



## Dr. Velta Ligita Sparnins

May 16, 1928 - November 2, 2021

Age 93, of Brooklyn Park. She passed away peacefully on November 2, 2021 from congestive heart failure. Preceded in death by parents Richards and Anna, sister Zigrida, infant son Martin, and daughters Ilona and Rita.

Velta was born in Latvia in 1928. She fled the brutal communist occupation in 1944, lived in a Displaced Persons camp in Germany where she attended high school and worked in a clothing factory. She separated from her family to join other Latvian refugees in England's post-WWII rebuilding effort, where she met her husband Andrejs. Their first daughter, Ilona was born in England. Rita and Arnie were born after she moved to Canada. Velta and her new family ultimately immigrated to the US in 1958 where she once again joined her parents and other family.

While raising her family of three children in Minneapolis, she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry (1965), and MS (1968) and PhD (1970) Degrees in Biochemistry at the U of MN. When Betty Friedan, author of the *Feminine Mystique*, wrote an article for the *Ladies Home Journal* that highlighted the stories of women that role modeled the "fourth dimension of women's existence," she included Velta's story.

At the U of MN, Velta planned and directed cancer research projects specializing in the inhibition of carcinogenesis by developing new methods for the analysis of different enzymes. She also taught upper level and graduate classes, most notably Biochemistry. She was published in scientific journals such as "Cancer Research", "Journal of the National Cancer Institute",

"Nutrition and Cancer". Her research efforts from the 70's and 80's continue to be cited in new research projects world-wide.

Velta was active in Latvian cultural activities in various roles, including leadership in the sorority "Selgas", vice president of the American Latvian Association, over 40 years of active service to the Latvian Church including teaching at the Latvian School, singing in the choir, and the newsletter editorial board. She was the secretary for the Latvian Press Society and long-time editor for the DV Latvian Calendar. She was always willing to help wherever needed and was a humble, demure servant to society. And of course, together with Andrejs, they would throw legendary parties for all their dear friends.

Velta's great joy was to retreat to the peaceful shores of her Whitefish Lake cabin in Wisconsin. She delighted in the presence of her two grandsons, Alex and Blake, and would always gladly clean fish with a smile for them, as well as other visiting children.

In 2007, Velta moved to Saint Therese at Oxbow Lake in Brooklyn Park where she lived comfortably amongst new friends and the loving staff. In her final days, extra loving care was also provided by North Memorial Hospice.

Survived by son Arnie (Kathy) Sparnins; brother Egons (Sue) Dunens; son-in-law Richard Childs; grandsons Alex (Carly) and Blake (Angie); great-granddaughters Kai and Skyler; goddaughter Ingrida; niece Kristine; nephews Gunars, Karlis, Eriks and their families; and numerous of good friends.

Funeral service Saturday, Nov. 20, 11 AM at the Latvian Ev. Lutheran Church, 3152 17th Ave. S, Minneapolis. Visitation one hour prior to the service and fellowship follows in the downstairs hall. Interment at Crystal Lake Cemetery.

Memorials preferred to the Latvian Church. Please note, church protocol requires facemasks be worn by all attendees, both vaccinated and unvaccinated. To view the service live through the church's facebook page: [www.facebook.com/151677648181316/live/](http://www.facebook.com/151677648181316/live/)

# Cemetery Details

## Crystal Lake Cemetery

3816 N Penn Ave  
Minneapolis, MN 55412  
(612) 521-7619  
info@washburn-mcreavy.com

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church  
3152 17th Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN

## Church Service

NOV 20. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church  
3152 17th Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN

# Tribute Wall

CC

“ *Candy, Katherine, Kristen and Christine purchased the Sweet Solace Spray for the family of Dr. Velta Ligita Sparnins.*



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**Candy, Katherine, Kristen and Christine** - November 18, 2021 at 11:30 AM

DC

“ *Velta will always be a part of us.*



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**Diane and Chris** - November 17, 2021 at 06:40 PM

AS

“ *1 file added to the album Family Pictures*



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**Arnold Sparnins** - November 16, 2021 at 11:35 AM

AS

“ 1 file added to the album Selgas



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**Arnold Sparnins** - November 16, 2021 at 11:02 AM

AS

“ 2 files added to the album Selgas



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**Arnold Sparnins** - November 16, 2021 at 09:48 AM

AS

“ 2 files added to the album Family Pictures



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**Arnold Sparnins** - November 16, 2021 at 09:46 AM

BF

“ Brother, nieces, nephews & families purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Velta Ligita Sparnins.



Brother, nieces, nephews & families - November 15, 2021 at 07:02 PM

AS

“ 1 file added to the album Professional



Arnie Sparnins - November 13, 2021 at 09:08 AM

AS

“ 4 files added to the album Family Pictures



Arnie Sparnins - November 12, 2021 at 12:21 PM

AS

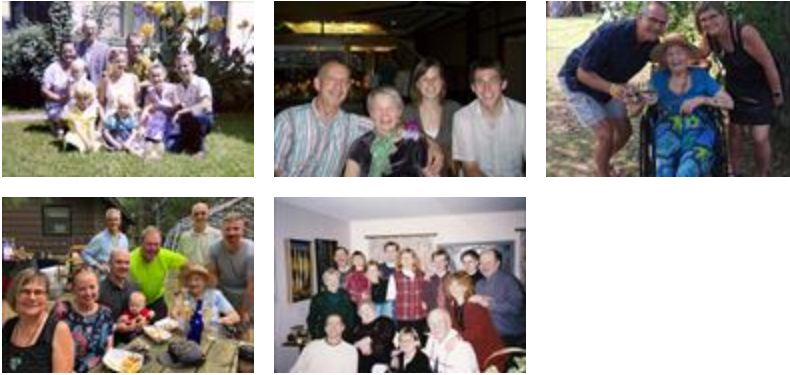
“ 1 file added to the album *Professional*



Arnie Sparnins - November 09, 2021 at 10:55 PM

AS

“ 5 files added to the album *Family Pictures*



Arnie Sparnins - November 09, 2021 at 09:59 PM

RN

“ Richard N. purchased the *Enchanted Cottage* for the family of Dr. Velta Ligita Sparnins.



Richard N. - November 09, 2021 at 09:28 PM

AS

“ 2 files added to the album *Professional*



Arnie Sparnins - November 09, 2021 at 07:36 PM



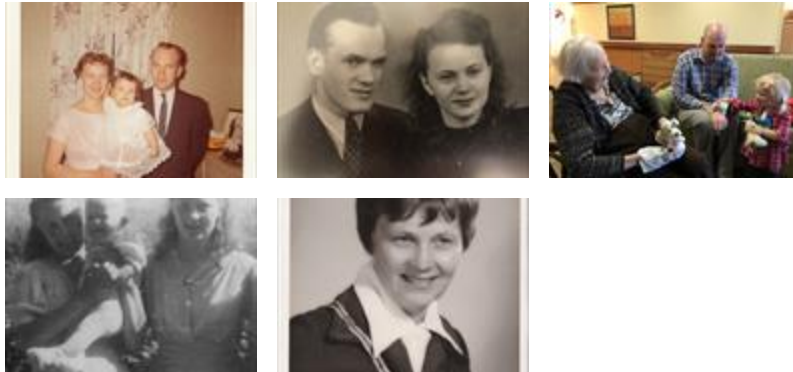
“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Velta Ligita Sparnins.



November 09, 2021 at 06:19 PM

AS

“ 16 files added to the album *Family Pictures*



Arnie Sparnins - November 09, 2021 at 05:23 PM

DC

*I love these pictures. Sparkling eyes in every single one 😁*

Diane Ciccarelli-Clothier - November 10, 2021 at 10:06 AM