

The Boston Globe

# JUDITH THOMPSON SAPERS

1933 - 2020



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SAPERS, Judith Thompson Died of interstitial lung disease on November 1. A writer, editor, fierce tennis player, maker of delectable pastry and a devoted board member of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), she was 87.

Born in Boston in 1933, she grew up in Ipswich and attended the Winsor School before graduating with a B.A. in English from Bryn Mawr College in 1954. After college she apprenticed as a teacher at the Shady Hill School, before taking a job in a law office in downtown Boston, where she met her husband, Carl Martin Sapers, who was then beginning his career as a lawyer at Hill & Barlow. They married in 1959.

They spent the first four years of their marriage on Beacon Hill, then moved to Brookline, where they brought up their three children, Jonathan, Rachel and Benjamin. Having grown up in a publishing family, she began a career as a freelance writer and editor.

In 1980, she joined the headquarters staff of the Barney Frank campaign, starting out as a jack of all trades, accompanying the candidate and organizing events, and later becoming the co-chair of his finance committee.

A lifelong contributor to LDF, she was elected to the organization's board in 1992 and later was a member of the board review committee, the board visioning session and the strategic planning committee. During her tenure she provided valued support and encouragement to five of the organization's director-counsels; at the time of her death she was a board member emeritus.

She was deeply fond of St. Andrews, a town in New Brunswick, Canada, where she spent summers as a teenager. In 1994, she and her husband

bought a turn-of-the-century shingled house looking out onto Passamaquoddy Bay, where they held an annual Fourth of July party for family and friends, extending the definition of summer to include May and June and September and October.

She was a treasured member of the St. Andrews Community Tennis Association (playing well into her seventies), known for the "Judy Sapers lob" - a looping shot that would disappear into the bright blue Canadian sky, confounding opponents. Her pies, made with local rhubarb and blueberries and according to local recipes, were magnificent. She loved to read and did so until the end of her life and always had an opinion on the latest novels and non-fiction, especially about civil rights. Before she died, she proudly cast her last vote for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

She was a loyal friend and a great listener; she was wise, thoughtful and emotionally astute.

She leaves behind her son Jonathan and his wife Cristine, her daughter Rachel, five grandchildren, her brother Nicholas Thompson and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. She was preceded in death by her brother Daniel in 2012, her husband in 2018 and her son Benjamin in 2020. Services will be at a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., c/o LDF Development, 40 Rector Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10006. J.S.  
Waterman-Langone Chapel

617-536-4110

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

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## MEMORIAL EVENTS

No memorial events are currently scheduled. To offer your sympathy during this difficult time, you can now have memorial trees planted in a National Forest in memory of your loved one.

Funeral services provided by  
J.S. Waterman Langone Chapel

[580 Commercial Street](#)

[Boston, MA 02109](#)

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## MEMORIES & CONDOLENCES

What would you like to say about JUDITH?

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