



Jean Gaumnitz Gruber

December 17, 1940 - June 17, 2022

Jean Gaumnitz Gruber was born on December 17, 1940 in Washington, D.C. She was a uniquely intelligent and fiercely loving person. Her entire life was exemplified by her strong belief in education as the great equalizer and social studies as a critical part of understanding the importance of elections and the issues facing our State and our Country. Jean taught in the Montgomery County Public School System for 21 years with additional experience teaching in Prince George's and Baltimore counties as well as Western Illinois University. In addition to teaching social studies and government in particular, she taught many classes in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Jean finished her teaching career at Walter Johnson High School in Montgomery County.

Jean graduated from Gettysburg College in 1962 where she was awarded the honor of election to the Phi Beta Kappa honors fraternity. She further obtained a masters degree from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (UNC) in 1965. Her lifelong love of learning led her to also take graduate level classes in teaching, reading, crosscultural studies, and methods of teaching ESOL at the University of Maryland College Park.

Almost 62 years ago, Jean met her husband Robert Gruber at UNC. They became partners for life and after moving back to Maryland and having children, in 1970, they became members of the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Kensington, Maryland. She taught Sunday School at Cedar Lane for 10 years and served on the Church's religious education, adult programs, and Kiplinger committees. Jean and Robert also had great experiences as a part of a Cedar Lane dinner discussion group. Never ones to remain inactive, after moving to Annapolis, Maryland, Jean and Bob also joined the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis (UUCA). She belonged to a covenant group, a book group, and worked at the UUCA summer camp for 8 years. After moving to Annapolis, she also volunteered as a tutor at the Homework Haven in Woodside Gardens and taught citizenship classes at the Center of Help.

Jean was never a person who merely "talked the talk" about what she felt was important.

Forever engaged in what she believed to be right, Jean along with her husband Bob, made get-out –the–vote calls, knocked doors to support candidates, participated in innumerable rallies and marches both in D.C. and in Maryland which included efforts to preserve women’s rights and enact stronger gun control laws.

Before she passed, Jean said she was so very grateful for the wonderful life she had lived. She took so much joy in many trips to Ocean City, Maryland with Bob and family and friends. The annual “Camp Ocean City” with the grandsons was a fun and exciting treat for all. Always one to find fun everywhere, she continued boogie boarding in the ocean until the age of 80 and had traveled all over the world on various adventures with Bob.

Jean was the matriarch of the Gaumnitz family and tremendously missed members of her immediate family who passed before including her parents, Walter and Agnes Gaumnitz, her older brother Gordon Gaumnitz, and her younger brother Glen Gaumnitz. She also strongly loved all her nieces and nephews: Page Miller, Holly Adolph, Gail Goering, Tamatha and Amber Gaumnitz, John Gaumnitz, Star Gaumnitz Bogenschultz, and Carrick Gaumnitz. Jean was determined to be the family connection after her brothers passed and she went to every wedding of Gordon and Glen’s children and grandchildren.

For many years, both Jean and Bob also loved and remained close with her sister-in-laws, Bettie Crow, Bonnie Orrison, and Beatrice Bastiany. As important to her as family, were the Lawson family, her best friend Sharon Lawson and her husband Chuck Lawson, and their children, Charlie Lawson and Jennifer Lawson Beppele.

Jean took great joy in her love of family and friends and could not have loved her four grandsons more. Jean is survived by her husband of almost 59 years, Robert Gruber, her daughter Laura Griffith and her husband Jack Griffith, her daughter Vicki Gruber and her husband Tom Lewis, her son Mark Gruber and his husband Chuck Dinsmore, and her beloved grandsons Luke and Nick Griffith, and Ben and Will Lewis.

We are all better in immeasurable ways for Jean Gaumnitz Gruber and we are less for her absence. God bless you Jean, Aunt Jean, Mom, and Grandma.