



Norma G. Sperry

September 8, 1923 - November 5, 2016

Norma Gay Sperry, (1923-16) passed away peacefully after a brief illness on Saturday November 5 surrounded by family. The widow of Roger W. Sperry (1913-94) she was born in Pittsburgh, Kansas to Mendall Johnson, II and Eleanor Pugh Johnson. Her mother divorced and remarried Charles David Deupree and they moved to Wichita, Kansas where they ran a soda fountain/tobacco shop in the downtown area. She attended Wichita High School East graduating in 1941 and then attended Wichita University graduating with a BA in Biological Science in 1945. Known as "Pinky", she was an active member of Epsilon Kappa Rho. She was admitted to the University of Chicago where she pursued a doctorate in bacteriology receiving her MS in 1947. Her research involved developing a vaccine for typhoid resulted in being her accepted into Sigma Xi in 1949. She worked with Roger Wolcott Sperry on a couple projects and subsequently were married in December, 1949. A short time after the birth of their son, Tad, Roger became the Hixon Professor of Psychobiology at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California.. Norma took up the mantle of homemaker with the organization and precision that had marked her research. Throughout his career, Norma was a partner in the Roger's work which eventually won the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Physiology in 1953 for their understanding of the two hemispheres of the brain. She read papers, edited talks etc., while raising a family and keeping the home life intact and seamless. She was a two-time president of the Caltech Women's Club, and served on other committees at Caltech as well. Daughter Janeth Hope Sperry was born in 1963. Though Jan was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis at an early age, she led a vibrant and active life until she died of complications from a lung transplant in 2001. She and her mother were very close. Norma also found time to become a mental health counselor at the Pasadena Mental Health Center, a position she held for over 25 years.

Main Line Animal Rescue, PO Box 89, Chester Springs, PA 19425 or Legacy into Promise Campaign at Church of the Redeemer, 230 Pennswood Rd, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

Events

NOV **Memorial Service** 02:00PM
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Church of The Redeemer
230 Pennswood Road, Bryn Mawr, PA, US

Comments



“ With deepest sympathy to you all. I enjoyed dining with Norma frequently at the Quadrangle but I'm sorry that I didn't know about her involvement in scientific research. I would have been fascinated to discuss it with her!

Bea Durham Blackman

Bea Durham Blackman - November 14, 2016 at 10:57 AM