



## Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt

May 10, 1925 - July 13, 2018

A devoted wife, mother, sister, educator and community activist, Phyllis Eloyce (Ash) Seabolt died peacefully at her residence at Woodside Assisted Living on Friday, July 13th. Phyllis, the oldest of four children of Carl Emerson and Gladys Irene (Stewart) Ash, was born May 10, 1925 and grew up in Dowagiac, MI. Phyllis' parents set a wonderful example of fine character, high expectations, strong faith and civic involvement that she and her siblings all aspired to emulate. She was a studious high schooler, vice president of the junior class, member of the Camp Fire Girls Club, the home economics club and glee club. When she completed high school in 1943, Phyllis attended Western Michigan College where she majored in education to become a "Home Economics" teacher. At Western she continued her involvement in social justice events in the Kalamazoo community and on campus where she served as a class officer in her junior year. When Phyllis graduated in 1947, African Americans had not been allowed to teach at the secondary level in Kalamazoo. Dr. Loy Norrix, who was then the Superintendent of Kalamazoo Public Schools, challenged the segregated practice and assigned Phyllis to teach at Vine Street School that merged with Washington Middle School to become South Junior High School.

Phyllis taught at South for 21 years. In 1970, she returned to Western but by this time Western had become a University and she was now a faculty member. Seventeen years later she retired from the Department of Family and

Consumer Sciences in the College of Education and Human Development, having spent a total of 38 years in the classroom.

While Phyllis had a passion for teaching, after retirement she refocused her energy on community engagement in several ways. She was active with Saturday Eves Book Club, Delta Sigma Theta (public service sorority) and Delta Kappa Gamma (honorary society for women educators) and the Kalamazoo Association of Retired School Personnel. In the community she worked in two food pantries sponsored by Loaves and Fishes, one located at Ministry with Community and the other at Bronson Park. Phyllis, along with Betty Floyd and other community supporters, worked to establish the private collection of over 3000 books on the African American experience that belonged to Mary Mace Spradling, (the first young adult librarian at the Kalamazoo Public Library), The collection was donated to the Arcadia Campus of KVCC and is considered the finest collection of books in Southwestern Michigan.

During her early retirement she and her husband Allen, enjoyed traveling the country from the east coast to Alaska, Hawaii and the Caribbean. After the death of her husband, Phyllis moved to Friendship Village where she continued to participate in learning experiences including the Resilience Project, a program developed to provide mentoring relationships between residents and freshmen students at Western Michigan University, who are enrolled in the Seita and Kalamazoo Promise Programs.

Phyllis was preceded in death by her parents, husband and brother Rolland.

She is survived by her son, Allen Jr., step grand-daughter Quinn; sisters, Carolyn Tate and Martha Warfield; sister-in-law, Julia Ash; six nephews, two nieces; four great nieces, two great nephews, along with many friends.

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS: The family requests donations be made to the Phyllis E. Seabolt Scholarship Endowment in the College of Education, Western Michigan University or to the Stewart Family Reunion Education Scholarship Fund.

# Cemetery Details

## **Mt. Ever-Rest Cemetery (S. Westnedge Avenue) at 1:30 p.m.**

3941 S. Westnedge Avenue  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

# Previous Events

## **Visitation**

JUL 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
212 S. Park Street  
Kalamazoo, MI

## **A Memorial Service In Loving Memory Of**

JUL 20. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
212 S. Park Street  
Kalamazoo, MI

## **Luncheon Following Services**

JUL 20. 12:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
212 S. Park Street  
Kalamazoo, MI



# Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt*

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ *Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt*

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ *Mrs. Seabolt, I want to thank you for the positive impact that you made in my life at South Jr. High back in the day. I pray that I will see you again; so that I can tell you all the details. I'm good, but I still can't make biscuits.*

*Loving Out Loud.. RIP Mrs. Seabolt.  
Henrietta*

Henrietta Holland - September 29, 2018 at 03:47 AM



“ *Such a classy woman. I had her for Home Economics at South Jr. High School. She taught me to sew an apron and to cook. When I look back at all of the teachers I had from kindergarten through high school, there are only a few who stand out as the teacher who had an impact in my learning. Ms. Seabolt is definitely one of the teachers on a short list. Nothing but class. Linda Szekely Kellum*

Linda Kellum - July 25, 2018 at 06:44 PM

MV

“ *Mignon Vincent lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt*



Mignon Vincent - July 19, 2018 at 02:57 PM

CO

“ *Cheryl Owens-Nebedum lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt*



Cheryl Owens-Nebedum - July 19, 2018 at 07:28 AM

CO

*Amazing Amazing woman. I am so glad she was my Home Economics teacher. She gave me so much more than what occurred in the classroom. A true role model and nurturer. Even when my aprons did not turn out quite right in sewing class, she always managed to make me feel special in spite of. You will truly be missed, but your legacy will live on forever and ever. Love and peace to the family of Mrs. Seabolt.*

Cheryl Owens-Nebedum - July 19, 2018 at 07:31 AM

EF

“ *Earline Fields sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt*



Earline Fields - July 18, 2018 at 09:02 PM

DH

“ Dear family members sorry to hear about your lost. I always heard wonderful stories about Mrs. Seabolt. She may be gone but her legacy and the contributions she made will live on forever. May the peace of the Lord be with you all. Diana & Claudio Hernandez

Diana Hernandez - July 18, 2018 at 02:44 PM

AS

“ Alma Snell lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt



Alma Snell - July 18, 2018 at 02:42 PM

DG

“ A wonderful teacher. She taught me to sew at South Jr. High about 50 years ago. She was always kind and patient with her students. R.I.P Mrs. Seabolt, you had a life well lived.

Darlene Gray - July 18, 2018 at 05:45 AM

AT

“ Alice Taylor lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt



Alice Taylor - July 17, 2018 at 09:44 PM

KD

“ Kevin Dunigan sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt



Kevin Dunigan - July 17, 2018 at 03:53 PM

RM

“ Al so sorry for the loss of your Mother thoughts and prayers.

RoxAnne Morgret - July 17, 2018 at 01:16 PM



“ Our prayers are with you Al. Phyllis was a quick wit women for her age. It was fun listening to her talk and tell stories. You lived a well life. Now you will have Allen once again. It was a honor to meet such a fine women.

Wanda Cavanaugh - July 17, 2018 at 12:09 PM

NH

“ Nanette Hickman sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Phyllis E. Seabolt



Nanette Hickman - July 17, 2018 at 09:28 AM

JP

“ Dear family -  
My deepest sympathy on the loss of Phyllis. I volunteered with Phyllis over the years on local political campaigns. And, I was working at Friendship Village when she moved there. It was nice to see her and visit with her. She was always such a pleasant person to be around.  
Sincerely,  
Judy Markusse Paget

---

**Judith Markusse Paget** - July 17, 2018 at 09:00 AM

WF

“ My heartfelt condolences to the family. She was a beautiful spirit filled lady. I also enjoyed her as my Home Ec. teacher.  
R. I.P Mrs Seabolt 😊



---

**Wendy Fields** - July 17, 2018 at 04:26 AM