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Lawrence University

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Professor Emerita Ruth Bateman Passes Away at Age 89

Posted on: October 30th, 2013 by Rick Peterson

Ruth Bateman, associate professor emerita of physical education at Lawrence University, lost a valiant battle with renal failure on her birthday, Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2013 in Hot Springs, Ark. She was 89.



Professor Emerita Ruth Bateman (1924-2013)

A native of Providence, Rhode Island, Ruth spent 34 years on the Lawrence faculty (1953-87), retiring as the chair of the physical education department. She was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree at the 1987 commencement ceremony.

Ruth coached the women's track team in its early stages as a varsity sport as well as the women's field hockey team. She also served as assistant director of the Buchanan Kiewit Recreation

Center when it opened in 1986. With the emergence of varsity intercollegiate sports for women, Ruth was instrumental in creating the organization Women In Support of Athletics at Lawrence and created its acronym, WISAL. She also spearheaded numerous student and faculty ski trips.

After she retired, Lawrence established the Ruth Bateman Award in her honor, which annually recognizes excellence in scholarship, athletic ability and leadership by a woman athlete.

She earned a bachelor's and master's degree from Boston University and taught in Laconia, N.H., and Denver, Colo., before coming to Lawrence.

Ruth was an avid skier, loved sailing and playing golf, badminton and bridge. She was a dedicated sports fan and rooted loyally for the Green Bay Packers, New England Patriots and Boston Red Sox. She was known for her quick wit, sense of humor and direct manner.

In the early 1950s, Ruth purchased land on Lovell Lake in Sanbornville, N.H., and later had her beloved cottage built there. She spent many of her summers there, enjoying the lake's beauty and being a fierce competitor in the weekly sailboat races. Prior to her retirement from Lawrence, she purchased a home in Hot Springs Village, Ark., where she built her dream home on Lake Desoto. In retirement she divided her time between her two "lakes."

A member of Village United Methodist Church, Ruth was preceded in death by her mother, Cora Proulx Taylor; her father, Harry Taylor; and her husband, Lewis C. Bateman. She is survived by her daughter, Robin Ruth Sturis of Punta Gorda, Fla.