



# Ada Frances Petrun

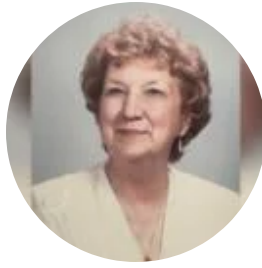
MAR 19, 1924 - JAN 25, 2021



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## **Ada Frances Petrun**

MAR 19, 1924 - JAN 25, 2021

**A**da Frances Petrun led a purposefully driven life that touched many people throughout her 96 years on Earth.

Ada is survived by her beloved husband of 53 years, Paul Petrun; children, Greg Kappers, Wendy Kappers, Dee (Rick) Hoffman, Paul Petrun; siblings, Charles (Dottie) Thomas and Barbara Thomas; grandchildren, Jennifer (Shannon) Legg, Gregory (Natalie) Kappers, Hadley Kappers, Jared Hoffman, Seth (Katherine) Hoffman, Colin Petrun and Connor Petrun; great-grandchildren, Zachary Legg, Gavin Legg, Adriana Gamber, Adelenia Kappers, Ayla Kappers, Jared James "JJ" Hoffman; as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Darland Smith and Grace Thomas; step-father, Walter J. Thomas; siblings, Walter N. Thomas and Linda Thomas.

Born and raised on an 80 acre farm in Milford, Delaware, she went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Maryland College majoring in English and Social Studies (Secondary Education), and would later acquire a Master of Science degree in Education from Duquesne University, as well as her Vocational / Cooperative Education Certification from the University of Pittsburgh.

After college, she taught elementary students in both Milford, DE and then in Hamilton, Oh. There she met John Kappers who worked for Fisher Body and was originally from Copenhagen, Denmark. When he was transferred, they moved to Flint, Michigan where they had 3 children, Greg, Wendy and Darlene (Dee). With another transfer, they moved to Pittsburgh, PA in 1955, where, sadly, John died in 1960. Ada then launched a new career of teaching students with Special Needs for the Allegheny County School System, later to become the Allegheny Intermediate Unit where she met Paul Petrun whom she married on July 15, 1967. Paul had been the love of Ada's life, as shown by their 53 years together. When their son, Paul Michael, was born in 1972, he made the family complete as their 4th child.



## Obituary

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Ada was a teacher at Mon Valley School for most of her career. In addition to her classroom teaching position, she was given the role of placing students on jobs in both the school and community, with having her Vocational / Cooperative Education Certification. Ada's enthusiasm, dedication and commitment was evident throughout her career, as she worked with families, employers and community agencies to help transition her students from high school to adult life, often with gainful employment. She took on many roles as Senior Advisor, Yearbook Editor, Co-Editor of the Newsletter, etc. Every year, she created fund raising events and encouraged community members, while raising public awareness of the needs for students with disabilities, to donate money to fund senior trips. Ada was a pioneer and visionary in creating experiences for disadvantaged students to travel beyond the school walls to gain new understanding and awareness outside of their own community. Each year she coordinated and was able to pay for some 30 students, which she chaperoned on trips to New York City, Washington, DC, Williamsburg, VA, Canada /Niagara Falls, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Hershey Park, Sea World, and Cedar Point, to name a few.

Ada taught school until she was 69 years old, retiring in June 1993. She loved her work and felt fulfilled all along, but finally opted to leave and see the wider world with Paul. In retirement they were able to travel throughout Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, and throughout the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii.

Ada was the recipient of the prestigious "Annie Sullivan Award" in May 1990. This award is given by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for the Special Education Teacher, "who shows care, concern, and skill in assisting students with disabilities to gain acceptance in their schools and communities." She was also honored in October, 1990, in Harrisburg by the State of Pennsylvania when she received the "Salute to Teaching Award" for the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

Ada and her husband Paul were selected to become members of Phi Delta Kappa Three Rivers, Chapter 14, which is a prestigious International Educational Honorary Society. They both worked together as active members. Ada held official roles as President, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Programs, and Newsletter Editor. Ada received the "Paul Varnum Award", in 2003, for her service in the community, the "Service Key Award" and "Newsletter Award" for her service within the organization. In addition, she was awarded the "Presidential Centennial Award" in recognition of her service and loyalty of PDK over the years. She was instrumental in working in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh to create and present "A Public Forum: Public Schools in the 21st Century on Education," in May 1999. Ada also belonged to Delta Kappa



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Gamma, Alpha Chi Chapter of an International Society for Key Woman Educators. There she served as the Scholarship Chair Person.

In the early years, Ada sold World Book Encyclopedias to help educate folks. On the side, she tutored students and helped their families. During her summers, she worked teaching students at Juvenile Court and Mayview State Hospital. For the last 40 years she was she was a Qualified Distributor with Shaklee Corporation.

Along the way, with teaching and side jobs, Ada took on the role as Power-of-Attorney for a former student named Richard over 30 years ago. She also took on the role as guardian of a former student named Martha, caring for her for 20 years.

Ada was an amazing human being, filled with a zest beyond belief for living. Somehow she summoned up the energy to take on a monumental work load and care for her family, who she loved dearly. She has many jewels in her crown with the shiniest being her 4 children, 7 grandchildren and 6 great- grandchildren. She was super-energetic, driven by God, and fully committed in her service to others. She was admired by all for her belief in God, courage, positive energy and her special talent of being a generous and effective helper of mankind. An angel on Earth!

A private service for immediate family only will be held at Jefferson Memorial Funeral Home on Saturday, January 30, 2021 at 12 P.M. A virtual broadcast can be viewed at the following internet link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11N8RuYPluaRPXS9WzH9jSuqdwFba5Qa4/view>

Interment will be at Jefferson Memorial Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation that may be made to Mon Valley School for the Ada Petrun Reading Room, 555 N. Lewis Run Road, Clairton 15025.



## Tribute Wall

**Ada Frances Petrun**

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LM

**Linda M** posted:

She was my teacher at Mon valley. Years ago A good woman lived life to the fullest. She helped a lot of students through the years . Will be missed. 🌹

April 21 at 12:04 PM

LM

**Linda Mokwa** posted:

She was my teacher when I was a student at mon valley a long time ago Good bye. R.I.P. 🌹

April 20 at 6:08 PM

CW

**Chester Wojciechowicz** posted:

I was Ada's student teacher at Mon Valley in the fall of 1977. Her boundless energy and the love for her students were an inspiration. I am forever grateful that she was a part of my teaching career.

February 16 at 6:51 AM

BS

**Betty Scheide** posted:

So sorry to hear of Ada's passing. She was a hard-working, devoted and generous woman. My deepest condolences to Paul and to her Children and siblings. I have fond memories of Ada while I was working at the Intermediate Unit. Betty Scheide

January 30 at 9:09 AM

CB

**Carol Berryman** posted:

I viewed the service virtually. All you said about Ada was so true. She helped me so much when I was an aide at Mon Valley School. We even rode together at times as we both lived in South Park. She was such a sweet kind lady...I will always remember her! I am thinking of you with Sympathy. Carol Berryman

January 30 at 8:37 AM

BL

**Boss Lady** posted:

What a beautiful tribute to a beautiful special creation of God! A life well lived and WELL LOVED!! Thanks for the memories Ada! 🙏🕊️❤️

January 30 at 8:31 AM



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TB

**Tom Bluemling** posted:

Fond memories of our times at Mon Valley.

January 30 at 6:43 AM

LK

**Larry Korchnak** posted:

Ada was a selfless crusader for learning. Her desire to help others will be missed on a number of levels. My condolences to Paul and the family.

January 30 at 6:03 AM

LB

**Linda Brown** posted:

Being a friend of Dee's since grade school, I've known Ada for many years. She always made you feel special with plenty of questions about how your life was going. She was sweet, kind, and always interested in others. I had the pleasure of going on one of the trips that Dee spoke of as a young teen friend of Dee's. It was to New York City and I would have never had that opportunity, if not for Ada. She gave me that experience along with so many others and that is such a fond memory. She has touched so many lives and her memory lives on with many of us. May Ada Petrun Rest in Peace. With deepest Sympathy and Love, Linda Brown

January 30 at 5:54 AM

BT

**Barbara Thuel** posted:

Dee, I am heartbroken to hear about your Mom. Ada was such a spirited young lady and a breath of fresh air at the nursing home! She welcomed everyone she met with a handshake and a formal introduction, always with professional poise. Ada was a beautiful soul, perfectly manicured and stylishly dressed, never a hair out of place. She carried herself with grace and dignity. I am saddened by her loss, as she brought so much joy to everyone who knew her, especially her family. I will always remember her for her friendship with John. May God comfort you and wrap you in His love as you cherish your memories of dear, sweet, beautiful Ada. All my love, Barb.

January 30 at 5:39 AM

VR

**Vicki And Ernie Robb** posted:

You have our deepest sympathies to Paul and his family. Ada will be missed by all her neighbors who know her well.

January 29 at 3:47 PM



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SH

**Seth Hoffman** posted:

A celebration of one of the greatest women I know, my grandmother.

January 29 at 2:57 PM

MM

**Mark A Machi** posted:

Sending my deepest sympathy. A wonderful compassionate woman. Sincerely, Mark A Machi  
Laborers Union

January 29 at 2:26 PM

NC

**Nancy Costanzo** posted:

Ada and Paul were mentors for me throughout my career. I cannot thank them enough. If I were to pick one word to describe Ada it would be passionate. Whatever she did, she did with 150% effort. At the center of her focus was always a commitment to service and aid others, especially her family and those with special needs. Her heart was always open and she never put herself first, nor did she ever expect anything in return. She always kept her focus on her goals and was not too proud to solicit help from others, and for her worthy causes she would never accept no as an answer. She had her way of making you see what was truly important and put things in proper perspective. I feel so very privileged to have had her influence and guidance in my life. I am truly saddened that she has left us but I am assured by her virtuous saint-like life she will continue to guide myself, those she loved, and those she served. To Paul and family, I extend my heartfelt condolences. Nancy Costanzo

January 29 at 12:57 PM

BS

**Beverly School** posted:

Ada was a optimistic person, giving willing of her time and support. We were very fortunate to travel with Ada and Paul, sharing many excellent memories around the world. Ada made this a better world with her presences. Dutch & Beverly School

January 29 at 10:38 AM

PN

**Patty Nicoletta** posted:

Sorry to hear of the loss of Ada, she certainly was a remarkable woman. You have my deepest sympathy, may she Rest In Peace Patty Nicoletta

January 28 at 2:06 PM



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**Pauline And Steve** posted:

With love, with sadness, with prayers that Ads at peace in Heaven with the Lord. We, and her loving, caring, family will miss her deeply.

January 28 at 12:16 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Ada by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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