



Yvonne Borowska

January 12, 1938 - November 8, 2019

Yvonne Borowska was born in Poland right before the outbreak of WW2, crossing Europe as a refugee with her parents and sister. Their journey eventually brought them to the United States in 1952, where the family settled in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Yvonne became the first woman in her family to go to college, graduating from Douglass College, Rutgers University with a Bachelor of Arts in German in 1959. She earned a Master's in German Literature in 1961 at the University of Kansas and completed all but her dissertation for a Ph.D. She taught at Southeast Missouri State College, returning to New Jersey to teach at Rider College before joining the Bridgewater-Raritan School District. There she taught German language, literature, and culture to 6th through 12th graders for over two decades, and developed a foreign exchange program with a school in Germany. She supported potential wherever she saw it and was loved by her students and colleagues alike, inspiring others with her love of language. She earned accreditation as a translator, subsequently introducing works of East German writers to English speakers.

Yvonne was a voracious reader and lover of theater, art, history, music, and nature. After their move to Naples in 2000, she and her husband, Witold Mechlinski, were often to be found at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, tracking its seasonal changes. Their travels took them to Alaska, France, Austria,

Germany, and Poland, but when at home she thrived on discussions with Great Books groups and delighted in playing Scrabble and Bananagrams in both English and German.

She died peacefully at home on November 8, 2019 at 81. She is survived by her beloved partner and husband of 50 years; her sister, Ursula J. Frey of Sarasota, Florida; her daughter and son-in-law, Astrida and Stephen Schaeffer of North Berwick, Maine; and her grandchild Helena Schaeffer of Boston, Massachusetts.

Should friends desire, memorial donations in her name may be made to the Alzheimer's Association at alz.org.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall



“ *Yvonne Borowska*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM

MM

“ In 7th grade in 1982 when we were picking languages, the principal called me down to the office and told me that my first choice French was too easy and I should take the most difficult language, German, since I was a top student. I was fooled by my ego into taking German and met the most influential teacher and one of the most influential people in my life. I chose the German name Gretchen for the class, got to have an exchange student and go to Kaiserslautern for the junior year exchange (first person in my family to get a passport but Frau Brau made my parents comfortable with it). 6 years with the same teacher. And Frau Brau (as we called her) taught us so much more. We were living through the Cold War and had someone who taught all of us about European history that had brought us to that point. I went on to Douglas College and decided I might as well keep up that German as a second major, studied abroad and got to travel through the Eastern Bloc. Came back and told her all about it. and everything she still instilled in me about why they learn about other cultures and people and oh yes the languages (I was never good at speaking German I'm pretty good at writing it based on the grammar book that I still have on my shelf but I got in seventh grade) . But she taught everyone her class so much more. I never saw anyone in her class yell or get upset. She always seem to know what was going on with everyone and always demanded kindness. Not by actually saying be nice but just her presence and how she treated us all at every young ages that we were capable of thinking about really big things and to have viewpoints on them. And most of us took her class for six years. So now Frau Brau, I wish you could know that I often get to speak about the globalization of our economy. And my speech always starts Talking about you and how important it is to give children a worldview. And you would laugh out loud if you knew why I get asked to do speeches. Seven years ago I was appointed the Honorary German Counsel for North Carolina. I have Germans in my office a couple times a week and always at least one asked me how did you end up in this position? And I tell them about the beginning of my connection which was with you. See you at the next Kaffeeklatsch.

Margaret Rosenfeld (Peggy Monte) - April 15, 2021 at 01:08 AM

HH

“ So sorry to hear this news. Yvonne was a mentor to me when I first came to Bridgewater and took over her German classes for a few months. We enjoyed a professional and a social relationship for many years when we taught together at the Middle School.

Hilary Helmy - December 03, 2019 at 09:39 PM

BM

“ We enjoyed a friendship when I shared my classroom with her at Hillside School. I admired her intellect and enthusiasm for her students.

Barb McCarter - November 13, 2019 at 04:26 PM