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OBITUARIES

Gengler was long devoted to St. Joseph hospital

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If a hospital could be a home, Sister M. Jeanne Gengler found hers at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center.

Geneler always knew that she wanted to be a nurse, and she beean her training in 1931 at what was then St. Joseph's Hospital. She did not know that she would join the religious life but felt the call as she watched the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters enjoying their work.

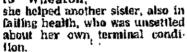
She evantually served as president of the hospital where she beean. Even after retirement in 1980, she remained a daily presence there, listening to patients and talking with staff members.

Gengler long lived alone at a house across from the hospital. She suffered a fall and finally dacided to move to the order's motherhouse in August, and she solusenumity was diagnosed with cancer, Gengler died Monday at Our Lady of the Angels Motherhouse Health Center in Wheaton, Ill. She was 90.

"She was quite the lady," said Pat Kalder, heapital president. "! was so pleased to be able to sit and talk with her a couple weeks ago, when I went to Wheaton to see her ... And she wanted to

read the book (being produced) on the history of St. Joseph's."

Kaldor also heard a story about Geneler in keeping with her kindness and character. After the moveto Wheaton.



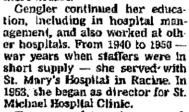
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"Just lei go and prepare a piace for me." Gengler told her, "because I'm not far behind you."

The other nun died peacefully the same night.

Gengler was born and roised in Appleton, Her parents died while she was very young, and she was raised by a grandmother. That early experience left her with strong feelings about the need to help others.

The lurning point came soon after she bagan her nursing studles, when she traveled to St. Louis to watch a friend take her first vows. She asked to be measured for her own robes. She entered the convent in 1932, returning to St. Joseph's to finish her studies thore in 1935.



Four years later, she was suddenly told to report back to the motherhouse on the next train.

"I thought I was in hot water." she later said, telling the story. "A nurse had put one of my alcoholic patients into a barred, locked room, and I had protested."

"Do you know why you are here?" asked the provincial directress.

"Yes," Gengler said.

"No, you don't," the directress soid. "The decision was just made this morning. As of now, you are the superior and administrator of St. Michael Hosoital."

During the next six years. Gengier added inpatient psychiatric and other services. She also paid off all but \$750,000 of the hospital's \$8 million debt.

She next served at a hospital in Missouri. Then she returned to St. Joseph's Hospital in 1966, this time as its chief executive officer.

Gangler saw the hospital grow. including with the expansion of its outpatient and emergency services, and the creation of an inpatient hospice and the neonalal intensive care unit.

After official retirement in 1980. she continued working in health care at the old St. Authory Hospital in Milwaukee and in programs elsewhere.

In 1993, she again returned to work at St. Joseph's, as a volunteer visitor and gentle advocate.

"I feel at home with patients." Gengler told Journal Sentinel coltennial Bill Janz in 1995, "I could not just sit back and not care for people."

She also helped to develop the hospital's archives, digging into its long history.

In her honor, a little park near the hospital was named the Sister Jeanne Cengler Park in 1989.

"Her spirituat presence will always live on in her hospital." Kaldor said. "Because this was her home."

Survivors include brothers Norbert and William, nieces and newhews.

The funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. today at Our Lady of the Angels Convent in Wheaton, \mathbf{n}

