

## Tuttle (Staples), Emily Anne



Emily Anne, who in 1976 became the first female DFL senator elected to serve in the Minnesota State Senate, died on Saturday, January 13th at United Hospital in Saint Paul. She was 88 years old.

A lifelong resident of the Twin Cities, Emily Anne traveled widely, but it was in the values and vitality of Minnesota where she found her center. Having grown up immersed in the cities' culture, she was an enthusiastic supporter of the visual arts, the symphony, and theatrical stages large and small and delighted in discovering a young artist or a previously unheralded play.

Emily Anne was the consummate people person, driven by a blend of curiosity and compassion; she loved to hear life stories and would listen with rapt attention whether she was engaging with her waitress or her senator. Though solid in her beliefs, she was eager to hear opposing viewpoints and able to diffuse conflict with quiet grace.

Through her positions as an elected official and community activist, Emily Anne's engagement in policy extended in all directions, from education to court reform, from balanced economic growth to human rights. She served on more than 50 boards, including the Minnesota International Center (now Global Minnesota), The University of Minnesota Foundation and Graywolf Press.

Some of Emily Anne's most concentrated efforts were directed in the areas of health care and women's rights, both of which she was able to promote through her positions as an elected official and on various boards. She was a co-founder of the Minnesota Women's Political Caucus and the Minnesota Women's Economic Roundtable, a board member of Abbott Northwestern Hospital and served nationally on the Minnesota Women's Forum and the Health Education and Welfare Commission on National Health Insurance. Elected to the Hennepin County Commission in 1992, Emily Anne chaired the commission's Committee on Health.

Emily Anne Mayer was born in 1929 to Frank A. R. Mayer and Emily Dunn. She attributed her civic commitment to her parents, both of whom were active in the community. Her father, a newspaper reporter, occasionally took her on his assignments, where she witnessed court proceedings, labor strife and, one memorable day from her perch on her father's shoulders, Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his motorcade.

Her parents also instilled in Emily Anne a great love of music and theater, which would later translate into her deep involvement with the Guthrie Theater and the Playwrights Center, among others.

After graduating Washburn High School, Emily Anne earned her degree from the University of Minnesota. Following a year in New

York City and extended travel through Europe, she returned to Minneapolis and met and married Loring Mitchell Staples, Jr. They moved to Plymouth, where they raised four children. Loring died of a heart attack in 1988.

With Loring, she created a home which reflected their intellectual curiosity and eclectic tastes, peppered with wavering towers of periodicals Emily Anne hadn't quite had the time to read and accented with a quirky collection of art collected on their overseas travels. She instilled in her children a clear-eyed optimism and sense of adventure, encouraging them to explore the world's mysteries, as well as a belief that when the gods hand you a classic Minnesota snowstorm, you strap on cross country skis to make the two mile trip to the grocery store.

As a young mother, Emily Anne began what would become a long and productive involvement with the Minneapolis Junior League, which included serving as President and culminated in her accepting the Association of Junior Leagues International Mary Harriman Community Leadership Award in 2010.

Her political career began in 1974 with a run for the state House of Representatives as a Republican. She split from the party over its refusal to support the Equal Rights Amendment and, in 1976, was elected to the State Senate as a Democrat. Emily Anne loved campaigning, as it allowed her to travel to the far reaches of her district, to meet new people and hear their concerns, which she then set out to address as their Senator.

In 1980, after losing her bid for reelection to the Senate, she received a Bush Foundation Leadership grant and obtained a Master's Degree from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

In January 1995, she married Gedney Tuttle, whom she had met at the University of Minnesota in the 1940s. Both were intensely curious about other countries and cultures and, using their Wayzata home as a base, they traveled frequently, frequently overseas but just as often to deliver hot drinks to the ice fishermen near their Lake Minnetonka home. Gedney died in 2014.

Emily Anne's legacy will live on in those she inspired. The efforts of many politicians and activists were launched or boosted by Emily Anne's example, her generosity and her encouragement.

Emily Anne is preceded in death by her parents, her husbands, her son, Tom and her brother, Martin Mayer. She is survived by three children, Missy Staples Thompson (Gar Hargens) of St Paul, Greg (Cristina) of Norwalk, CT and Kate Staples (Kevin Kuenster) of Copake Falls, NY; her daughter-in-law, Lisa; four step children, Andrew (Susan) of Switzerland, Carl (Mary) of Eden Prairie, Jeff (Ali Nighswander) of Chanhassen, and John (Nina) of St Paul; grandchildren, Madeline, Allegra (John Reber), Mitchell, James, Cole, Owen, Maya, Lucas, Simeon, Max, Nick, Dylan, Logan, Mason, Jock, Charlotte and her long-time assistant, Tracy Rode.

In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred to Guthrie Theater, 818 South 2nd Street, Minneapolis 55415; Planned Parenthood MN, 671 Vandalia Street, St. Paul MN 55114; Global Minnesota, 1901 University Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414. A memorial service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, February 12th, at the Guthrie Theater, 818 South 2nd Street, Minneapolis.

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