



Dr. Ruth Joan Strubel

May 30, 1935 - November 14, 2022

Dr. Ruth Strubel, distinguished educator, mother and grandmother, passed away in her home on Nov. 14, 2022.

Ruth Joan (pronounced JoAnn) was born May 30, 1935, in Riverside, Illinois, to Ruth and Paul Lassanske. She discovered her love of French language and culture before she was 10 years old, shortly after the family (which now included her brother, Paul) moved to Cleveland Ohio, in 1943. The following summer she attended the Foreign Language Demonstration School at (Case) Western Reserve University and was immediately enthralled by the French language.

Ruth continued her French studies at Richmond Hill High School in Queens, New York, when her father, an ordained Lutheran minister and a school administrator, was serving a parish on Long Island.

After high school, she attended Concordia Teachers College (CTC, now Concordia University) in River Forest, Illinois. Since CTC did not offer French, she took French classes at Rosary College (part of Dominican University), walking the mile in all kinds of weather.

She graduated with three majors: French, Elementary Education, and American Literature. After graduation, she taught at Walther Lutheran High School before earning a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the Universite de Grenoble in France. She was recruited to spend a second year at the Universite as a teaching assistant in the American Studies Department.

Returning to the United States, Ruth enrolled in the French department of the

graduate school at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She earned her Master of Arts in 1962 and began working on her Ph.D. Marrying and having two sons, Christian and Walter, kept her busy as she worked on her dissertation, completed in 1974.

Unfortunately, the U.S. was in the midst of a recession in 1974 and there were no jobs available teaching French at the college level. Ruth joined the Minneapolis Public Schools in the English as a Second Language (ESL) Department. She was the first certified elementary ESL teacher in Minnesota. When MinneTESOL was formed (about 1980), Ruth joined the organization and became co-chair of the Elementary Interest Section. Realizing that university TESOL (Teachers of English as a Second Language) had only prepared teachers of adults, she began drawing on her elementary training to adapt methods and materials.

Dr. Strubel prepared numerous presentations on a variety of topics which she shared with her colleagues at local, regional, national, and international conferences. She also helped mainstream teachers by educating them on the cultures of their students and how they could make their classes more inclusive.

Ruth taught in the Minneapolis schools for 26 years, as a full-time teacher and as the coordinator of the Close Up for New Americans program at Edison High School.

Retiring from teaching, Ruth became a volunteer driver and caregiver for an Anoka County program for senior citizens. Her grandchildren also kept her busy. Ruth led a full life, blessed with service and activities.

Survived by sons Christian, and Walter, grandchildren Sarah, Nick, and Emily, brother Paul (Peggy) Lassanske, other relatives and friends. She was a teacher for 26 years in Minneapolis Public Schools.

Funeral service 11:00 AM Thursday, December 1, 2022 with visitation one hour prior at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, 900 Stillwater Road, Mahtomedi. Interment Hillside Cemetery.

www.Washburn-McReavy.com

Hillside Chapel 612-781-1999

Cemetery Details

Hillside Cemetery (Minneapolis)

2600 19th Ave NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418