
**Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
On the Death of Professor Emerita Bernadine Peterson**

Dr. Bernadine Peterson, Professor Emerita of the School of Human Ecology, passed away on July 27, 2014 at the age of 90. She was born in Neillsville, Wisconsin on September 16, 1923; the daughter of Effie (Alt) Peterson and Bernhardt H. Peterson.

According to Bernadine, it was the opportunity to learn about vitamins and minerals, and their role in child development and human health at Neillsville High School that led her to pursue a lifelong career focused on improving the quality of everyday life through education. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1945 in home economics education and served as a teacher in several Wisconsin high schools for eleven years before returning to school to complete MS and PhD degrees in home economics education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1961.

Bernadine was mentored in academic s and leadership by Dean Francis Zuill, who oversaw the transition of what is now the School of Human Ecology from a department to a School, as well as a major building expansion. Following completion of the PhD, Bernadine had numerous career opportunities and initially joined the faculty at Kansas State University. In 1965, she returned to UW-Madison, attracted by the ability to continue to play a key role in implementing the University's land grant mission in her home state.

After her initial 1965 appointment at UW-Madison as a resident faculty member in home economics education, Bernadine chaired her department from 1967 - 1969. In 1969 she accepted a joint appointment with University of Wisconsin-Extension where, until her retirement in 1985, she served as Professor and District Program Leader for Family Living Programs in two state districts encompassing 17 counties; the southeast (urban Milwaukee and surrounding area) and south central (Dane County and surrounding region).

Bernadine was passionate about the land grant mission of the University and the importance of interpreting research so that it can be understood by lay audiences and used to improve the human condition. In her role as district program leader for Extension, Bernadine authored numerous publications designed to help the public address critical issues of daily living. And she worked with county Extension specialists to plan adult and community education programs that anticipated emerging family issues rather than simply attempting to ameliorate them reactively. Among her publications were: "Consumer Credit: Make It Work For You," "Getting Your Money's Worth," "Your Food Dollar," "Your Budget: Planning is the Key Word," "Choosing Parenthood," "Food Becomes You and your Baby (Diet in Pregnancy)", "It's Never Too Early to Think About Food Habits." In addition to translating issue-specific research for lay audiences, Bernadine was also an innovator in designing educational delivery strategies to meet community needs. Long before family-focused distance education became well-known and available, for example, she collaborated with Professor Charles Hennon to design, evaluate, and disseminate a packet-based learn-at-home delivery system to provide low-cost family life education for young families focused on parenthood, family management, consumer decision-making, credit, and nutrition.

Those who knew her appreciated Bernadine's willingness to lend a hand both professionally and personally. Bernadine served as advisor to the School's Alumni Association and was an active

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member of a number of professional and civic organizations including the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, the American Vocational Association, National Organization for Women, League of Conservation Voters, Wisconsin Women's Network, Wisconsin Historical Society, and the Association on American Indian Affairs. She was particularly pleased with the role she was able to play in helping Elizabeth Simpson, who later became Dean of the (now) School of Human Ecology, succeed in becoming the first female president of the American Vocational Association. While she was still able, Bernadine was known to shovel snow and fetch groceries for those unable to do so themselves. Her consideration of those around her also extended to the office where she would, for example, offer to eat lunch alone rather than with the regular office lunch group on those days she brought her particularly pungent cold pizza with anchovies. Following retirement, Bernadine was a generous benefactor for the School of Human Ecology and enjoyed personally meeting the students her scholarships supported.

In addition to her parents, Bernadine was predeceased by her sister, Carol Margaret. She was survived by her long-time friend and housemate, Jane Gruber (who has now unfortunately also passed), as well as Jane's sister, brother and sister-in-law and Jane's eight nieces and nephews whom Bernadine regarded as family; and many friends and colleagues. Bernadine's ashes were buried in the family plot in the Neillsville Cemetery. She will be greatly missed.

Respectfully submitted by the Memorial Committee:

Wendy L. Way, Chair

Constance Flanagan

Chere Gibson