

Marianne Jensen Driver, the *Grande Dame* of United States ladies prone shooting, passed away March 3, 2007. Mrs. Driver was born in Transylvania in 1913 and emigrated to the United States in 1929 with her mother and two brothers to join her father who had preceded them to take up a post as a Lutheran minister. A bright young woman who spoke German, Saxon, and Romanian, she quickly learned English in night school and soon enrolled in high school, graduating in just 2 ½ years.

A tennis player, she gave up the game after her marriage to the avid prone shooter Max Jensen so that she might spend more time with him; which led to her taking up shooting. The United States was in the midst of the Great Depression in the mid-1930s, and the Jensens shared Max's equipment. Within a year of picking up the sport, she was placing in tournaments despite the fact she could not practice because she was working and shot matches only. When Max Jensen passed away in 1952, she was left a widow with two daughters, Lenore (Lemanski) and Marianne (Bobbi Vitito).

She married Marvin Driver, a pistol shooter, in 1954 and became more deeply involved in shooting activities as Driver was an NRA Board member. Mrs. Driver's competitive career spans more than 50 years at the Camp Perry National Smallbore Prone Championships and three woman's any sight titles; the ladies title in Ohio, Michigan, and North Carolina; and Women's Adjutant of the US Team at the 1962 and 1966 World Championships.

However, in most people's minds, she is the face of the US Randle Team, outside of the team's founder, Eleanor Dunn. She has been a member of the team a dozen times, a line coach countless times, and her daughters account for 53 appearances between them. After her retirement from active shooting, her presence behind the line at the Randle Match, perched on a lawn chair and peering through a spotting scope, was as regular as the appearance of the trophy itself.

Her retirement at Camp Perry is legendary. During the first stage of the any sight 50 yard match, the 80 year old Driver shot a 200X200. She walked down range, looked at the perfect score and told those around her this was as good a time as any to retire. Patti Clark, Randle veteran and NRA Board member, took the target from her and had it signed by Mrs. Driver's many friends and admirers and later presented it to her.

Mrs. Driver was a founder of the Stinknik Rifle Club after the Nationals in 1963. The club is one of the premier shooting clubs at Camp Perry, having won many national prone championships.

Mrs. Driver also served as a mentor to several of the nation's top smallbore shooters, including Edie Reynolds, current National Woman Champion, and Carolyn Millard Sparks, former National Champion and perennial contender for smallbore's highest honor. She enjoyed encouraging young shooters to aspire to accomplishments at the highest levels of the sport.

The National Rifle Association recognized Mrs. Driver's lifetime support and achievement in 1999, when she was named the recipient of the Sybil Ludington Freedom Award. It was cited that her "dedication to mentoring others in competition and recreational shooting, promotion of the NRA service as a competent ambassador for smallbore shooting, and encouragement of participation in the shooting sports, especially among young people, has shown no boundaries."

It serves as an exemplary epitaph for an exemplary human being.