



Susan A. Johnson

January 2, 1937 - January 17, 2018

SUSAN NANCY ANDERSON JOHNSON was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the eldest of three daughters of Alden Clifton Anderson and Thelma Iola Stein Anderson. She attended Clinton Elementary School in South Minneapolis, entering kindergarten several months before her fifth birthday and later skipping the second grade.

After moving to Northeast Minneapolis, Susan attended Edith Cavell Elementary School, Lowry Junior High School, and Edison High School. She studied the violin for many years and played in the high school orchestra. She was assistant editor of Edison High School's 1953 yearbook, *The Wizard*, and graduated third in a class of over three hundred students.

Figure skating became Susan's primary interest at age 12. She enjoyed membership in the Figure Skating Club of Minneapolis from 1949 until 1961. From 1950 through 1953, she skated summers in St. Paul and performed in the thrice-weekly Pops Concerts.

In 1953, Susan enrolled at the University of Minnesota as a chemistry major. She joined the Zeta Tau Alpha sorority and the University of Minnesota Figure Skating Club. After her junior year, she participated in the SPAN program (Student Project for Amity Among Nations), spending six weeks studying the chemical industry in Greece and eight weeks traveling through Europe with friend Jane Larson. This trip kindled a life-long love of travel. Susan was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year of college and graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Minnesota in 1957.

After a college advisor recommended that Susan attend graduate school at Northwestern University, she applied and was accepted. In August 1960, Susan married Ronald Carl Johnson, a fellow chemistry graduate student, a marriage that lasted 57 years until her death. Susan and Ron completed their Ph.D. studies at Northwestern under advisor Fred Basolo.

Susan and Ron moved to Atlanta in January 1961 after Ron accepted a teaching position at Emory University. Susan became the first woman to teach freshman chemistry at Georgia Tech, in 1961. She continued teaching and performing postdoctoral research with Henry Neumann from 1961-1964. After daughters Erica and Laura were born in 1964 and 1966, Susan threw herself into motherhood and stayed at home with her daughters for ten years.

Through education and motherhood, Susan never lost her passion for figure skating. She had become a U.S. Figure Skating Association ("USFSA") Low Test Judge on her eighteenth birthday in 1955. Following her move to Atlanta, Susan joined the Atlanta Figure Skating Club in 1961. After working up the ranks of USFSA judging, Susan became a National Judge in 1977, an International Judge in 1984, and an ISU Championship (World) Judge in 1993. During her long judging career, Susan judged numerous test sessions, about 185 non-qualifying competitions, 39 Regional Championships, 26 Sectional Championships, 14 National Championships, 28 International competitions, and 10 ISU Championships, including 3 World Championships and the 1998 Olympic Winter Games (ladies' event) in Nagano, Japan. Between skating and other travels, Susan visited all 50 states and 35 foreign countries.

Susan contributed to a half-dozen articles for SKATING Magazine, her favorite being "And Then There Were None, a Fond Remembrance of Compulsory Figures in the World Championships," published in the March and April, 1991 issues. Susan held many positions within the USFSA, including Tests Committee Chair and Judges Committee Chair. Susan served as the International Committee's monitor for Sarah Hughes for 2002, the year Hughes became Olympic Ladies Champion.

Susan also served on the Atlanta Figure Skating Club's Board of Directors for sixteen years; as Test Chair for nine years; as originator and editor of the Club's newsletter, the *Freestyler*, for three years; and as Club president for two years. With friend Ginny Ford, Susan co-chaired the 1980 U.S. Figure Skating Championships held at the Omni Coliseum in Atlanta. Susan also served as a member of the local organizing committee for the 2004 U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Atlanta. Susan volunteered for ACOG for five years leading up to the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and was an usher for Gymnastics and Basketball events during those games.

Susan held part-time jobs with Emory University's Chemistry Department over a period exceeding twenty-five years, working for Professor Larry Clever, and later for Professor Lanny Liebeskind as an editorial assistant for the chemistry journal *Organometallics*. Susan was a long-time member of Decatur Presbyterian Church. Susan's other interests included reading, sewing, foreign languages, tennis, duplicate bridge (achieving life-master status), and pet parenthood to miniature poodle Fitzgerald.

Susan was preceded in death by her parents Thelma and Alden Anderson; her niece Theresa Johnson; and her brother-in-law Tom Johnson. Susan is survived by husband Ron; daughters Erica and Laura; sisters Judy Hadler and Nancy Tykwinski; sister-in-law Carolyn Johnson; brothers-in-law Bruce Hadler and John Tykwinski; nephews Richard Johnson, Bryan Homzik, Justin Hadler, and Jordan Hadler; niece Nicole Burke; and poodle Fitzgerald.

Susan requested that any donations in her honor be made to U.S. Figure Skating or to the Atlanta Figure Skating Club. A memorial service will be held at Decatur Presbyterian Church in early February.