

Ruth Vars Barnes June 16, 2023

(August, 2023, still waiting for official obituary from the college)

Judy Ashworth remembered her 4 years as Ruthie's roommate which started in Buckland Hall where they "slid their desks together to do their work facing each other, chewing bubble gum loudly!" After college, they were in each other's weddings and though they moved far apart, would see each other regularly on trips back east. Later in life, Ruth soldiered through many heart problems. Husband Jim said that after she died, he looked out the window, and there was a double rainbow — one belonged to Ruth and the other to daughter Caroline's husband. A lovely thought! After her husband died, Judy moved from large farm in Maryland to Cambridge, then to Belmont, MA to be near daughter Emily.

Here is her Obituary, which we think was written by her daughter Caroline.

Ruth Vars Barnes, '61, of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, died on June 16, 2023, of heart failure. Born in Westerly, Rhode Island, she was Valedictorian of her graduating high school class. A chemistry major at MHC, she graduated magna cum laude, and was thrilled that both of her daughters also graduated from MHC (Caroline Barnes '88 and Deborah Barnes Hardaker '93).

Ruth later earned an MA in Teaching from Harvard University. She loved learning, and earned many accolades during her academic career.

Ruth met husband James (Jim) Barnes on a blind date arranged by Jim's cousin, a friend and colleague of Ruth's. On June 26, 2023, they would have been married for 58 years.

Ruth taught high school chemistry, and later, because of concerns about the environment, started a successful Shaklee business with Jim, sharing "products in harmony with nature and good health."

Ruth and Jim raised their daughters in Acton, Massachusetts, and then moved to Charlestown, Rhode Island, where they enjoyed a beautiful view of the ocean. They later moved to Glenwood Springs to be closer to their daughters, trading the ocean view for one of the mountains.

Ruth was also active in the United Methodist Church over her lifetime. Ruth was warm and genuine, thoughtful and loving, and simply brilliant. She was a doer - her favorite day was March 4th, because it is the only day of the year that is also a command! Ruth was also a wonderful listener and communicator. Friends and family will greatly miss the heartfelt cards she sent for every special occasion.

