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Obit - June Marie Krutza

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CHARLESTON — June Marie Krutza, 90, passed away peacefully on December 25, 2013 at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center.

June was born June 22, 1923, in Chicago, the eldest child of Romeo and Elizabeth Krutza. A child of the Great Depression, she worked hard on the family's northern Indiana farm, finding her solace in the study of plants and animals and developing a lifelong appreciation for the natural world.

Dr. Krutza earned her bachelor's degree in biology and English with a chemistry minor from Manchester College in Indiana, her master of fine arts degree from Indiana University, and her Ph.D. from The Ohio State University. She also took classes from the Art Institute in Chicago.

June joined the art faculty at Eastern Illinois State College in 1952. Hired to teach Art education and high school art at Buzzard Lab School, she later taught undergraduate and graduate courses in a variety of media including jewelry and textiles, but ceramics was her love. An article in the faculty newsletter announcing her retirement highlighted June's feelings: "Once you get clay under your fingernails, you can't give it up." She was honored with a Distinguished Faculty Award in 1987. Professor Krutza retired from Eastern Illinois University in 1989.

During and after her teaching career, June was a prolific artist who produced works in various media including ceramics, weaving, photography, metals, drawing, and painting. Her pieces have been shown in numerous local and national exhibitions. Her most recently shown works were created for the EIU Faculty Art Show in 2011.

June was passionate about international mission work and traveled extensively to participate in projects aimed at poverty relief and educational advancement. She visited Asia, Europe, Russia, Central and South

America, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. She served on church mission teams to Appalachia, Alaska, Haiti, and Chile. As longstanding leader of the missions committee at Wesley United Methodist Church, June's constant goal was to inform and inspire. Through monthly "Mission Moments," June raised awareness and funds to address the plight of women, to feed the hungry, and to educate the disadvantaged. June was a longtime member of the Friendship Class at Wesley, frequently presenting lessons on world religions and social issues. Beyond the church, June was an active member of the Charleston Reading Circle and the Delta Kappa Gamma Society.

June was a feisty and independent woman. In addition to her passions for art and social justice, June was an animal lover (especially of cats), an accomplished seamstress, a camping enthusiast, an ardent naturalist, an avid photographer, an insatiable reader and book collector, and a constant learner.

June was preceded in death by her parents, her sister Lois Hill, and sister-in-law Vilma Krutza. She is survived by her sister Florence (Jim) Moore of Hot Springs Village, AR; brothers Bill (Ruth) Krutza of Bradenton, FL; and Jim (LaVerne) Krutza of Longview, TX; her brother-in-law Roger Hill of Naperville, IL; as well as many nieces and nephews and their families. June is also survived by her church family and many friends, and the caring staff at Brookstone Estates in Charleston.

Visitation will be Sunday, December 29 from 4:00—6:00 p.m. at Wesley United Methodist Church, with funeral services to be held Monday, December 30 at 10:00 a.m. at Wesley. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be made to the Wesley United Methodist Church Missions Committee, the June Krutza Art Scholarship (through the EIU Foundation), or the Heifer Project. Arrangements through Caudill-King Funeral Home.