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PROVIDENCE

GOLDBERG, NORMA J., 82, died Monday, September 10, 2012 due to complications with Alzheimer's disease, but lived her life full of passion and compassion for children in need and justice for those who are oppressed. Born June 4, 1930 in Worcester, MA, she was a daughter of the late Karl Lewis and Celia (Silverman) Goldberg and the former wife of the late psychologist Jay Marvin Kaplan.



She is survived by her children, her son, Samuel David Kaplan and her daughter, Suzanne Nicole Kaplan; her sisters, Ruth

Shaffer resident of Israel and Sylvia Orodener, PhD and her husband Norman Orodener, Esq.; nieces, Dr. Judith Orodener, Karen Koffink, Lisa Press; nephews, Joshua and Daniel Orodener, Esq., Rick Shaffer, Esq., Jimmy Kaplan and their spouses; many great nieces and nephews; as well as many beloved friends and children she has had the privilege to teach.

Throughout her childhood she was very involved in Camp Young Judea and later became a camp counselor, influencing her love of nature, teaching and strong sense of Judaism. She loved dancing, winning a "Jitter Bug" contest with her high school sweetheart, Gene Rosenberg; playing the piano, music, art, theatre, poetry and history. She was also a gifted writer and over the years had several letters to the editor published in The Providence Journal as well as a letter to Anne Landers.

In 1947 she graduated from Classical High School and studied early childhood education at Brandeis University and Clark University, earning her BA in English. She graduated in 1952 with the Highest Honors. She completed her graduate studies at Rhode Island College and in fact throughout her academic career she received High Honors.

Norma was a pre-school teacher for 30 years at The Jewish Community Center where she formed a Teacher's Union and then worked at Providence Head Start for 25 years. She was an active and committed board member of Childhood Lead Action Project and predated the organization working hard to help pass legislation for the 1991 Lead Prevention Act. She was also a member of the ACLU, Amnesty International, NAACP, Women for a Non Nuclear Future and supporter of Carriage House and gave annually to the Native American College Fund, as well as donating her time and money to many other organizations and charities too various to name.

Norma was a political, social and human rights activist and a huge advocate for children. In the mid-70's Norma "fought City Hall and won" when she prevented the City from destroying the woods behind her family's home. She was an Active member of the Unitarian Church being drawn to Buddhism along with her strong sense of Judaism. She could also be seen attending Quaker meetings from time to time.

Norma J. Goldberg was a tiny Jewish woman with a huge presence and a great sense of humor, but of all her talents, her true life's work can be seen walking all over the streets of Providence in the faces of the children she loved and loved to teach. That is her true legacy.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her memory to Childhood Lead Action Project, 1192 Westminster St. Providence, RI 02909 or Children's Friend Head Start, 153 Summer Street Providence, RI 02903.

A Memorial Service will be held on Sunday, January 27, 2013 at 1:00pm at Sugarman-Sinai Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope Street Providence, RI 02906.

For information and condolences, www.sugarmansinai.com