



## Judith Pearson

May 2, 2024

Judith Anne Finn Pearson passed into eternal life on May 2, 2024. She was born in Basin, Wyoming, on March 16, 1944. She lived with her mother, Betty Lungren Finn, and grandparents, Oscar and Anna Lungren, in a log cabin near Basin while her father, Orin David Finn, served with the army in Europe in WWII. When Orin returned from the war in October, 1945, Betty and Judy moved with him to his hometown of Wray, Colorado, and settled near his parents, Otto (Jack) and Ruth Finn. Judy's sister Sandy was born the following year.

Judy graduated from Wray High School in 1961 and attended Nebraska Wesleyan University for two years. She transferred to Colorado State University, where she completed her Bachelor of Music and her Master of Arts degrees. Her major instrument for performance was the piano, and her minor instruments were organ and flute. She married Leonard Pearson in June, 1964, and they moved to Davis, California, where Judy began her career as an elementary music teacher. Her son Kirk was born in 1968 and her daughter Kirsten was born in 1971.

The family moved to Canberra, Australia, in 1972 to live for two years. In 1974 they moved back to the U.S., to Madison, Wisconsin, and in 1975 they settled in Fort Collins, Colorado. Judy and Leonard divorced in 1979.

Judy began teaching elementary music at Bennett Elementary School in Fort Collins in 1979 and continued at Bennett until she retired in 2004, also teaching Kindergarten and first grade. In 1990 she took a sabbatical trip to New Zealand in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange program to study Whole Language education techniques there. During the 2000-2001 school year she took another sabbatical trip around the perimeter of the contiguous United States, emailing Kirk photos and “lessons” of geographic and historic sites she visited to put on a website for her students at home to learn about (<https://www.horsetooth.net/eClassroom/> ). She later wrote and published a book about her experience, *Travels with Charlie Brown: A Woman’s Odyssey on the Edge*.

While Judy was teaching she was also a church organist for many years, first at Plymouth Congregational Church in Fort Collins, Colorado, later at American Baptist Church in Fort Collins, followed by First United Methodist Church in Fort Collins, and finally at First United Methodist Church in Loveland, Colorado. She also taught piano to students everywhere she lived for over 40 years. She also was the original accompanist for Centennial Children’s Chorus and sang with the Larimer Chorale for many years.

Judy had several hobbies. She enjoyed hiking and she climbed numerous “14’ers” in Colorado (fourteen-thousand-foot peaks). She completed the RAGBRAI (bike ride across Iowa) twice. She taught Kirk and Kirsten to ski cross-country and later downhill. During Spring Breaks and Summer vacations she took the family on lots of road trips in the U.S. in “Hermie” (Volkswagen Bus), “Vanna White” (white Volkswagen Vanagon), and later by herself in her Chevy S10 pickup to Alaska and Denali, riding a mail ferry boat up the Inside Passage, and in Charlie Brown (Tiger Provan motorhome). Judy eventually traveled to all 50 U.S. states and to 46 foreign countries on 6 continents (she and her travel buddy Nancy saw Antarctica up close from a cruise ship). Highlights of her travels include: walking along the Great Wall of China; hiking

up to Machu Picchu; seeing the Northern Lights in Iceland; visiting Moai on Easter Island; the Eiffel Tower; the Roman Colosseum; hiking the Milford Track on New Zealand's south island; standing at the base of Uluru (Ayers Rock); hiking to the bottom of the Grand Canyon; helping Habitat to build a hospital in Chiapas, Mexico; riding a camel at the Great Pyramid of Giza; sleeping in a bush tent in Zimbabwe; and visiting the birthplace of Mozart. Judy's other hobbies included photography, reading and book clubs, playing guitar in a guitar club, playing her flute with the Loveland Concert Band, and putting together puzzles.

Judy doted on her grandchildren and took them on fun adventures like camping weekends at KOA campground in her camper "Charlie Brown," museum visits, and dinner theater plays and musicals.

Judy was preceded in death by her parents Orin and Betty, numerous aunts and uncles, and some of her cousins. She is survived by her children Kirk (Michelle) and Kirsten (Dean) grandchildren Myra, Alex, Jordan, Drew, Rylan, Owen, Colin, her sister Sandy Davis (Dale) and their family, multiple cousins, and her classroom newt, Isaac Newton (still going strong after 30+ years).

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life Service

JUN 8. 10:30 AM (MT)

First United Methodist Church Loveland  
533 Grant Avenue  
Loveland, CO 80537  
[info@goesfuneralcare.com](mailto:info@goesfuneralcare.com)

# Tribute Wall

MH

“ Judy was a neighbor and workmate at Bennett Elementary. We also had daughters the same age and I became Kirstin's Camp Fire leader.

*Judy's was a joy to know and will be greatly missed.*

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**Marilyn Hackett** - June 06, 2024 at 04:00 PM

NL

“ Judy was a joy to know and we are proud to call her a friend with a friendship that started in the 70s and continued into 2007 and more. She was talented in many ways, music, writing, teaching, and her many outdoor adventures. Every holiday season, we enjoyed receiving her annual letter. We were guests in her homes and she in ours over the years. We were so sadden to know of her decline and now she has passed on to be in heaven and at Peace. Judy, we love you today and forever.

*To her children and grandchildren, may all of times she shared with you be remembered and tell the stories with love. We extend our sympathy. Nancy and Lon Lewis*

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**Nancy Lewis** - June 04, 2024 at 11:19 AM

WC

“ Mrs. Pearson was Lacy's kindergarten teacher. Lacy adored her and she taught her to love school and music. After Lacy died, she told me that Lacy would visit her from time to time. She was also Kenyan's first grade teacher. I believe she is one of the reasons both of my children wanted to become elementary teachers. I can't Thank you enough Judy for all you have done for my children, the children's lives you touched and our community. Say hi to Lacy. Love and light on your next journey. xoxoxoxo

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**wendy cohen** - May 20, 2024 at 10:11 AM

JP

*We are so sorry for your loss, Judy was one of our neighbors and such a sweet person.*

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**Judi and Dean Place** - May 26, 2024 at 12:04 PM

RF

“ I love my cousin Judy. My wife, Elese and I had many opportunities to visit her. We shared laughs and meals at her favorite restaurant "Olive Garden". On or near holidays we would take her various types of chocolate and balloons. She always had a drawer full of the good stuff. We enjoyed her 80th birthday party where the majority of her gifts, yes you guessed it was chocolate. Through our visits we were able to become closer to her children and grand children. The world has lost a beautiful, talented, loving soul. We will meet again in the Golden City.

*Rick Finn*

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**Rick Finn** - May 20, 2024 at 12:16 AM

VA

“ Hi, my name is Vanessa and Mrs. Pearson was my kindergarten teacher 40 years ago. She was so kind, loving and a wonderful teacher. I know she will be missed deeply. My condolences to the family. ❤️

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**Vanessa** - May 19, 2024 at 01:22 PM

LM

“ I was sad (but grateful) to have encountered Judith when she was my daughter Christen's kindergarten teacher at Bennett elementary school in Fort Collins. She was the absolute perfect person to introduce Christen to classroom education--she is now, herself, a long time elementary special education teacher in the Colorado Springs area. I was delighted to hear about Judith's background and also about her adventures as a musician, reader, photographer and more. Her's was obviously a life well-lived. My sympathies to her children and grandchildren. What a lovely human being!

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**Lisa McCann** - May 18, 2024 at 09:58 PM

SR

“ Sorry to hear of Judy's passing. Many a summer night with the windows open, we were privileged to listen to a 'private' piano concert. She was such a sweet neighbor.

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**Steve and Mary Ann Romans** - May 18, 2024 at 12:37 PM