



Margaret Ann (Ranny) Riecker of Midland died peacefully at MidMichigan Medical Center-Midland on Monday, April 7. She was 80 years old. She was born on November 9, 1933, in Ann Arbor, the daughter of the late Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley.

Ranny married John E. Riecker on July 30, 1955. He predeceased her on November 8, 2008. Surviving is her son, John T. Riecker (Cindy Brittain) of Salado, Tex., her daughter Dr. Margaret E. (Peggy) Thompson (Dr. David Thompson) of Grand Rapids and her granddaughters Sarah Thompson and Stephanie Thompson. She also had four sisters Judy (Don) Rumelhart of Ann Arbor, Lynn (Stuart) White of Grand Rapids, Janis Elizabeth Poteat who died in 1991 and Harriet Susan English who died in 1995.

Ranny earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. During her life, she had been awarded honorary doctorate degrees from Albion College, Central Michigan University, Ferris State University, Kalamazoo College, the University of Michigan, Carleton College, Northwood University and Michigan State University.

One of Ranny's greatest passions was serving as a trustee for The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation for 51 years and she led The Foundation as its President since 2000. During her tenure, Ranny was especially pleased to have established the Associates Program. Each year, for a one-year tenure, the Trustees selected a family member to represent the various branches of the Herbert and Grace Dow family on the board. The Foundation has benefited from their unique perspectives and talents, and they benefited by expanding their skills in philanthropy. In 1992, Wiley T. Buchanan, Pamela G. Dow and Jeffrey W. Doan became the first Associates.

Ranny has been a Trustee of The Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation since 1962. She was the board president from 1985 to 1999 and became board chair in 1999.

In the 1970s, Ranny served as vice-chair of the Michigan Republican Party. She later served as a Republican National Committeewoman from Michigan.

Ranny was also a co-founder of the Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF) in 1973. She was a Trustee at CMF from 1974 until 2002, serving as the Chair of the Board from 1982 to 1984 and again from 1999 to 2000. She was also chair of CMF's Government Relations Committee.

From 1992 to 1996, Ranny served as a Trustee of the Council on Foundations. She chaired its Legislative and Regulation Committee from 1992 to 1995.

Ranny also was a strong believer in collaboration in philanthropy. In the 2012 annual report for The Dow Foundation, she wrote, "In a time of tightening resources and increasing need, it's important that we make the most of every minute and every penny. Often, the best way to do that is to work together. So we help create collaborative opportunities among

nonprofits, governmental agencies, private sector and other organizations. Sharing expertise, finding complementary strengths and leveraging resources gives us stronger organizations who accomplish more. Even better, it creates a shared sense of purpose that makes us even stronger.”

Ranny was an active leader and volunteer in our community, state, and nation. She was a past chair and trustee of Carleton College’s Board of Trustees as well as a past chair and trustee of Central Michigan University’s Board of Trustees. She served as a member of the Board on the University of Michigan’s Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy and the Center for the Education of Women. She and her husband John were the honorary co-chairs of the Michigan Difference Campaign which raised \$3.2 million for U of M.

Ranny’s local community volunteer activities included serving on the boards of Midland Downtown Development Authority; as former chair of the board of Greater Midland Community Centers, Inc.; as a member of the Board for MidMichigan Medical Center-Midland and member of several MidMichigan Health System committees; Midland Kids First; Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network; Michigan Molecular Institute; Northcoast Technology Investors Advisory Committee; Joint Midland City/County Building Authority; chair of the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy Leadership Council at Grand Valley State University and the University of Michigan President’s Advisory Group.

Ranny’s grandfather, Herbert H. Dow, was the founder of The Dow Chemical Company. His wife Grace Ball Dow established The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation in 1953 in memory of her husband. The Trust Agreement specifies that the income of the trust is to be used "for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes for the public benefaction of the inhabitants of the City of Midland and of the people of the State of Michigan."

Funeral services will take place at 11 am, Monday, April 14, 2014 at the Memorial Presbyterian Church. Family will receive friends at Ware-Smith-Woolever Funeral Home, 1200 W. Wheeler Street, on Sunday from 2-4 & 6-8 pm and at the church on Monday from 10 am until time of services.