



Margaret Seelye 'Peggy' Treuer

Treuer, Margaret Seelye Markaret, whose Ojibwe names were Giiwedinookwe (North Wind Woman) and Aazhideyaashiikwe (Crossing Flight Woman), of the Turtle Clan, was born November 19, 1943, in Cass Lake, Minnesota, and died at home on March 18, 2020. Peggy grew up in a one-room cabin in Bena, MN, with her five siblings. She graduated from Cass Lake High School in 1961. Ambitious from the start, she went on to get her degree from St. Luke's Nursing School in Duluth. She returned home to found Leech Lake Reservation's Community Health Program. She went on to write the grant and administer Red Lake Reservation's first nursing program soon after. She married Bob Treuer and moved to Washington, DC, where she gave birth to her sons Anton and David. While taking care of her boys she went to law school at Catholic University, had twins -- Micah and Megan -- while studying for the bar, which she passed easily. While parenting and studying law she volunteered at the Native American Rights Fund where she worked with Ada Deer and Silvia Wilbur was a part of the reestablishment of the Menominee Reservation in Wisconsin. The family moved back to Minnesota in 1978. Margaret and Paul Day opened the first Indian law firm in the state. She was the first American Indian woman attorney in the state of MN and the first American Indian woman judge in the country. She worked for years as a federal magistrate, tribal court judge, and advocate for Native people. She also stayed close to her roots: teaching her children how to rice, hunt, tap maple trees, and live off the land. She loved her Native ways and served as a mentor and guide to many people in their quests for healing and ceremonial connection. She loved being in the woods, gardening, remodeling, candy, and sleeping in, and having other people fetch her things. Margaret was preceded in death by her father, Eugene Seelye and her siblings, Sonny, Davey, and Gloria Jean Seelye and Barb Cleveland, and long-time partner Ron LaFriniere. She is survived by her mother Luella Seelye, her brother Lanny Seelye, four children -- Anton, David, Micah, and Megan, 16 grand children, and 3 great-grandchildren. Traditional services in the Indian

custom will be officiated by Keller Paap. Wake begins at 6:30pm on Saturday, March 21, 2020, with funeral services on Sunday, March 22, 2020, at 10am, at the Bena Community Center (adjacent to Leech Lake Headstart). Casket bearers: Jesse Seelye, Sam Cleveland, Robert Treuer, Caleb Treuer, Isaac Treuer, Elias Treuer, Honorary Casket bearers: Nate Seelye, Josh Seelye, Justin Seelye, Jerry Cleveland, Lorra Meier, and Founding Members of the Minnesota American Indian Bar Association In lieu of flowers, donations to the Minnesota American Indian Bar Association are encouraged.

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Guest Book

3 comments

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Our staff does not correct grammar or spelling. [FAQ \(https://www.startribune.com/obituary-guest-book-f-a-q/238868691/\)](https://www.startribune.com/obituary-guest-book-f-a-q/238868691/)

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Tim S  March 21

What a woman!
What a Minnesotan!
What an example!

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Family of Ronald LaFriniere  March 21

We are sorry to hear about Peggy's illness and passing. Her friendship to our dad meant a great deal to him. Our condolences.

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betty  March 21

I am so sorry for your loss; she was a wonderful role model.

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