



# Wanda Hodge Underwood

May 4, 1938 - January 24, 2026

Wanda Hodge Underwood, 87, of Gainesville, Virginia, passed away peacefully in her sleep on January 24, 2026. She was born on May 4, 1938, in Dell, Arkansas.

Wanda's life was shaped by hard work from an early age, growing up working in the cotton fields of Arkansas alongside her family. Those experiences instilled in her the resilience, independence, and determination that remained with her throughout her life.

She held many roles over the years, including working as an accountant for Sears and JCPenney and as a Liaison Action Request processor at Newport News Shipbuilding. She served her community as a school crossing guard, and later as a school bus driver. She took pride in her work and in her ability to care for herself and those around her.

Wanda faced significant physical challenges during her lifetime, including two major strokes, but met them with remarkable resilience and a headstrong spirit. Contributing to her ability to cope and remain strong throughout was her faith and support from her church community, which were very important in her life.

She was also deeply creative and found joy in drawing and painting. She loved flowers and hummingbirds, and appreciated the quiet beauty they brought into her life.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Emmett Hilt Underwood, her son, Emmett Hilt Underwood, Jr., her parents, George Ernest Hodge and Annie Mae Hodge, four brothers, G.E. Hodge, Lloyd Hodge, R.H. Hodge, and Huey Hodge, and two sisters, Martha Ruby Lee Birdsong, and Geneva Addybelle Hodge.

She is survived by a sister, Brenda Hodge Baker of Ironton, Missouri; her daughter, Martha Ann Wallace of Haymarket, Virginia; her grandson, Brandon James Underwood of Belleville, Michigan; and many nieces and nephews.

Her strength, creativity, and determination will live on in those who knew and loved her.