



# Selma T. Knoepfel

SEP 27, 1930 - JUL 4, 2015



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## **Selma T. Knoepfel**

SEP 27, 1930 - JUL 4, 2015

**S**elma T. Knoepfel, age 84, of Waupaca, WI passed away Saturday, July 4, 2015. She was born September 27, 1930 in Lutcher, Louisiana, the daughter of the late Louis and Selma (Schexnayder) Esneault. Selma was united in marriage to Gerald Knoepfel on July 10, 1965 sharing 42 years together. He preceded her in death on June 14, 2008. Survivors include her sister; Corinne Robert of Gramerly, LA, three nephews and one niece and many friends.

Selma was employed as a science middle school teacher in Waupaca for 27 years, retiring in 1992, as well as teaching in Lutcher, LA, France, Germany, Japan, Libya and Turkey. She was a board member of Waupaca Fine Arts Festival, and a past president of Waupaca Teachers Association.

The Funeral Mass will be held at St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church in Waupaca at 11 AM on Thursday, July 9 with Father Amalraj Roche, presiding. Burial will be in Lakeside Memorial Park, Waupaca. Memorials greatly appreciated to the Waupaca Fine Arts Festival or Waupaca Music Scholarship Fund. Holly Funeral Home in Waupaca, WI is assisting the family with arrangements.



## Events


**Selma T. Knoepfel**

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### Memorial Visitation


 **Thursday**, July 9, 2015


 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM CT

 **St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church**  
N2845 Shadow Road, Waupaca WI 54981


### Funeral Mass

 **Thursday**, July 9, 2015

 11:00 AM CT

 **St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church**  
N2845 Shadow Road, Waupaca WI 54981

### Cemetery Details

 **Lakeside Memorial Park**  
936 High Street, Waupaca WI



## Tribute Wall

**Selma T. Knoepfel**

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ML

**Mary Edminster Lane** posted:

This condolence, though late, is no less heartfelt. Selma, you were a phenomenal woman. I will look at a rainbow and think "ROYGBIV", I will make your Texas Caviar and think of you, I will thank you for being my teacher and for being my friend. Jon and I have happy memories of martinis and pontoon boat rides, all those wonderful operas and much more. I am so happy that you are with Jerry again. Bless your heart Selma Knoepfel, we love you.

September 20 at 5:11 AM

MD

**Melodi & Doc Duwell** lit a candle in honor of Selma.



July 9 at 5:03 AM

DT

**Dawn Telfer** posted:

Every student that came in contact with Mrs. "K" learned from her. The respect she had was awesome. She was really quite a lady! All of their students were family. I do not think they missed a students party or wedding invite. Everyone was welcomed in their home or dock. God bless you, Mrs. K. I know you are happy to be with Mr. K. Give him a hug from us. Bob and Dawn Telfer. Waupaca Class of 1974 & 1975.

July 8 at 3:13 PM

KP

**Karen Pionke** posted:

Before I was married to my husband, Bill Pionke, he said, "We cannot get married until you meet Jerry and Selma!" They had such a profound influence on his life. When family times were tough during his high school years, as his former and current teachers, they looked out after him. They made him a part of their family. Once we were married and had the kids, we were all blessed to be included. They were a part of our wedding and a part of Bill's funeral. They were and are a part of our lives. Selma, your commitment to your students and profession make Megan, Corey and myself proud to be teachers. You exemplified everything we all strive to be as teachers. I like to now picture Selma, Jerry and Bill cruising the heavens on a pontoon boat, enjoying Tanqueray and tonic with lime. Thank you for sharing Yourself~With Much Love, William Pionke Family [Karen, Megan, BJ (Will), Corey and Brennan]

July 8 at 6:22 AM



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RS

**Rhea Steinpreis** posted:

Having been very active in the high school musicals, I was often asked if I wanted to be just like Mr. Knoepfel when I grew up. What I never said out loud until many years after I graduated but what always went silently through my head was, "No, I want to be just like Mrs. Knoepfel." To me she was the living embodiment of everything I wanted to be a....female scientist. I remember every inch of her classroom, filled with preserved animals and dissection kits. I remember her blue lab coat and the microscopes. Because I was able to see a living, breathing scientist and educator in Mrs. Knoepfel, I went on to become one....earning a joint PhD in clinical psychology and neuroscience and becoming the first woman to be awarded early tenure at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Years ago I was brought to tears by author Vivian Gornick, who capture the essence of what Mrs. Knoepfel meant to me....." I have been deeply moved by the resourcefulness of women in science rather than by their victimization, and amazed by the variety of their personalities, their experiences, and their activity. I discovered how passionate an enterprise science is - how like artists scientists are - and that hundreds of women who possessed the driving spirit, the pressing hunger, occupied peripheral, often humiliating positions for twenty and thirty years in order to DO science. You could not keep them out of the human enterprise, and because you could not keep them out they have created a history, left a legacy, had consequences. Together with the contemporary women's movement, they have formed a wedge, making the opening for women in science larger than ever before so that today - while the profession is still without anything that resembles parity - innumerable women in science are where they belong, in possession of grants, professorships, and laboratories, and thousands of young women think it perfectly natural that they should become scientists." VIVIAN GORNICK,, author WOMEN IN SCIENCE For years this quote hung on my office door at the University and I never read it without tearing up a little or thinking of Mrs. Knoepfel. My own graduate and undergraduate female students have gone on to earn tenure at other universities, thanks to the example you set as a professional. Thank you for the gift Mrs. Knoepfel....one that I will never be able to repay. Give my love to Mr. K.-Rhea Steinpreis, PhD

July 6 at 9:56 AM

FA

**Fr. Amal** lit a candle in honor of Selma.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to the family of Selma. May her soul rest in peace.  
Fr. Amal.

July 7 at 2:56 PM





## Tribute Wall

**Selma T. Knoepfel**

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**Jean E. Delauche** posted:

How sad to know one of the best people ever is no longer with us. I had some great times with Selma and Gerry at their home and with their good friends the Freiburger family. Selma and Gerry will remain alive in the hearts of many. My condolences to Selma's family and all who knew and loved her.

July 7 at 10:17 AM



**Terri Schulz** posted:

As I posted her information on our Class of 1976 Facebook Group page I had to type her name and as I typed it I remember her spelling it for our science class as she had written it on the chalk board. She was a great teacher and community member, she will be sadly missed and missed by many. What a legacy for our community to have both her and Jerry. Terri Schulz Waupaca WI Class of 1976

July 7 at 7:00 AM



**Gwen Weisbrod** posted:

Mrs. Knoepfel will always be one of my favorite teachers. It was great to have a strong woman early on in the sciences! What a great influence. I have to say I know I was the teacher's pet in that class...I fell asleep one time in her class...and instead of getting reprimanded...she rushed over and felt my forehead because she was truly concerned I was sick! What a great woman! Gwen Weisbrod

July 7 at 5:33 AM



**Ryan Reisman** posted:

"You're my best girl, and nothing you do is wrong. I'm proud you belong to me." Selma was my 7th science teacher the same year the middle school music program loaned me out to the high school to play Young Patrick in Jerry's "Mame." She gave me a hug and kiss on closing night at curtain call when I gave her flowers from the cast. The play didn't make me famous, but that kiss on the cheek from Selma made me almost legendary. She was a wonderful teacher, stage mom, and a powerful force who brought music, science, learning and pride to the souls and minds of so many of us. "Place your chairs beneath your tables, please. You're excused." I love you, Mrs. K. Ryan (Malone) Reisman her student, 1978-79, and always her Patrick Las Vegas, Nevada

July 7 at 5:06 AM



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RM

**Regina-Gina Batten Marsden** posted:

I still share memories of my experiences in Mrs. Knoepfels class with my kids. She demanded and received respect. I especially loved her classroom rules that she would run through at the beginning of the year. " A chair has four legs. We will use all four legs. This is a faucet. We do not flick water from the faucet." If she ever witnessed anyone just pulling the paper towel out of the dispenser without using the hand crank, she would light up that classroom! Selma liked me for some odd reason. I liked her too. Maybe it was because not one time did I ever forget to write her name on my papers, and not one time did I ever spell it wrong. KNOEPFEL.

July 7 at 4:36 AM

ML

**Michele Larsen** posted:

I was in Mrs. Knoepfel's 7th grade science class (1985-86), which I enjoyed. I always looked forward to that class and learned so very much. On tests she always required the class to write her name correctly and she would mark our papers with a stamp of her name written in German. I loved how she kept her hankies up her shirt sleeve. Mrs. Knoepfel was one of the great teachers of all times and you were lucky to be in her class. God bless. Michele (Buck) Larsen

July 7 at 3:31 AM

JT

**Jim Thompson** posted:

"Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." This quote from Wittgenstein speaks well of Selma -- though silent she was not. She was the wind beneath many wings. She came into her own at her 80th birthday -- a coming out party of sorts; just Selma again - and what power and wowza she had. I was delighted to be there for the surprise. I am still delighted to be her friend. A friendship that guides me in her own wry way: "You are not my problem any more! I'm retired." That was one of the last things she said to me. And we laughed so so SO hard. OMG! K N O E P F E Lxo Jim Thompson

July 6 at 7:44 PM

DF

**Deb Boyer Fenske** posted:

Selma was one of my favorite teachers and later became one of my favorite people. Selma's tough exterior had a beautifully warm interior!! I'm so happy she and Gerry are together again. May God bless them both. I will miss you "Mrs. K".

July 6 at 5:39 PM



## Tribute Wall

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**Wayne Vestal** posted:

What wonderful memories we have of these two beautiful souls. Wonderful friends, great people. I am sure Selma and Jerry are sharing a martini and planning their next trip! God Bless you Selma, Wayne and Laurie Vestal

July 6 at 4:14 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Dearest One Casket Insert to the Knoepfel family.



July 6 at 2:10 PM



**Stacey Stephens** posted:

No one who had Selma as a teacher will ever lean back on a chair, lifting the two front legs off the ground, without hearing her voice say "Please utilize all four legs of the chair, until a two legged chair is invented." The world has lost a wonderful soul-I will sleep better knowing that she will once again dance with Jerry, and have drink together. I loved her like family. And I know that I have another guardian angel watching out for me. Stacey Stephens Her student 1979-80 Boston, Massachusetts

July 6 at 12:54 PM



**Pionke Family (Bill, Karen, Megan, Will, Corey And Brennan)** sent a Blooming Garden Basket to the Knoepfel family.



July 6 at 12:47 PM



**Joni Radley** posted:

What a joy it was to know, learn from and work with Selma (and Gerry). She was a vibrant lady and will be greatly missed! So glad they are now reunited. Joni (Strebe) Radley

July 6 at 9:56 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

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



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