



Judith Wilcox

March 12, 1942 - March 3, 2018

Judith Wilcox, 75, of Sarasota, passed away Saturday, March 3, 2018, at the Tidewell Hospice House in Sarasota.

Judy was born on March 12, 1942 in Passaic, New Jersey to the late Virginia Robinson Harris Sheppard and Kenneth Harris. After graduating from Nutley High School and briefly attending Douglass College, Judy graduated from Montclair State College (now University) with a B.S. in Mathematics. Judy eventually obtained a Masters degree from Montclair State, and completed postgraduate work at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Columbia University, where she obtained her Doctorate in Education.

Judy devoted her professional life to education. Starting out as a teacher in the Newark and Nutley, New Jersey school districts, Judy transitioned to school administration when she left Nutley to work for Montclair Public Schools. Ultimately she became an assistant principal at Montclair High School. From the high school, Judy went on to become principal of several elementary schools in Montclair before returning to the high school to serve as principal during the 1985-86 school year. Judy then transitioned to the Superintendent's Office, where she served as an assistant superintendent for several years. Judy then left Montclair to serve in a similar capacity for Jersey City Public Schools for a few years before ending her career as the Superintendent of Schools for Pleasantville Public Schools in Pleasantville, New Jersey.

After retiring, Judy moved to Sarasota, or "Paradise" as she called it on her answering machine message. She was an active member of the Links and the Bethlehem Bible Church and met many wonderful people who became her closest friends. She also loved the theater and African American history, as well as traveling to Africa, China, the Middle East and many other places around the world. Judy also was very active in the formation of the Horizons Unlimited Christian Academy, which is an educational day care program run by the Bethlehem Bible Church.

Judy is survived by her sons Gary Wilcox and Neil Wilcox, daughters-in-law Wendy Clarke Wilcox and Donna Ramsay-Wilcox, and her three grandchildren, Jonathan Ramsay Wilcox, Justin Clarke Wilcox and Hayley Lynne Wilcox. She was preceded in death by her parents, including her beloved stepfather, Harold Sheppard, her sister, Alice Harris Overby, a son, Kenneth Harris Wilcox, and a grandson, Matthew Warren Wilcox.

A memorial celebration of life service will be held on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at 11 a.m. at Bethlehem Bible Church in Sarasota, with the Reverend Patrick Miller officiating. Immediately following the service, the family invites all who are able to join them for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Horizons Unlimited Christian Academy, 2674 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Sarasota, Florida 34234.

Tribute Wall

JH

“ Gary, Neil and the Wilcox Family: You have my sincere condolences in the loss of your mother. Judy was a best friend of my sister, Katherine Moore. I did not know her well, but from my sister and others who knew her, she was an esteemed educator, a strong leader and gift to her students. She loved her family and loved life, and will continue to be in the memory of many who knew her. Blessings.

Joylette Hylick - March 26, 2018 at 12:00 AM

LI

“ Judy was my Geometry teacher and tutor at Nutley High School (NJ). She also was a friend to the family. I was happy and blessed to know her. To her family, May God extend his loving hands towards u during this time of bereavement.

Lonnie Tomlin III - March 25, 2018 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ Judith was a wonderful lady who brought joy and friendship to all who knew her. She will truly be missed. During the many years I known Judith, not one day has passed that I have not thought of her with love in my heart. She was a great mother to her boys and friend to all. Gary and Neil are strong men today because they had a strong loving mother to show them the way. My prayers are with each of your families.

Charles Spain - March 25, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ To the family of Dr. Judith Wilcox. May you be reminded that your loved one will always be remembered for the significant contributions and time she sacrificed for assisting the birth of Horizons Unlimited Christian Academy. She genuinely cared about our children, their growth, development and academic success. We are grateful to have had her guidance and expertise.

Linda Ferdinand
Horizons Unlimited Christian Academy

March 23, 2018 at 12:00 AM

ST

“ Dr. Wilcox was dedicated to educating our children and lifting our people. She was a caring and supportive friend and I was blessed to be considered among them. Most importantly she was a loving Mother and Grandmother. Neil and Gary , God comfort you and the family, her love, guidance and memories will be with you forever. I know God welcomed her home with loving arms saying " job well done ".

Sharon Thompson - March 22, 2018 at 12:00 AM

JG

“ Gary, Neil and Wilcox Family
Our deepest sympathy in the loss of your Mom.
Judy was a beautiful person and truly loved her family and life.
She was a great educator in the Montclair school system.
A little over a year ago we reconnected with your mom, by telephone and email.
At a time like this friends share in your sorrow and want you know how much we care. Our prayers are with all of you.
John & Patricia Griffith, Williamsburg, Va.

John & Pat Griffith - March 20, 2018 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ Hello Gary and Neil,
You know my thoughts are with you and your families. Judy was my very special friend, sister and mentor. I will miss her always. She, Faith and I shared many rides, meals and meetings. Talked weekly and saw her this past summer so my memories will go on forever. Take heart and know she will be remembered by many. She was a force!

Katherine G Moore - March 20, 2018 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ To Gary & Neil, our deepest sympathy during this time and prayers to you both. We remember your mother as a wonderful mother of you both, esteemed educator and fine neighbor on Beside Street in Bloomfield, NJ.
Mrs. Adelpia Lucas, Caryl & James Lucas

Caryl Lucas - March 19, 2018 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ Dear Gary and Neil,
I spent 18 years as teacher and principal in the Montclair Public School System and mom and I were colleagues most of those wonderful years. Mom was a no-nonsense educator with a heart of gold. May your many precious memories help to sustain you as you begin your period of mourning.

Rest eternal grant to your servant Judith, O Lord
And let light perpetual shine upon her.
May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed,
Through the mercy of God, nor rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

The Rev Monroe Freeman - March 19, 2018 at 12:00 AM

MM

“ To Gary & Neil, My deepest and sincerest condolences go out to you and your families. You guys don't remember me. Your grandparents lived in my mom's house in Nutley...and your mother and your Aunt Alice were my role models. I loved your mom...lost touch after she left Montclair. Such a beautiful picture of her. Remember, when the Lord calls our loved ones home, he leaves a gift of memories in exchange. Memories are the legacy of LOVE! May she rest in peace!

Michele Mitchell - March 19, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ I offer my sincere condolences to Judith's two sons. I remember your mother as a passionate and dedicated educator, who cared for both students and educators in their pursuit of excellence. May you have comfort in the host of wonderful memories you must have of your mother.
Sincerely,
Joe Macaluso, MHS English Department

March 18, 2018 at 12:00 AM

NS

“ Our dear friend you will be missed.
Love,
Natalie & Vernon

Nataie Sievers - March 18, 2018 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ In loving memory of a wonderful person. We will love you and miss you always.

Jill Pendergrass Lynch - March 17, 2018 at 12:00 AM

LA

“*Dr. Wilcox was a treasure, a sparkling jewel. I met her when my son was in the NAACP Youth program and enjoyed her wisdom and wit. I would often see her at performances at the Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe and on one occasion she shared with me her story of coming to Sarasota. She told me of her three requirements for making Sarasota her home. One, a good hairdresser, two, a good doctor, and three, most importantly, a good church. I will cherish the good times I enjoyed with her. Sleep in peace, wonderful woman.*

Lauretta Anderson - March 15, 2018 at 12:00 AM