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# Annette Rosker Gavens

1924 - 2022

Hartford Courant



Name

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**BORN** 1931

**DIED** 2023

## Annette Gavens Obituary

**A**nnette Rosker Gavens died November 20, 2023, surrounded by her children. Annette was born October 14, 1931 in the tiny Polish village of Komorowo near Ostrow-Mazowiecka and was originally known as Chana. Annette was the youngest and the last surviving of the 8 children born to Helen and Jacob Rosker, formerly known as Chinka and Jankiel Rostkier. Over 12 years and in 4 different travel groups, the family passed through Ellis Island, and reunited in Hartford, Connecticut in 1937.

Annette attended Hartford Public Schools, graduating from Weaver High School in 1950. As a 12-year-old, Annette survived the July 1944 Hartford Circus Fire. In 1952 Annette married the love of her life Seymour Gavens. They briefly lived in Denver, CO before raising their family in Newington and West Hartford. Summers were spent on the soft sand of Old Colony Beach in Old Lyme.

Annette had an insatiable desire to make things better. Annette was an active volunteer while raising their children, Lee, Andrew, and Michelle. She delivered Meals on Wheels for 15 years, was a literacy tutor at her elementary school alma mater, Hartford's Vine Street School, for 16 years, donated 7 gallons of blood, and served as a school PTA officer. In her neighborhood, Annette initiated recycling before there was curb-side pickup, encouraged food pantry donations, and organized annual street parties.

Annette was deeply devoted to her synagogues and her Jewish observance. At Beth El Temple, Annette served as a Trustee, Sisterhood President, Art Show Chair, College Youth Chair for 26 years, and as Knitzvah Chair for 18 years overseeing the creation and donation of hundreds of hand-knit afghans to local Veterans and to people in need around the world. She attended services regularly and celebrated her Bat Mitzvah at 45. Previously, she was Sisterhood President at Congregation B'nai Shalom in Newington.

Annette was a talented athlete winning numerous local tennis club tournaments, playing on the Beth El softball team into her 70's, and riding her bicycle on her 90th birthday. Golf, cross-country skiing, volleyball, long walks or just playing catch or basketball with her children or grandchildren were her pleasures. Annette enjoyed watching sports just as much as participating. Annette and Seymour were named the 2000 Connecticut Fans of the Year. They were regularly seen attending and raucously cheering for their teams with Annette ringing a cowbell. They were avid supporters of UConn football, men's and women's basketball and soccer, the Whalers, Yard Goats, New Britain Red Sox and more. Annette and Seymour attended numerous UConn men's and women's Final Four tournaments and even travelled to Israel to watch the UConn basketball team play. In January 1978, Annette and Seymour were at the Hartford Civic Center for a UConn basketball game just hours before the roof collapsed.

Annette had a multitude of friends with whom she shared life's ups and downs. She remained close with many school friends throughout her life. She entertained everyone with her singing and animated sense of humor. Annette and Seymour enjoyed traveling around the world with a troupe of friends. They visited Israel 7 times.

Annette was predeceased by her beloved husband of 68 years Seymour Gavens, her parents Helen and Jacob Rosker, her siblings Ida Labinger, Rifka Rosker, Edith Bloom, Pauline Kushnet, Esther Kandel, Frances Kasdan, and Harold Rosker, and her daughter-in-law Susan Stein Gavens. Left to mourn the loss of an extraordinary

woman are her children Lee Gavens, Andrew (Sara) Gavens, and Michelle Gavens (Brian Margolis), her grandchildren Daniel (Sarah), Abigail (Simon), Melissa, Jennifer (Jonathan), Molly (Benjamin), Jacob, Samuel, and Deborah, and her great-grandchildren Sivan and Lev.

In addition to a lifetime of joyous memories, Annette left a note for this obituary, "Dear Family, don't cry. Dad and I had a wonderful life. Who could ask for more? Go Huskies and God Bless America."

Funeral Services will be Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 11:30 AM at Beth El Temple, West Hartford. Interment will follow at Beth El Cemetery in Avon.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to The Gavens Family College Youth Fund at Beth El Temple, a donation to the [charity of your choice](#), or an act of lovingkindness.

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