



## Frances Mary (Eickstead) Johnson

April 2, 1931 - December 15, 2018

### Obituary

Frances M. Johnson, age 87, died peacefully on Saturday, December 15, 2018, at Oakwood Prairie Village in Madison. She was born April 2, 1931, to the late Evalyn (Parke) and Raymond Eickstead in Janesville, Wis., later growing up in Belvidere, Ill., and Durand, Ill. Her sister Barbara was three years older and after their mother died in 1952, they were surrounded by their caring aunts throughout their lives: Ruth Lane, Mila Protteau and Jean Miller.

A 1950 Durand High School graduate, Frances graduated in 1954 from Northern Illinois Teachers College in DeKalb, Ill. She fondly remembered when her great uncle Henry Parke stood in for father's weekend when she was at college. She married Ray W. Johnson June 12, 1955, in Rockford, Ill. at the Unitarian Church. A year later, they were off to New Jersey when Ray was drafted by the U.S. Army. They soon relocated to Alabama where Frances taught English and French at Butler High School in Huntsville, and where they made several lifelong friends. In 1958, they returned to Durand and on March 1, 1959, they moved to the farm on County Highway T in Rock County, Wis., where they lived for 55 years.

Frances resumed her career as an English teacher at Durand High School for many years, while also raising three daughters, managing a household and supporting the farm business. She cherished flowers, especially her rock

garden. In later years, she and Ray planted many varieties of peonies, inviting friends to enjoy the blooms in early summer.

Frances was a founding member of Unitarian Universalist congregations in Huntsville, Ala., and Janesville, Wis. She was a member of the League of Women Voters, worked for marital property reform in the 1970s, and served as a local poll worker. She helped form the predecessor organization of Compassion & Choices in Wisconsin. A lifelong learner, Frances was an active member of her neighborhood UW-Extension Homemakers group, now known as the Rock County Association for Home and Community Education. She was an Avon 4-H Leader in sewing and crocheting. She also volunteered for the American Cancer Society.

Frances's guiding principle was to treat all people with dignity, respect and kindness. Reading, music, gardening and discussing history and current events with friends were her passions. After retirement, Frances tutored English language learners in Brodhead as a volunteer. She enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren, whose fond memories include: tea parties, birdwatching, playing dress up, reading *Wind in the Willows*, arts and crafts projects, cooking, and playing with cats. She often told them, "Your education is something you will always have." All six grandchildren are University of Wisconsin-Madison graduates and Mikaela is working toward her doctorate degree at Michigan State University.

Frances is survived by her husband, Ray Johnson; their three daughters Daphne (Lloyd) Holterman, Nadine (Sam) Miller, Valerie (Jeff) Renk; six grandchildren Lauren (Jacob) Brey, Taylor Holterman, Carly (Ben) Wood, Eleanor Miller, Kyle Breunig and Mikaela Breunig, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, her sister, Barbara Fosler, and three aunts.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 11:30 a.m., Friday, December 21, 2018, with Mr. Ed Timmer officiating, at the D.L Newcomer Funeral Home, Brodhead, WI. Visitation will be held from 10:30 a.m. until time of the service at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the University of Wisconsin Initiative to End Alzheimer's or a charity of your choice. For the UW fund, note #112580053 on the check payable to UW Foundation and list Fran's name. Send to the family or UW Foundation, US Bank Lockbox, Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807.

The Johnson family would like to thank the staff at Oakwood for their compassionate care of Frances.

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Frances Mary (Eickstead) Johnson, please visit our floral store.

# Tribute Wall

DA

“ Thank you, Tom. Your memories are comforting to us all.

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**Daphne** - December 23, 2018 at 05:09 PM

TD

“ Hi Ray and family of Frances--I offer my condolences to all the family--she was my English teacher at Durand High School. One of the best teachers I ever had. I remember her well. She had a lot of energy and made sure that everyone was treated with respect . May she Rest in Peace and the family be proud of all she accomplished,  
Sincerely Tom Dolan

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**Tom Dolan** - December 23, 2018 at 02:27 PM