jon Nelson - March 26 at 12:19 PM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Evelyn CeCelia Gutknecht.*



March 26 at 11:17 AM



“ *What a wonderful life! Fabulous mother, father, and family. Many fond memories of various family interactions. The beauty of Evelyn's life's calling resides in her family legacy, civic contributions, and guiding love and care to everyone she met. On behalf of the Donald and Mary Pechan Family I extend my condolences. May we all carry the spirit of Evelyn and her family with us in being good stewards of life. She and her family set a great standard! My love, respect, and admiration for such a wonderful lady.*

John R. Pechan - March 25 at 09:29 PM



“ *My Deepest Sympathy to the Gutknecht family in the passing of Dear Evelyn! May you all find Peace and Comfort in the kind spirit she has left for you all. Kind Regards, Tim Coyle*

Tim Coyle - March 24 at 04:41 PM



“ *Tom(Jenny),David(Trisha) and families. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Evelyn CeCelia Gutknecht.*



Tom(Jenny),David(Trisha) and families. - March 24 at 04:03 PM

GF

“ Gary, Mary and family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Evelyn CeCelia Gutknecht.



Gary, Mary and family - March 24 at 09:42 AM

MS

“ Our deepest sympathies to all the family.
Robert and Maureen Smith

Maureen Smith - March 23 at 09:06 AM

TS

“ Condolences to the Gutknecht family!

Tammy Schwingle - March 21 at 01:25 PM

LD

“ So sorry to hear of Evelyn's passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family. Alan & Lauri Dischler

Lauri Dischler - March 21 at 12:18 PM

CS

“ So sorry to hear of her passing. Our condolences to entire family.
Cherish the memories.

Chris and John Storer - March 21 at 09:07 AM

LS

“ Our sympathies to Evelyn’s entire family.I always enjoyed her loving smile that she shared everyday at The Meadows.She was a ray of sunshine.We will all miss her and the blessed family we all got to know.Love,Lori

Lori Shaw - March 20 at 10:40 PM

KU

“ So sorry for your loss! Our thoughts and prayers to all of you! I remember, as a child, visiting the farm and your mom (and dad) was very good to us. My mom will be very sad as well.

Kay (Stocks) and Rich Ubrig - March 20 at 10:16 PM

VW

“ Virginia Wiedenfeld lit a candle in memory of Evelyn CeCelia Gutknecht



Virginia Wiedenfeld - March 20 at 08:46 PM

VW

“ My sympathy to the family especially gary and mary may she rest in peace

Virginia Wiedenfeld - March 20 at 08:46 PM