Charlotte H. Tripp, 77, of Winona and Professor Emeritus at Winona State University, died Saturday, May 15, 2010, at Sauer Memorial Home surrounded by family.

Charlotte Helen was born June 8, 1932, in Canton, Minn., to Ellsworth Kenneth and Jesse Louella Jetson. She was raised on the family farm in rural Mabel, Minn., and attended the Mabel school.

On Aug. 27, 1949, Charlotte married Mervin Elias Tripp in Mabel, where they made their home, until 1966 when they moved to Winona. For about 50 years, a good share of Charlotte's life was devoted to nursing and education. While still in high school, she completed the nurse's aid course and worked at Lutheran Hospital in La Crosse, Wis. She later worked at the Green Lea Manor Nursing Home in Mabel. In 1964, she graduated from the Winona Technical College and became a licensed practical nurse. In 1970, she graduated from Winona State University with a bachelor of science degree in nursing and became a professional registered nurse. In 1972, she graduated from the University of Minnesota with a master's of science in nursing education, and in 1986, she graduated from the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, where she completed both the adult and geriatric nurse practitioner programs and became certified as an adult nurse practitioner. Charlotte was always a very good student and graduated with high honors from all the schools she attended.

Throughout her professional career, she traveled all over the country, taking courses and programs to continue her education and update her knowledge and skills. Charlotte worked as a nurse in various places, including St. Marys Hospital in Rochester, before accepting a position at the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Winona State University, where she taught for 25 years. While there, she attained the rank of full professor. When she retired in 1998, she was honored by the university as Professor Emeritus. During her career, Charlotte taught more than 1,600 nursing students. She loved every one of them, and they loved her, too. When Charlotte retired, her colleagues wrote that she was "the sweetheart of present and former students because of her caring approach to teaching. She was devoted, loyal, caring, respectful, a true colleague, friend and a role model." They also went on to say that she was an outstanding nursing professor and colleague.

Over the years, Charlotte held memberships in many local, state and national education and nursing organizations, including Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society of Nursing and both Zeta and Kappa Mu chapters. She received many honors and awards. One example is being named the Nurse Educator of the Year in 1994 by the Kappa Mu Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau. Charlotte and Mervin loved to travel and had visited all 50 states of the U.S. and 17 foreign countries and had taken nine cruises. She enjoyed taking walks, biking, reading and baking. Her church was always important to her. In her early years, she was an active member of First Lutheran Church in Mabel, where she was a member and held offices in the Ladies Aid and the Mary-Martha Circle.

She taught Sunday school for many years and also vacation Bible school. Since 1966, she has been a member of Central Lutheran Church, and since 1953, a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, Post 299, in Mabel. Charlotte is survived by Mervin, her beloved husband of 60 years; their daughter, Linda Tripp King of Homer, Minn.; brother, Milton (Donna) Jetson, of Harmony, Minn.; brothers-in-law, Louis Billmeyer, of Rosemount, Minn., and Lyle (Pat) Tripp, of Coos Bay, Ore.; sisters-in-law, Phyllis (Arlyn) Vigeland of Mabel, Allene (Glenn) Buxengard of Spring Grove, Minn., Janice (Wordean) Welper of Mabel, and Evelyn Tripp of Winona; 22 nieces and nephews and their families; two godchildren, Rory Welper of Burnsville, Minn., and Becki Welch Russell of Stoddard, Wis. She was preceded in death by her parents, Ellsworth and Jesse Jetson; stepmother,
Gertrude Glise Jetson; half-sister, Phyllis Billmeyer; father- and mother-in-law, Loren and Emma Tripp; and three brothers-in-law, Arden and Norris Tripp, and Arnold Flatin.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Thursday at Central Lutheran Church, 259 W. Wabasha St., with the Rev. Michelle Rem officiating. After the service, there will be a luncheon in Grace Hall, and interment will be at Mabel Lutheran Cemetery. Friends may call from 4 to 7 p.m. Wednesday at Fawcett-Junker Funeral Home and Thursday from 10 to 11 a.m. at the church. Casket bearers are Rham Flatin, Randy Snell, Robert Peterson, Daniel Fliehr, Mark Wagner, Derek Espy, and Rory and Lance Welper. Honorary casket bearers are Becki Welch Russell and Kimberly Faith Otterness.

Memorial gifts may be directed to Central Lutheran Church. Words of sympathy and remembrance may be left at www.fawcett-junkerfuneralhome.com. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23:6) Amen.

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