



Suzanne Wiley Brown

August 28, 1938 - February 24, 2024

Suzanne Wiley Brown, “Sue”, 85, scientist and activist, passed away peacefully at The Clare of Chicago, February 24, 2024.

Born and raised in Cheyenne, Wyoming, the only child of Robert James Wiley and Catharine Helen Wiley (nee Schroeder). Sue graduated from Cheyenne High School and earned her bachelor’s in science from the University of Wyoming at Laramie, Phi Beta Kappa. Sue worked to exhume mammoths (photo in June 1962 National Geographic p. 828), studied psychogenetics, did archaeological field study, and moved to New York before the ink was dry on her undergrad diploma for a fellowship at the American Museum of Natural History, where she met and married Emmanuel Ledecky-Janecek.

The couple moved to Boston where Sue held research and assistant positions at Harvard Medical School’s Department of Pharmacology under B.F. Skinner. They had their daughter Nina in 1963, and divorced in 1965. In 1967 Sue attended a reproductive rights activist group in Chicago led by Ralph Everett Brown, who was to become the love of her life. They were married for 39 years before Ralph’s passing in 2008.

Sue continued her scientific career as Senior Lab Technician for the University of Chicago sleep lab. She then taught genetics and designed and conducted experiments at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Circle Campus, then took

a position at the Chicago Academy of Sciences, where she stayed for two decades advancing to Associate Director. During her tenure, she developed programs ranging from some of the earliest museum-sponsored historical travel fundraising tours to such locations as Egypt, various Mayan ruins, Antarctica, Galapagos, and an infamously crazy tour to Peru for Haley's comet and Machu Picchu that bonded the participants for life.

Sue also co-developed the first international symposium on chimpanzees with Jane Goodall and the academy's director at the time. Jane Goodall credits this symposium with turning her from purely a scientist into an activist, and was the basis of the book "Understanding Chimpanzees" and spawned a series of chimpanzee symposiums.

Sue was an avid traveler who went pole to pole, and to six continents. She especially loved southern Mexico, Central and South America, Cheyenne Frontier Days, and the American Southwest. Sue is survived by her daughter Nina Marie and cousins in Wyoming and California.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to: AISES: Advancing Indigenous People in STEM <https://www.aises.org> or Best Friends Animal Society <https://bestfriends.org/>.

A celebration of Sue's life is being planned for early May. For info please contact: Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-370-2959 or www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com.

Tribute Wall

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“ *Ms. Brown and her late husband Ralph Brown were longtime friends of my parents. They were also very kind to me. My parents deeply appreciated the Brown's, and I do too. May she rest in peace and rise in glory. Fred Johnston, Jr.*

Fred Johnston - May 03, 2024 at 09:00 AM