



## BETSY ROSE WOLF-GRAVES

January 1, 1928 - June 6, 2017

Betsy Rose Wolf-Graves died on June 6th at The Atriums in Overland Park, KS. She was 89 years old. A memorial service will be at 10:00am Friday, June 16, 2017 at The Louis Memorial Chapel, 6830 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64131. In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions to (1) “DemocracyNow.org”: Listener sponsored news – US and international.

(2) “siliconvalleydebug.org”: This is a collective in San Jose of mostly minority youth that do art, write their own news, and provide support to people with problems with law enforcement. They do NOT provide legal advice, but they do help families and the accused work in ways that tend to get better treatment from the system.

She was born January 1, 1928, to Bess (Felsenberg) Wolf and Harry Ben Wolf Sr., in Kansas City, Missouri. She was confirmed in Congregation B’nai Jehudah in 1942 and graduated from Southwest High in the class of 1945. From there she went to the University of Colorado before transferring to University of Missouri in Columbia and graduating with a BA in English Literature.

In 1952, she married Frank Josephson. They had a daughter, Nan. In 1962 they divorced and Betsy went back to school and obtained a master’s in public administration at UMKC.

She worked at different anti-poverty programs in Kansas City in the 1960’s before joining the probation and parole office for the City of Kansas City, Missouri. In that capacity, she developed a “Volunteers in Probation Service (VIPS)” program to pair volunteers with probationers to help increase alternatives for constructive lives for the probationers while reducing recidivism.

In 1970 she met a 26-year-old US Air Force Captain, Spencer Graves. They were married on December 31, 1971. In 1976 Spencer left Kansas City to go to the University of Wisconsin-Madison to get a PhD in statistics. In 1977 Betsy moved to Madison, WI, where she got a Masters in Social Work.

In 1982 they moved to Santa Clara, CA, as Spencer got a job with Hewlett-Packard. Betsy found work with the Adult and Child Guidance Center in San José and became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW).

In the late 1990's she worked as an LCSW for O'Conner Hospital in San José. During the 1990s and 2000s, she became active with a Jewish Voice for Peace, the Green Party of Santa Clara County, the San José Peace and Justice Center, and Silicon Valley De-Bug. The latter "is a story-telling, community organizing, and advocacy organization" composed largely of minority youth and their families.

There she developed a system that helped youth snared in the criminal justice system avoid the harshest penalties typically applied to accused, who cannot afford adequate legal support. She introduced a social work and family therapy perspective to criminal justice. Part of this included getting families involved in preparing life histories that helped a judge see the support system available for convicted individuals; this in turn provided a basis for reduced sentencing. This program was so successful it achieved international recognition. Raj Jayadev, a lead organizer with De-Bug, has since taught this model of support at several places around the world, including in Moscow, Russia.

In 2012, she broke her neck in a fall. Her health continued to decline. In June of 2015, she and Spencer moved back to Kansas City.

She was preceded in death by her parents and brother. She leaves to mourn her husband, Spencer, daughter, Nan Josephson (Rick Bailey), grandson Bryan Bailey, and nephew Richard Wolf (Melanie Swaine).

# Events

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**JUN**   **Memorial service**                      10:00AM  
**16**

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Louis Memorial Chapel

6830 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO, US, 64131

# Comments

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“ I am so sorry to learn of Betsy's death. I am her first cousin Jay Wolf's son. She and I had spoken and corresponded on several occasions and I always enjoyed her very candid opinions on issues and her sweet attitude. I am so sorry we never got to meet face to face.

Spencer, I am so sad for your loss. Nan, you as well.

Love,

Chris Wolf  
Cjwolf@verizon.net

**Chris Wolf** - August 18, 2017 at 07:57 PM