



## Mary Ruth Snyder Childs

June 13, 1914 - April 30, 2020

Ruth Snyder Childs, long-time resident of Westminster Oaks in Tallahassee, FL died peacefully in her sleep on April 30, 2020, at the age of 105. She was born June 13, 1914 on a farm in the back hills of West Virginia, where her multigenerational family of 11 lived in a house without electricity, running water, or central heating. Ruth learned at an early age the importance of hard work and perseverance. Both of her parents were teachers, and they taught their seven children the value of an education. Ruth's mother sold eggs to finance her children's college educations.

Ruth attended West Virginia University, where she earned a degree in Home Economics and also met and married her husband of 47 years, Dr. William H. Childs ("Bill"), a professor of horticulture at WVU. They made their home in Morgantown, WV, where together they raised their four children.

Ruth had an unquenchable zest for life. Voted "most popular" in her high school class, she was always a "people person," enjoying the company of others and greeting friends and strangers alike with her ready smile and warm hospitality. Ruth and Bill were bridge enthusiasts, and they loved to entertain their friends with delicious dinners and fresh-brewed coffee, followed by hours of bridge-playing. Ruth had learned to make her "forum coffee" while a student at WVU, and to the end of her life she was proud of having once served coffee to Eleanor Roosevelt.

After Bill's retirement in 1972, Ruth and Bill moved to Heather Lakes condominiums in Dunedin, FL where they continued to play bridge and developed a habit of daily vigorous exercise walking. Ruth attributed her longevity to good nutrition and exercise. She always warned, "Don't let the rocking chair get you!" Ruth and Bill also began an annual tradition of weeklong family reunions for their children and grandchildren, who have remained close to her and to each other to this day. After Bill's death in 1981, Ruth stayed in Dunedin, continuing to play bridge and travel. She took each of her children on a trip of their choice as a 50th birthday gift. She relocated to Tallahassee in 1990 to be near her daughter Patty and her family.

Ruth had a magic touch with children, bringing her effervescent energy to teaching and inspiring young minds. More than anything else, she was devoted to raising her children, paying special attention to character development and introducing all of them to the joy of learning at a very early age. She taught each of them, and many other children, to play the piano and shared her profound love of classical music. Expecting everyone in the family to pitch in and help out with chores was Ruth's way of teaching her children the dignity of honest labor. To her many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Ruth was their beloved "Nana", who always had a ready lap, a story to captivate them, or a song to sing to them.

We shall never forget Ruth - beloved daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend to so many - whose love spanned seven generations. When asked how she wanted to be remembered, she said "Tell them I was an old workhorse who had a good sense of humor and loved her family dearly."

Ruth is survived by her children: Patricia (Dr. Clarence William) Applegate of Tallahassee, FL, Dr. Robert Childs of Freeland, PA, Dr. James (Rose Anne

Henry) Childs of Kittanning, PA, and Dr. Judith Childs (Hays) Butler of Wilmington, DE; her grandchildren and great-grandchildren: Clarence Bruce (Natasha) Applegate, Aurora Applegate of Moss Beach, CA; Dr. Mark (Emilee) Applegate, Melanie Applegate, Julianne Applegate, Tommie Applegate, Joseph Applegate, Benjamin Brooks, Ellie Brooks of Tallahassee, FL; Andrew (Jeanna) Childs, Abigail Childs, Allison Childs, Alivia Childs of Liverpool, NY; Erin Childs (Jesse Starflower), Riley Childs, Jordan Childs, Dyllan Ruth Childs of Pittsburgh, PA; Dr. Thomas (Rebecca) Childs, Isaac Childs, Anna Childs of Traverse City, MI; Lynn (Paul) Nelson, Nathan Nelson, Annabeth Nelson of Nashville, TN; Caitlin Butler (Max Robitzsch) of Philadelphia, PA; Sean (Emily) Butler, Owen Butler of Las Vegas, NV; and Dr. Kathleen Childs (TJ Kurczewski) of Walnutport, PA; beloved nieces and nephews: Grace Reuss of Naperville, IL; Dr. Barbara Snyder of Dunbar WV; Frances (Dr. Larry) Hemmings of Cary, NC; John (Dr. Sue) Snyder of Apollo, PA; Sue (David) Van Volkenburg of Yorkville, IL; John (Sandra) Melton of Charleston, WV; and Darryl Snyder of Sarasota, FL. She was preceded in death by her parents Lloyd Nathaniel and Janet Board Snyder, her husband William Henry Childs, her brothers Mayford Snyder, Lester Snyder, Marvin Snyder, Walter Snyder, and Hobert Snyder, her sister Nelle Melton, and her daughter-in-law Sue Ann Serenella (Dr. Robert) Childs.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations in her memory be sent to Westminster Oaks Foundation, 4449 Meandering Way, Tallahassee, FL 32308. The family expresses gratitude to the Westminster Oaks Assisted Living staff who cared so lovingly for Ruth during the last decade of her life, and to Dena Wiggins, her primary caregiver from Home Instead before and during the quarantine, who relieved her isolation and kept her connected to family.

A memorial mass will be held at St. Peter's Anglican Cathedral in Tallahassee

on Saturday, July 25, 2020 at 2:00 PM . Todd Wahlquist with Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193, [www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com)) is assisting the family with their arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

JUL **25**. 2:00 PM (ET)

St Peter's Anglican Cathedral  
4787 Thomasville Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32309

# Tribute Wall

PM

“ We knew her as "Aunt Ruth", one of Mom's (Connie Green) dearest friends, and the mother to our classmates at Morgantown High School and beyond. She was one in a million in every way, and we all were touched by her in one way or another. What I remember most was the gift she had for turning little parakeets into talking like crazy little people who were family members. I gave her my beloved birdie when I had to move to Germany to be with my then husband. She had Petey talking in just a couple of weeks, when all I had been able to do was get him to chirp and enjoy my company.

*We lost my Mom last year, and my fondest hope is that she and Aunt Ruth are again able to talk and talk to catch up at last!*

*We share in your loss and wish you peace.*

*Patty (Green) Metzger*

---

**Patty Green Metzger** - May 09, 2020 at 09:20 PM

PA

*Thank you, Patty. My mother and yours stayed in touch until fairly recently. Their friendship meant a lot to my mother. And you are right about the birds! Patty Childs Applegate*

---

**Patricia Applegate** - May 16, 2020 at 06:46 PM

BS

*Ruth, my father's YOUNGER sister was my "Good Old Aunt Ruth!"*

---

**Barbara Snyder** - January 11, 2024 at 10:34 AM