



Dr. Mae (Wiest) Barnhart

April 16, 2011

TRAVERSE CITY — Dr. Leona Mae (Wiest) Barnhart, 70, of Traverse City, died Saturday evening, April 16, 2011, after a long battle with cancer, at Henry Ford Hospice in Southfield, with her family at her side. Leona, the eldest of three, was born in Detroit on Sept. 14, 1940, to Mary and Roy Wiest. She received her bachelor's degree and teaching certificate from Wayne State University. She earned her master's degree in Reading Education from Michigan State University, and earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum Development from Michigan State University in 1979. Leona began her long education career in the Detroit Public Schools. Upon moving to Traverse City with her family in 1971, she continued as a teacher with the Traverse City Area Public Schools until her retirement in 2001. Leona was passionate about the power of education and the impact it has on individuals and communities. As the Director of Adult Education from the mid '80s to early '90s, she was instrumental in the growth of programs such as alternative high school education for teens, a teen mother program with integrated day care, programs for local tribes and educational services for the local jail. Leona was active throughout her life with Rainbow for Girls, both in Detroit and Traverse City. She was a longtime member of the Order of Eastern Star Chapter #147 in Traverse City. She was also a member of Central United Methodist Church. Leona was a devoted mother, grandmother and friend to many. Her caring nature and strength of spirit was an inspiration and comfort to many. She had a marvelous sense of humor and was a joy to converse with. She loved to travel, covering North America from New Foundland to Alaska, across the United States and as far as China. She spent her weekends, summers and retirement travelling to visit her three children and five grandchildren. She proudly proclaimed her greatest life interest was her family. She is survived by her brothers, James Wiest, of New Foundland, and John Wiest, of Arizona; her son, Thomas Barnhart, of Ohio, his wife, Sylvia Rombis and children, Alexis and Eric; her son, Terence Barnhart, of New York, his wife, Helen Lee and daughter, Fiona; and her daughter, LeAnne Coulter, of Michigan, her husband, Jonathan Coulter and children, Alexander and Cassandra. Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday, April 22, at Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 23, at Central United Methodist Church. Memorials may be directed to the Traverse City Area Public Schools STEP Program, the Munson Healthcare Women's

Cancer Fund or Women of Wayne at Wayne State University. Please view Leona's online guestbook at <http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com>. The family is being served by Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.