



. Virginia Bodner, retired Las Vegas, New Mexico teacher, passed away peacefully at home early August 5, 2019. After teaching at both local high schools and Memorial Middle School, her happiest years were spent leading primary students on countless adventures at Paul D. Henry and Los Niños. She believed every child has gifts to encourage, along with a sense of kinship with the larger living community.

Both her parents were biologists, and encouraged her spirit of curiosity and adventure. Before settling in northern New Mexico in 1972, Virginia had lived, studied, and taught widely, earning a B.A. in biology from Radcliffe College ('64) and marrying a classmate, Richard, along the way. Their son Gus was born in India, where she worked at a rural children's clinic after the Peace Corps. Their daughter Gita arrived when they lived in northern Nevada. The family soon set down roots in San Miguel County while Richard taught five years at the local university.

After her own graduate work in town and at UNM, Virginia enjoyed her many years and friends in the local schools. Among many projects bringing people and groups together, she helped turn a school 'drainage problem' into a learning opportunity and outdoor classroom/ wetlands that attracted national attention. Though creativity and sharing were part of her nature, Virginia never sought personal recognition or publicity, yet her contributions were widely appreciated. In 1992, she was named "New Mexico Conservation Educator of the Year," for example. Her poetry also received unsought honors from afar, even the Museum of Haiku Literature in Japan. (Many of her poems are just being discovered in notebooks now....)

Retiring from the school system early due to a Parkinson's condition, she continued to enjoy painting, poetry, family, friends, yoga and the natural world. Recovery from major falls in 2012 and 2015 gave her and loved ones added quality time and adventures together. Complications following a recent fall proved more than her systems could handle, however, despite skilled caretakers, to whom the family remains grateful.

...Virginia was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Dorothy Richardson of Orcas Island, Washington. She is survived by her husband of 55 years, Richard; her son Gus; and daughter Gita; along with an extended web of beloved friends and family. Rogers Mortuary has overseen cremation. A memorial may be planned at a later date.

The family requests any offerings in her honor be made toward the kind of efforts close to her heart, e.g., Friends of the LVNWR; Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance; the "Outdoor Classroom/ Wetlands" at Los Niños; or a personal project that carries such caring on. Friends are also invited to share more *from*, as well as *about*, Virginia at <http://virginiabodner.net>.