

Elizabeth J. Rocklin

Jul 30, 2022



Elizabeth J. Rocklin ASHBURN, VA — Elizabeth Jo Rocklin (Liz) passed away on July 22, 2021 in Ashburn, Virginia. A force to be reckon with, Liz lived an active life as an educator, counselor and social justice warrior. Liz was born in Duluth, MN in 1938 to Grace (Peck) and Sam Rocklin. The family lived in Spokane, WA and then Madison, WI where, when Liz was starting 10th grade, she met Stuart Rosenfeld. Liz and Stu were married on June 23, 1957, just one day before her 19th birthday. Her first “real job” was as a secretary to William Evjue, the editor and owner of Madison’s dominant newspaper, the Capital Times. He was wellconnected politically and Liz had the opportunity to meet John F. Kennedy when her boss was interviewing him. Stu’s career took them to many different places to live. In 1959 they moved to Sacramento, CA, where Mitch was born, and less than two years later Barry was born in 1961. They moved from California to Massachusetts to New York and then to Philadelphia, PA, where Rebecca was born in 1965. The 60’s brought more political awareness to Liz and Stu, who started reading and learning about John Dewey and Maria Montessori. Liz enrolled in a Montessori training certificate program in order to teach. Their interest in education reform and politics led them to move to Vermont in 1971, which was not a popular idea with their parents. Liz and Stu were hired to run an alternative school called The New School in Plainfield, VT. The job included a farmhouse right next door to the school for the whole family to live in, a pond for swimming and a large garden, all surrounded by the beautiful Green Mountains. Liz and Stu participated in a new food co-op and made lots of friends. They also organized the first Bar Mitzvah ceremonies ever held in Plainfield for Mitch and Barry. Goddard College was central to life in the small town of Plainfield and Liz went back to school and earned her BA in 1974. Liz and Stu divorced in 1977 and Liz stayed in Vermont with the kids, living in a farmhouse up Hollister Hill. Both Mitch and Barry were soon off to college but Rebecca was still school age. In an effort to “bribe” Rebecca to stay in Vermont with Mom, Liz created and founded the Washington County Community High School. It was a fully accredited high school that was taught by local community members with “hands-on” learning, group studies, and an individualized, innovative education plan. The principal of the school was Anthony Pollina, a long-time political activist who served in

the Vermont State Senate. Liz being Liz, secured Bernie Sanders to give the commencement address at Rebecca's graduation in 1983. Creating a school was only a part-time job for Liz, who also worked for Country Roads Counseling Services providing shelter to at-risk youths and runaways, an organization still in existence today. Liz stayed in Vermont for a few more years before moving to Washington, DC where she continued to help others and worked in education for over 25 years. Through her jobs at executive search services, Liz provided chief executive officer search assistance to more than 160 community colleges and districts throughout the country. She was highly respected by college trustees and executives for her commitment and tireless work. She was the first Director of Board Services for the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and worked to increase the recruitment of minority and women candidates for CEO positions within community colleges. Liz met Bill Pierce when she was living in DC and they were married on March 13, 1998. Liz and Bill later moved to Heritage Hunt in Prince William County, VA where they stayed active with friends, traveled on many cruises, and played golf as often as possible. After Liz's stroke in early 2018 they moved to Ashburn, VA in order to access support services and where they enjoyed watching golf and her "favorite" TV channel, MSNBC. Liz is survived by her children Mitch Rosenfeld (Lisa Berman), Barry Rosenfeld (Cara Stein), and Rebecca Draznin (Lee) as well as by her grandchildren Daniel and Adam (Mitch and Lisa), Jane, Kate and Anna (Barry and Cara), and Sarah, Elliot and Amanda (Rebecca and Lee), and by Bill's son Stuart Pierce and his wife, Barbara. In honor of Liz, please consider a donation to either of these organizations: City Year: https://secure.qgiv.com/for/cyiddp/restriction/?_ga=2.94547227.622103640.1658793546-1325423756.1658793546 Special Olympics of Virginia: https://support.specialolympics.org/a/virginia?ms=IDMP_DB&utm_source=donatebtn&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=IDMP Plans for an August 28th memorial as well as interment at Arlington National Cemetery (with Bill) will be posted at a later date. Cards, questions or memories to share can be directed to Rebecca at: rebecca@advanceconcepts.com or mailed to 10716 Burr Oak Way, Burke, VA 22015