



## Phyllis Jean Archambeau

August 4, 1924 - January 6, 2018

Phyllis Jean (VanEenenaam) Archambeau of Rockford, Illinois, Traverse City, Michigan, and Stuart, Florida passed from this life January 6, 2018 at Munson Hospice House in Traverse City, Michigan. Phyllis was born in Zeeland, Michigan on August 4, 1924 to Mildred J. (Bertsch) and Julius H. VanEenenaam, Sr.

### “THIS IS MY LIFE”

According to Phyllis, the following are details and excerpts from her memories and life experiences.

Growing up in Charleston, West Virginia, Phyllis graduated from Stonewall Jackson High School in 1942 and attended Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia. After her family moved to Traverse City, where her parents owned and operated The VanEenenaam Hardware on Front Street, she completed her undergraduate education at the University of Michigan in 1945. She learned to fly in open cockpit planes used for aerobatics and earned her Airman “Wings” from the Civil Aeronautics Administration during the last year of World War II. She even had sky-diving experience! Way to go, Gma! Phyllis volunteered during school vacations at the USO in Traverse City serving cookies and treats to the service men and women. There, she met a young Navy radio-gunner who sparked her interest!

“Tetch” (as she was fondly remembered by Aunt Olive and Mildred) followed him to Texas (!) and married M. Donald Archambeau in “The Chapel” on the USNAS Corpus Christi. Travel was expensive in those days after the war, so no other family attended. The young couple honeymooned in Mexico where Phyl was sick the entire time. Ergo – she hated Mexican or spicy food!

Phyllis worked for the Navy for a year, and returned to Traverse City (and family) in 1946 to earn her Teaching Certificate and to deliver her only child – Lynn (named after Phyllis' college room-mate).

Phyllis' extensive career in education began as a pre-school teacher in Badger, Wisconsin near Madison where Don was earning his degree at the University of Wisconsin. She

continued in the pre-school setting at Rockford (Illinois) Day Nursery (eventually serving on the Board and as the United Way liaison). She moved on to the primary grades: first as a kindergarten and first grade teacher, Instructional Consultant for the Elementary Office of Education, Head Teacher, and finally as Summerdale Elementary School Principal. Phyllis dedicated many years to Rockford (Illinois) College as a tutor and teacher in the Reading Clinic and Learning Resource Center, and as a member of the Friends of the Library Board.

Phyllis was Director of Chapter 1 - Reading and Math (formerly known as Title 1) for over ten years and led the development of several projects: Books for Babes, Assured Readiness for Learning, Reading Recovery, Summer Reading Program, Computer-Assisted Instruction, and many Parent Programs such as Family Math Night. She wrote an "Innovative Grant" providing educationally and economically disadvantaged students with new learning methods and materials and made significant contributions at the Illinois State level developing policies relative to the administration of Chapter 1 programs. She held office as President of the Illinois Association of Chapter 1 Directors for an unprecedented two terms and was honored with the "THOSE WHO EXCEL" Award of Merit in the Administrator category, part of the "Teacher of the Year" program under the Illinois State Board of Education. She truly was an educator and administrator dedicated to the education of the "whole child."

Phyllis traveled extensively through-out Europe, the Orient, and South America investigating educational systems and procedures. She completed coursework at Northern Illinois University and the University of Illinois and earned her Master of Arts degree in Teaching from Rockford College in 1955.

Grandma Phyl retired from her life dedicated to education in January, 1994, and spent much of the next 6 years enjoying time with her mother, "Mid," in Michigan, Florida, and at the lake with sister, Marilyn. She became an active member with the First Congregational Church in Traverse City, Michigan, enjoying escapades with the "Fun-Timers" and participating in the "Care-Givers" ministry.

In 2001, Phyllis became a resident of Florida, and was proud of joining the "Sun Bird" population, traveling between Traverse City and Stuart, Florida. She enjoyed several years of activities with friends at Pierpoint Condominiums.

She was a Life Member of the University of Michigan Alumni Association, serving on the Board of Governors in Illinois. She was a member of Phi Delta Kappa and Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, Lambda State, Beta Gamma Chapter, taking part on the Legislation Committee. Phyllis contributed to numerous other professional associations. She was a past member of First Presbyterian Church in Rockford, Illinois where she served as an Elder and Session member.

Phyllis was pre-deceased by her parents, NanNan (Mildred Bertsch) and Grandpa Jule, (Julius VanEenaam, Sr.); Aunt Olive (Bertsch) Dodson; brother, Julius (Jim)

VanEenenaam, Jr. and wife, Sandra (Richard); and brother-in-law, Howard Fortney. Phyllis is survived by her sister, Marilyn(VanEenenaam Wideman) Fortney; her daughter, Lynn Ann (Jeff Vincent) Stam; three grandchildren: Katherine Stam-Carrelle, Kristopher (Michelle) Stam, and Kimberly (Gordon) Wilson; two Great-Grand-Men, CJ and Aiden Stam; two Step-Great-Grand-Young Ladies, Josie and Jade Wilson; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, co-workers and friends.

Following a visitation with the family, a Memorial Service will be held June 11, 2018 at 11:00 AM in the Chapel of the First Congregational Church, 6105 Center Road, Traverse City, Michigan with the Rev. Dr. Gary Hogue officiating. A Family Interment will take place in Oakwood Cemetery, Traverse City.

In lieu of flowers, Phyllis requested that memorial contributions be directed to First Congregational Church, 6105 Center Road, Traverse City, Michigan, 49686; Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, 250 E. Front Street, Ste 310, Traverse City, Michigan 49684; or First United Methodist Church, 1500 S. Kanner Hwy, Stuart, Florida, 34994.

# Events

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**JUN** **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

**11**

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First Congregational Church

6105 Center Road, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

**JUN** **Memorial Service** 11:00AM

**11**

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First Congregational Church

6105 Center Road, Traverse City, MI, US, 49686

# Comments

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“ I will always remember this wonderful lady. Condolences to the family. Dr. C. Picus

**Dr. Clhas. Picus** - June 10, 2018 at 04:33 PM

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“ Phyllis was our principal at Summerdale School and I had the privilege of working there as one of her teachers. She was always fair and practical to both students and staff as our administrator, with a touch of humor thrown in for good measure. Later, when she was the director of Title I Reading and Math, she again supported me. I will always treasure "Eet Smakelijk: A Collection of Recipes by Members and Friends of Junior Welfare League of Holland, Michigan," which she gave to me as a wedding gift. Please accept my sincere condolences on her passing.  
~ Cece Dahlgren

**Cece Dahlgren** - June 09, 2018 at 01:33 PM

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“ I began teaching elementary art in 1979, a position split among 4 schools including Summerdale. With Phyllis as principal, I learned to be part of a staff that was held to high professional standards, modeled from the top! Bless your family at this time.  
Kathie Bridges

**kathie bridges** - June 07, 2018 at 12:39 AM

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“ Mrs. Archamebeau was my kindergarten teacher at Summerdale ES in Rockford. I remember her kind heart and caring words. I'm now in my mid-60's and am the School Board President in Rockford. I will recognize her educational impact on the children of Rockford at our next Board meeting. Heaven has a new angel reading to kids.

**Kenneth Scrivano** - June 06, 2018 at 09:39 PM

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“ Mrs Archamebeau was my Kindergarten teacher at Summerdale School in Rockford IL in 67-68. As a first teacher, I remember her being dignified and garnering respect, but not scary.

**Renae Buck Peters** - June 06, 2018 at 12:41 PM

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“ Carole Oxlade lit a candle in memory of Phyllis Jean Archambeau



Carole Oxlade - January 23, 2018 at 10:56 PM

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“ We will miss Phyllis at both our church and the many lunches with "our group" at various restaurants following our 11:00 a.m. service. Her smiles and quick wit were always appreciated. It was particularly sad not to be able to deliver our homemade peanut butter fudge to her at Pierpoint this past Christmas. She always looked forward to the treat.

Stan & Juanita Marks

Stan & Juanita Marks - January 11, 2018 at 11:50 AM

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“ Phyllis was a Principal and Director of Title 1 in Rockford,IL-she was a dedicated,smart,and well-respected educator. I worked with Phyllis and had the utmost respect and love for her. We stayed in touch thru birthdays & Christmas cards-I send my heartfelt love to her daughter Lynn & grandchildren -Linda Wyatt,Rockford,Il.

Linda Wyatt - January 11, 2018 at 09:06 AM

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“ We had many good times together here at Pierpoint. Her wit and spirit live on with us. In loving memory, Sharon and Dick Walden

Sharon Walden - January 09, 2018 at 09:05 AM