



Mrs. Lucille Jean Hillyer

February 27, 1936 - December 31, 2025

Lucille Virginia (Jean) Hillyer, 89, of Anthem, Arizona, passed away peacefully on December 31, 2025 in her home with her husband at her side. She resided in Commerce, Georgia; also Florida, South Carolina, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Alaska before retiring to Arizona.

Celebration of life will be held at Christ the Lord Lutheran Church, Carefree, Arizona on February 27, 2026 at 1:00 pm. Burial will follow at Grey Hill Cemetery, Commerce, Georgia on March 7, 2026 at 2:00 pm. Following interment, a celebration service will be held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Nome, Alaska on March 25, 2026 at 2:00 pm.

Lucille was born in Greenville, South Carolina to David Wilbern Strickland and Margaret Lucille Woodall on February 27, 1936. She married Harold Robert (Bob) Hillyer on December 28, 1950. After Mr. Hillyer's death she met and married Peter Bente in Nome, Alaska.

She went to Commerce High School and graduated from American School in Chicago, Illinois. She graduated from Bible Baptist College, Springfield, Missouri with AA degree in Christian

Education and BA degree in Religious Education. She completed student teaching qualifications at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

Lucille's first husband was an ordained minister and she worked tirelessly with him for 30 years to bring Baptist ministry to many communities. She joined the Bible Baptist Fellowship International (BBFI) mission program and served 10 years in Wrangell, Alaska and 14 years in Nome, Alaska. She was an active leader of church programs, especially Worship services, Festivals, Sunday school, Summer camps, yearly Bible schools, and Youth groups. She worked at Kawerak Inc. (a tribal consortium) as Head Start Health Coordinator to bring services to 12 Native villages in the Bering Strait region. She retired from BBFI mission program in 1989 and from Kawerak Inc. in 2005.

Besides church commitments, she was active in community affairs and did fund raising for the Girl's Drill Team, 4-H, and Boy Scouts and taught 4-H cooking, sewing, crocheting, knitting, and photography. She had deep affection for her family, often visiting her mother, children and grandchildren. She liked traveling and visited every U. S. state, Canada, Mexico, and St. Croix Virgin Island. She researched her family tree and found she was directly related to the Stalcup family that started the Swedish Colony in North America in 1610.

She taught herself to sew, knit, crochet, play piano, and paint. She played piano very well and always liked playing hymns. She enjoyed camping, hiking, fishing, and looking for big garnets at the Stikine River. She opened Southern Comfort Bed and Breakfast and ran No Place Like Nome Bed and Breakfast at a larger home in

Nome. She owned The Bloomin' Solarium, a business supplying greenhouse bedding plants during spring gardening season. She joined Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Nome and participated in many church programs.

She was a member of BBFI, Pioneers of Alaska Women's Igloo #1, Nome Arts Council, and Our Savior's Lutheran Church. She was well known for her life-long devotion to glorify God and share the joy of the Gospel with others.

Lucille is survived by her husband; children: David Hillyer (Glenda), Lorraine Ivy-Dahlin, Karen Phillips (Lyle); grandchildren: David Hillyer (Lorraine), Kristi Busse (Andy), Trina Ivy-Moreno (Phillip), Robert Ivy (Brittany), Timothy Ivy (Rebekah), Tanya Lester (Nicolas), Arthur Johnson, Benjamin Johnson (Jenny); great-grandchildren: Kendon Rowcroft-Ivy, Faith Every (Devin), Carter, Kadin, and Kodi Ivy, Emma and Grace Lester, Sophia and Norah Johnson; nieces: Sabrina Short (Steven), Tina Burns (Bruce). She is preceded in death by her first husband, Harold Hillyer; parents David and Margaret Strickland; brother, Furman Strickland.

Memorial donations may be made to BBFI (<https://www.bbfi.org/>), Kawerak Head Start (<https://kawerak.org/>), Pioneers of Alaska Women's Igloo #1 (PO Box 146, Nome AK 99762), Nome Arts Council (<https://alaskacf.org/>), Wounded Warrior Project (tel: (480) 946-0663), Our Savior's Lutheran Church (www.oslcnome.org/)

Cemetery Details

Grey Hill Cemetery

Clayton St.
Commerce, GA 30529