



Virginia Mae McCoy

June 18, 1933 - December 17, 2025

Virginia Mae (Denney) McCoy, 92, of Huntsville, passed away peacefully Wednesday, December 17, 2025, surrounded by her loving family. She was born June 18, 1933, in War Eagle Township, Arkansas, to Irving (Debs) and Helen Mary Denney.

Virginia lived a life of both quiet dignity and unyielding resilience. She was one of the last of true pioneer stock: strong, resourceful, and steadfast.

Throughout her life, she answered to many names: Mom, Grandma, Granny Grunt, Old Nan, and Chicken Granny. That last one did not come from any hint of fear (she never showed any), but from her love of her very spoiled chickens.

She spoke with a soft, velvety drawl. Her words were rarely rushed or loud or excited. She was the voice of reason, the calm in a storm, and the law and order. She listened to problems and responded with thoughtfulness. She was a truth-teller. Even if it was something you didn't want to hear, it was probably something that needed to be heard.

She did not raise victims, and she tolerated very little self-pity. Instead, she expected her family to be tough and capable. Her greatest lesson was lived, not spoken: true strength is steady, not loud, and it's passed down through example. She was comforting and fierce and seemingly invincible all at once.

She could sing you to sleep or make you rethink your life choices in a heartbeat.

She loved gardening. She could grow anything and often did. Through her plants, she taught patience, but also the swift wrath of stepping on a strawberry runner. That gentle but firm rule remains a reminder of her deep respect for life and constant nudge of awareness at the berry farm every year.

Virginia filled many roles in life. She was a devoted homemaker, but also picked cotton and apples, tended the garden and farm, raised children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She worked alongside her husband at their service station in Huntsville, served in the school cafeteria, worked at the senior center, and for a time ran a furniture business with her sisters. She taught her family to forage for mushrooms and to fish. She made the best food, happily sharing it with anyone who stopped by. She often acted as the family physician, assessing various injuries and even providing triage in some cases.

Her love for animals was legendary. Strays got dropped off under the cover of darkness, knowing she would complain a little when she discovered them, but she would never turn them away. Many of them were usually missing a limb or required regular medication. She would nurse them back to health and welcome them into her pack while barely questioning their mysterious arrivals at her doorstep.

She loved yard sales and thrift stores and often spent days treasure hunting with her sisters and anyone else who wanted to go. She always gave in abundance, while practicing thriftiness. She made intricate doll clothes out of scraps, feasts from morsels, and memories from ordinary moments. Though she taught the values of hard work, she also taught the importance of fun and family. She hosted impromptu tea parties, pretended (at least we think) to be

upset at the sneaking of ice cream before dinner, and she planned picnics and family kite flying contests.

Despite her practical side, discreet luxuries were found throughout her house. She had a feather bed that made it a special treat to spend the night and listen to ghost stories told in the dark. She made waffles and served them on Blue Willow plates. She collected oddities that were fascinating to young eyes like brass ashtrays shaped like various bugs (she didn't smoke). She would walk you around the garden to let you smell the flowers or pick lavender to turn into homemade sachets. Occasionally, you could help in the kitchen while she told the story of the Little Red Hen.

Above all, she made her family resilient. She equipped them with the skills to survive hard things and instilled the importance of caring for the vulnerable while still allowing time for family and fun. Her legacy lives in the strength she built in those she loved, the compassion she modeled, and the simple rules that guide them still: never step on the strawberry runners, always have your toolbox handy, and care for those creatures who cannot care for themselves. She was the voice of reason, the anchor in chaos, and the embodiment of quiet strength. Her family will carry her lessons forward with the same dignity she showed every day.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Arvis McCoy, and one brother, Bill Denney.

Survivors include one daughter, Sandra (Joseph Lee) Sloan of Huntsville; one son, Michael D. (Teresa) McCoy; four grandchildren, Teresa (Phillip) Escalante, Tracy (Daniel) Bennett, Matthew McCoy, Lara (Christopher) Tilton; and six great-grandchildren, Trinity McCoy, Gabby Bennett, Morgan McCoy, Tasha McCoy, Rosalie Tilton, and Dalton Tilton; and three sisters, Geneva

Vinsant, Genevieve Lyman, and Joyce Warford.

The family will receive friends 9:00 AM-10:00 AM, Monday, December 22, 2025, at Brashears Funeral Home. Funeral Service will immediately follow at 10:00 AM, with Lonnie Burks officiating. Pallbearers will be Joseph Lee Sloan, Matthew McCoy, Christopher Tilton, Daniel Bennett, Phillip Escalante, and Johnnie Walker. Interment will immediately follow services at Huntsville Cemetery, Huntsville, AR.

Services are entrusted to Brashears Funeral Home and Crematory of Huntsville.

Cemetery Details

Huntsville Cemetery

Cemetery Drive
Huntsville, AR 72740
<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Huntsville+Cemetery/@36.0935763,-93.7338822,15z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x431b3912d1b18b1b!8m2!3d36.0935763!4d-93.7338822>

Previous Events

Receive Friends

DEC **22**. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Brashears Funeral Home and Crematory
509 North Gaskill Street
Huntsville, AR 72740
(479) 738-2123
<https://www.brashearsfuneralhome.net/>

Funeral Service

DEC **22**. 10:00 AM (CT)

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Tribute Wall

JR

“ *Our prayers go out to you all.*

Jeff and Sara Reeves - December 21, 2025 at 11:33 PM

DB

“ *Dena B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Virginia Mae McCoy.*

Dena B. - December 21, 2025 at 09:48 PM

TB

“ *Virginia was a true lady. I loved visiting with her at the station. My deepest sympathies to her loved ones. May God bless you all.*

Tamara Bartlett-Long - December 20, 2025 at 08:26 PM

BW

“ *Sandra and Mike we are so sad to hear of your sweet Mother's passing.
She definitely had a sweet soft voice and was one of the kindest ladies I ever knew.
Prayers and condolences to all of you.*

Tom and Billie Whorton

Billie Whorton - December 19, 2025 at 09:03 PM

JC

“ *What a lovely and well-deserved tribute to a wonderful lady. Each time I was at the nursing home and saw her, she made me smile. I said hello to her once and gave her a pat on the shoulder; she looked at me and said, "You're standing on one of my plants." When so much else fades in your life, and the sweetness remains, then the sweetness must have been very deeply rooted.*

Jackie Collins - December 19, 2025 at 01:14 PM



“ *So sorry to hear of Virginia's passing. She was a special friend. Prayers to the family*

Joetta Smith - December 19, 2025 at 10:54 AM

CP

“ *I want to express my deepest condolences to the McCoy family. Mrs. Mcoy was a special lady. A Christian lady. She would help anyone in need. I was honored to know her for a short time.*



Chad D Parker - December 19, 2025 at 10:43 AM