



## Phyllis J. Weikart

April 22, 1931 - March 11, 2016

Age 84, passed away peacefully on Friday, March 11, 2016 at the Saline Evangelical Home—The Redies Center. She was born on April 22, 1931 in Poughkeepsie, NY, the daughter of Randall P. and Dorothy Vail Saxton. On August 24, 1957 in Shelton, CT, she married David P. Weikart. He preceded her in death on December 9, 2003. Phyllis received her bachelor's degree from Beaver College in 1952 and her master's degree from the University of Michigan in 1957. Phyllis was Associate Professor Emeritus in the School of Kinesiology at the University of Michigan. The School honored her with the Lifetime Achievement award in 2004. She was also a visiting Associate Professor for the Hart School of Music in Hartford, CT. Early in her career, Phyllis was involved with women's field hockey at both the local and US levels. She started and coached the first women's field hockey team at the University of Michigan. She was herself a top US goalie, playing on the US international touring and Great Lakes Regional, and Ann Arbor teams. She served as President for the women's United States Field Hockey Association for 5 years. In 1979, Phyllis was inducted into Michigan Amateur Sports Hall of Fame. In addition to her role in teaching sport skills and physical education, she created and directed the University of Michigan Adult Lifestyle Program. She was also the creator of "Fitness Over Fifty," an exercise program for older adults. Phyllis developed "Education through Movement: Building the Foundation" certification program for school educators. She was the first Director/Developer and then Senior Advisor to the Movement and Music Division of High Scope Educational Research Foundation. In 2010, High Scope awarded her a Lifetime achievement award, dedicated to the "lifetime of teaching children and adults the value of movement and music and its impact on education." She has authored numerous books, videos and CDs on movement, music, and International folk dance. She holds a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Michigan Dance Council. Her most recent honor was bestowed in 2014 when she was inducted into the Early Childhood Music and Movement Association (ECMMA) Hall of Honor. Phyllis' life's work centered around creating and refining a process approach to teaching, which ensured that everyone would be successful. She was an astute observer of learners. She intuitively knew how to meet students where they were, and how to teach others this process. Her ultimate goal was to provide the most exciting, inviting educational environment that anyone could ever hope to

experience. Sharing the Education through Movement program, Phyllis changed every person she encountered for the better. Her influence will continue for generations to come. Survivors include Phyllis and David's children: Cynthia (Dale) Embry, Catherine (Mark) Yeckel, Jennifer (Vince) Danko, and Gretchen. Other survivors include their grandchildren Brian and Steven (Sara) Embry, Zachary, Jacob, Nathan, and Allison Danko, and her brother Richard (Janice) Saxton. Cremation has taken place. A Memorial Gathering will take place on Saturday, April 23, 2016 at 3:00 P.M. at Clinton United Methodist Church 10900 Tecumseh-Clinton Hwy, Clinton, MI 49236 with Rev. Orval Willimann officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Brecon Village Wellness Program, Development Office, 200 Brecon Drive, Saline, MI 48176 and envelopes will be available at the service. To sign Phyllis' guestbook, to leave a memory, or for more information please visit <http://www.rbfhsaline.com>

# Events

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**APR** **Memorial Gathering** 03:00PM  
**23**

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Clinton United Methodist Church

10900 Tecumseh-Clinton Hwy, Clinton, MI, US, 49236

# Comments

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“ Today as I write about music education, I am thinking of the huge contributions of Phyllis Weikart on the subject of steady beat and whole body coordination. Her decades of research at High Scope are still amazingly relevant to education today. I had the privilege of attending one of her workshops in Florida. She was so gracious and informative. Her folk dance materials had a great impact on the children in my general music classes. We saw improvements in beat coordination and related improvements academically. Later I called her and she gave me permission to include her in an article published in The Florida Director about improvements in education.

My sincere condolences to her family. I want you to know that her work lives on with so many of us. And I am ever grateful.

Barbara Alice Moir  
Franklin, New Jersey  
Art of Reading Music

**Barbara Alice Moir** - July 27, 2020 at 09:02 AM

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“ RIP Phyllis Weikart! We are at Massachusetts Music Ed Association All-State Conference and thinking of you! We remember soooooo many wonderful evenings dancing with you since the early 1980s. We danced in Boston, Springfield, Danvers in MA, and even in Indianapolis and Philadelphia at National Conferences. You were an amazing educator and we want your family to know that your passion and joy coupled with your solid methodology have empowered our teaching for decades! We still LOVE to teach international folk dances to new generations and to children from around the world in Lowell, MA. Thank you!

**Rita McLaughlin and Cheryl Squeglia** - March 04, 2020 at 10:52 PM

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“ I remember Phyllis from Dayton, Ohio in a Music and Movement Training. She was an inspiration to keep it moving all the time.

**Sheila Howell** - April 21, 2019 at 07:05 PM

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“ I learned a lot from Mrs. Weikart. Her legacy will live on in music classes everywhere.

**Ruth Pardue** - August 13, 2018 at 09:25 PM

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“ To the Family Members of Phyllis,

My apologies for this message being so slow in coming. I worked at High Scope for 12 years (1986 - 1998) and came to know Phyllis over that time both personally and as a trainer. She is everything and more that is written in her obituary. She adored music and movement anything!, was an energetic educator, and a caring person. I know she will be missed greatly by her family and also by so many that knew her and/or had the opportunity to work with her. People come into our lives for a moment, a season, or a lifetime and it is always for a reason. The hard part is when they are no longer with us. But, the 'reason' they were in our life is the memory that we can hold onto and keep with us for the rest of our days. May you find strength in the love she left with you, peace in the strength she gave you, and love in the memories you have from her.

Sincerely, Love,  
Sue Terdan

**Sue Terdan** - June 06, 2016 at 01:11 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Colegio Ypsilanti** - April 26, 2016 at 12:15 PM



“ I am sad to see that your body has left this world. Your light forever shines when we listen to music and move ...our souls are connected to yours...eternally. My heart felt condolences to all who were blessed to know you.

Alice McLaurin

**alice mclaurin** - June 05, 2016 at 11:53 AM

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“ To Cindy, Kathy, Jenny, and Gretchen, and all your loved ones, I was deeply saddened to hear yesterday of your mother's passing. She was a very special person, who meant more to me than I realized. She helped me get through a rough period in my life, with great caring, skill, and love. The night I bonked my head coming up the stairs from the basement of the Brick House, she sat and talked with me all the way through a folk dance evening program (and you know what that meant, for either of us to miss a chance to dance!). It was the moment that my year-long depression hit bottom and began to heal. Her words that night catalyzed my recovery.

She also was one of the biggest reasons I went into teaching. Her joy of doing folk dance and movement was only exceeded by her joy of teaching it to others, and thousands of us were never the same afterwards. I have strived to live up to her model of a caring teacher for 32 years. I'm not even close yet. She will be my standard for the rest of my career.

Please know that each of you is in my heart as you grieve the loss of your mother. All my love, Rob Groesbeck

**Rob Groesbeck** - April 08, 2016 at 10:11 AM

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“ Phyllis Weikart was an outstanding field hockey goalkeeper, coach and President of US Field Hockey. Its important to remember those who came before us. Thank you for all you did for field hockey.

Karen Weaver  
Former Ohio State field hockey coach  
Former member Board of Directors, USFHA

**Karen Weaver** - April 06, 2016 at 04:01 PM

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“ It was a priviledge to play field hockey under Phyllis. She was a great coach and a wonderful person. Judy Oppenheim (U of M grad 1968, field hockey)

**Judy Oppenheim** - April 05, 2016 at 10:06 PM

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“ Such an amazing woman! My mom did aerobics with her at Briarwood Mall and then I learned about Early Childhood Movement Activities at High Scope! She has made life better for thousands of people. Terrie Uphaus Eroh

**Terrie Eroh** - March 28, 2016 at 05:39 PM



“ Carrick, Kathy, Alex and Kevin Legrismith purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Phyllis J. Weikart.



Carrick, Kathy, Alex and Kevin Legrismith - March 26, 2016 at 09:12 AM

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“ We met Phyllis back in 1991 when our family moved to the High/Scope Camp in Clinton, Michigan. We saw her conduct scores of music, movement and dance workshops, often with several young boys present (her grandsons Brian and Steven, and our sons Alex and Kevin)! We personally saw that she was devoted to teaching and teaching others to teach, and also devoted to her husband, children and grandchildren.

Our condolences to her family and our gratitude that we got to know her and see her doing what she loved to do.

Carrick and Kathy Legrismith

Kathleen Legrismith - March 26, 2016 at 08:16 AM

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“ Thank you Phyllis, for all you did for UofMichigan Field Hockey and women's athletics - we are grateful for special pioneers like you! Sending prayers and condolences to your family.

Ashley Reichenbach Kopp (U of M grad 2000, field hockey)

ashley reichenbach kopp - March 25, 2016 at 11:37 AM

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“ Phyllis was very instrumental in my growth as an Early Childhood educator. We shared a love of dancing and a love of working to find ways to bring that joy to adults and children. I am saddened by her passing but enormously grateful to have crossed paths with this extraordinary woman. My sincere condolences to all who will miss her.  
Michelle Graves

Michelle Graves - March 17, 2016 at 09:03 PM



“ Larry and Sue Schweinhart purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Phyllis J. Weikart.



Larry and Sue Schweinhart - March 15, 2016 at 04:40 PM

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“ Our early childhood music and movement teaching community are all talking about Phyllis today and appreciating her beautiful influence and contributions to the work we all love so much! Thank you Phyllis, and love and comfort to your family and friends!

Judy W. - March 14, 2016 at 09:01 PM

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“ I was a Physical Education teacher and I participated in several of Phyllis Dance workshops throughout the years. She was an amazing teacher, who could get anyone to dance with her innovative techniques. I utilized her techniques in my classes and the students loved the various patterns, music and dances. More recently, I often would see Phyllis at Brecon Village in the hall, being very enthusiastic and always friendly. Her wisdom and presence will be missed. Condolences to the family. - Sandee Sheats



**Sandee Sheats** - March 14, 2016 at 12:16 PM



“ As a music educator I appreciate her contributions to the world of dance. Her memory lives on in classrooms across the world!

**Kendra** - March 18, 2016 at 12:59 PM



“ Phyllis Weikart was a national treasure. Her ability to understand and to "fill in the blanks" in children's learning development made teaching music and movement a joy for teachers and a delight for students. I was fortunate to have had many years of learning with Phyllis and each time I saw her she had worked out a new insight that she was excited to share. She was a kind and generous teacher and friend. I will miss her greatly.

**Jan Moebus** - April 07, 2016 at 10:19 AM



“ Phyllis had so many gifts including her love of dance and wonderful enthusiasm. I met her at High Scope many years ago. And she helped to transform my life for the better. She was a shining light in the world.

Jacqueline Mayfield

**Jacqueline Mayfield** - July 04, 2016 at 05:18 AM