



Virginia Bernice Christian

JUL 26, 1923 - OCT 28, 2011



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Virginia Berniece Christian, (Ginny) age 88, Decatur, IL, formerly of Mattoon, IL and Mankato, MN., passed away Friday, October 28, 2011 at Mckinley Court in Decatur, IL.

Virginia was born July 26, 1923 in Mattoon, IL, the daughter of Jenny and Marshall (Harry) Christian, both of whom preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her sister Mildred Christian of Mattoon, one brother, Kenneth Christian of St. Louis, MO., and niece, Carol Lynn Christian of CA. She is survived by one brother, Harris (Harry) Christian, Riverside CA; nieces: Ann (Bob) Lewellen, Decatur, IL, Sue Christian, Weed, CA, Linda Radosivich, Twist, OR; nephews: Bob (Kathy) Christian, Orange, CA, Jim Christian (Linda), Eugene, OR, and many great and great-great nieces and nephews, as well as a large circle of close friends.

Virginia graduated from Mattoon High School in 1941; obtained both her Bachelor of Science (1945) and Masters in Education (1956) from Eastern Illinois University. After graduating college, her first teaching job was at Assumption High School in Assumption, IL. She then taught at Mattoon High School for several years. Virginia began her college teaching career at Eastern Illinois University, taught at a university in Brookings, South Dakota, then went to Mankato State University in Minn. where she taught for the duration of her career. She retired as assistant professor with the distinction of Professor Emeritus. While teaching at Mankato State she was accepted into an advanced studies, one-year program at Columbia University in New York City. Some of her very difficult mathematical coursework was written in French, requiring her to translate the text, as well as master the material. She was held in high esteem by both fellow faculty members and her students. After retirement, Virginia continued to hear from former students, thanking her for making a difficult subject, not only easier to understand, but fun as well. Her classes were always full. Her former students also expressed how much they appreciated her sense of humor and



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admired her brilliant mind.

After retirement, she continued her love of teaching, volunteering to teach English as a second language to foreign students at Mankato State and remained actively involved in university functions.

Virginia was a life-long member of First Presbyterian Church, where she served as a deacon for a time. She also actively participated in and supported her community and many different charities, including the American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), Humane Society, Nat'l Cancer Society, Democratic National Committee, several disabled veterans' groups, and Salvation Army, to whom she donated her home to be auctioned, with proceeds going to the Salvation Army. She then moved to a local retirement community and from there decided to relocate back to Decatur, IL to be near family.

Virginia had many interests and passions in addition to her teaching. She loved all animals, especially her cats, which she has had from childhood on, choosing those who were strays, in shelters or in harm's way. She fulfilled her life-long dream of traveling around the world, visiting many exotic locations. When not traveling she enjoyed spending time with her family, her friends and her cats. She will be most remembered for her love and passion for animals, her great sense of humor, her brilliant intellect, her innate kindness and her heart for anyone or anything who suffered. She demonstrated this with her many generous contributions to her church, numerous charities and organizations. She was a great lady, dearly loved by her family and friends and anyone blessed to be in her association. She will be deeply missed.

Per her wishes, cremation services were performed at Graceland/Fairlawn Crematory. Upon her death, she did not want a sad memorial service. Instead, she requests that those who knew her commemorate her life with a joyful celebration. Memorial contributions may be made to (ASPCA), Salvation Army or donors' charity of choice.



Tribute Wall

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BA

Barbi posted:

I thought I'd have to read a book for a dciosvery like this!

January 18 at 9:10 AM

TC

The First Presbyterian Church posted:

The members and staff of The First Presbyterian Church of Mankato send their sympathy,love and prayers to Viginia's dear Family. Virginia was a dedicated member who joined the church on October 8,1967. Her talents were many. She will be missed by all. Our hearts go out to you at this time of sadness.The Member Care CommitteeFirst Presbyterian ChurchPaul Mueller: Chair

November 14 at 11:24 AM

RS

Roger Stoufer posted:

Dear Family and Friends of Virginia Christian,I became acquainted with Virginia when she volunteered to tutor our at risk students at the Alternative High School in Mankato. After our initial meeting I silently questioned whether she would succeed at this task. How foolish of me to underestimate her. Under her tutelage our students thrived. Her knowledge and teaching skills enabled her to understand the differing learning styles of our students. To achieve success with them she developed alternative teaching procedures which met their needs. She did this in her quiet, unassuming manner. I suspect her only compensation was the warm glow that went with helping students. She certainly didn't seek or need credit for her accomplishments. She was the model for Maslow's Self Actualization Stage of living fully.I am forever grateful for the opportunity to know her.Sincerely, Roger Stoufer

November 14 at 10:18 AM

GD

Gary Dierks posted:

Virginia was the most important educator in my life. She made Calculus fun and easy. I took every math class I could take from her because I enjoyed her classes so much. I tried to copy some of her habits in my teacher as I taught for 36 years. She was a great, great person. I remember when another former student of hers and I visited her here in Mankato, at Christmas time, just how witty she was and how much we enjoyed visiting about the old days of 35+ years ago. She remembered every details about us in class from 35 years earlier. (Wow) She may be gone, but she will always be in my heart as one of the greatest educators of all timeGary DierksRetired Math TeacherMankato Public Schools

November 13 at 9:33 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Virginia by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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