



Elizabeth Lion

March 1, 1926 - March 14, 2013

Elizabeth M. Lion, 87, of Bloomington, an Associate Professor Emeritus at the Bloomington campus of the Indiana University School of Nursing, died peacefully on Thursday evening, March 14, 2013. She was born on March 1, 1926 in Brooklyn, N.Y., the daughter of Felix and Maria (Rosaschi) Garbarini, and grew up in Newark, N.J. Elizabeth received a B.S. in Education from the New Jersey State Teacher's College in 1948, an M.S. in Public Health Nursing from the University of Pittsburgh's School of Public Health in 1965, and an Ed.D. from IU's School of Education in 1990. Her doctoral dissertation was titled "Sexuality of the Dying: What Dying Participants, their Spouses and their Caregivers Teach us about the Sexuality of the Dying". During her time as a faculty member at Indiana University, from 1969 to 1996, Elizabeth became a pioneer in teaching human sexuality for nursing students. In 1982, she edited a widely adopted textbook titled "Human Sexuality in Nursing Process", to which she also contributed six chapters. In addition to her renown as a teacher, Elizabeth made numerous contributions to the University community. She was an active member of the Bloomington Faculty Council, served as President of IUB's Faculty Professional Association from 1992 to 1995, and was involved in the Affirmative Action Committee and the Commission on

Multicultural Understanding (COMU) for much of her IU career. When asked recently, she said that she was most proud of co-chairing IU's Educational Task Force on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns. The final report by this task force in 1993 revolutionized campus diversity policy and led to the creation of the GLBT Student Support Services Office. It became a model for similar efforts throughout the Big Ten. IU recognized her service with a Distinguished Service Award for academic year 1992-93 and the COMU Award in 1994-95. After Elizabeth's retirement, the IU School of Nursing created the Elizabeth Lion Distinguished University Service Award for nursing faculty. Elizabeth made similar service contributions to the Bloomington community, particularly in support of civil rights, diversity, and the dying. Elizabeth was a vital founding member of Hospice of Bloomington. Her long time professional interest in the dying as an RN, with a specialty in sex and the dying, gave her unusual insight into the emotional and medical needs of those near the end of their lives. In the mid-1970s, when her efforts began, openly discussing death was perhaps more taboo than discussing sex. Elizabeth joined with Unitarian Universalist minister Bill Murray, Bloomington Hospital pathologist Tony Pizzo, Trinity Episcopal Priest Hugh Laughlin, freshly minted attorney Guy Loftman, and others to shepherd this entity from good idea to vital community reality. Because she led this movement for the benefit of the many who have been comforted as death approached over the years, it is fitting that she became a Hospice patient herself in her last days. Elizabeth was also an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Church, worked at Middle Way House, administered anonymous HIV tests at Public Health Nursing, and participated in organizations like the NAACP, the Indiana ACLU, and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Her retirement in 1996 allowed her to increase her community

activities, and she received Bloomington's Woman of the Year Award in 2001. She referred to these later years of community service as not just "golden" years, but "platinum" ones. Elizabeth loved theater and opera and was known for her hats, snappy outfits, and canes. She had a boisterous laugh and a sharp mind, and she loved to tell racy jokes and stories about her life. Elizabeth was famously articulate and almost always had the last word in any battle of wits at a committee meeting or around the dinner table. Elizabeth is survived by her sister, Margaret E. Meehan, her daughter, Margaret M. Lion, her son-in-law, Scott Hutchinson, and her "grandson by special arrangement", Michael V.M. Durisen, the son of her friends Annamaria Mecca and Richard H. Durisen. Elizabeth was preceded in death by her parents and her brother-in-law, Thomas Meehan. A memorial service will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Bloomington at 2pm on Sunday, March 24, 2013. In addition to or in lieu of flowers, donations in her memory can be made to the Unitarian Universalist Church, the ACLU of Indiana, the Monroe County Humane Society, the World Wildlife Fund, or Bloomington's Middle Way House. Development of a commemorative website (emlion.weebly.com) is currently in progress.

Tribute Wall

BA

“ Margaret and family: I was deeply saddened to read of Elizabeth's passing. Your mother had a deep and abiding impact on my life and outlook as faculty member... I loved her humor and persistent jovial outlook on life. She encouraged me to be just who I am and to stop worrying about what others thought I should be. Always encouraging and a steadfast colleague-friend. Although I haven't seen her in more recent years, she remains one of my most cherished colleagues at IU. There is no other nor will there ever be another like Elisabet, as she once informed me she was called earlier in her life. A true pioneer and one of Bloomington's treasured citizens.

Barbara Hawkins - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM

GH

“ My dear friend Margaret and family, I was saddened to hear of your Mother's passing. It sounds like she was a wonderful woman who looked out for others. I can imagine that her 'boisterous laugh' brings much joy to the inhabitants of heaven! Know that your Mother is forever in God's care and keeping.

Gwen Hamm - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM

GS

“ Margaret, So sorry to hear of your Mother's passing. From the reading of her obituary, it sounds like she was wonderful, caring and compassionate person. My thoughts are with you.

Gina Wilkes Stillions - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM

KA

“ *My sympathy to family, friends, colleagues. Spunky is how I'd describe her. She had quoted me in her book and never failed to remind me. I feel honored to have known her. Our community is missing one good soul.*

Karen Van Arsdale - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM

AN

“ *Hello Margaret,
Of course I heard the news about your mom's passing and I read with delight Dick's wonderful obit. I think he did her spirit justice. She was so accomplished. I mostly enjoyed her spirit at Anna's potlucks.
I hope you are doing OK with all of this, knowing it's never easy to lose a mom.
You and Scott are in my thoughts.
Ann*

Ann Smith - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM

Jl

“ *Elizabeth was wonderful to work with on community projects. From the beginning of the epidemic, she was a dedicated volunteer in our work with people with HIV/AIDS. I will miss her jubilant sense of humor and inspiring thoughts.*

Jill Williams - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM

CI

“ To Margaret Lion and family - I am so sorry for your loss. Your mom was a great woman and a champion for the causes of those who could not always speak for themselves.

She is singing in heaven for those causes and reminding us to continue that work now.

What a beautiful and strong woman that God put on this earth to show strength and love and to forge a path for others to follow.

I knew her but a short time but I know you and her character and values live on in you. What a legacy she has left and I am proud to have known her and I am proud to know you.

Cindy Moore - March 22, 2013 at 08:16 AM