



## Frances Unnamed Wentz

May 25, 1931 - December 06, 2020

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### FRANCES THUNDERCLOUD WENTZ (Wakajapiiwiga)

Frances Thundercloud Wentz died on Sunday, December 6, 2020. She was born on May 25, 1931 at home at the Indian Mission, Black River Falls, WI to Lydia (Lyons-Lowe) and Daniel Thundercloud. Frances was an enrolled member of the Ho Chunk Nation and she was part of the Wakaja Clan. She was baptized and confirmed at the Ho-Chunk United Church of Christ. She was a lifetime member of the Ho-Chunk United Church of Christ (previously Winnebago Evangelical and Reform Church). Frances spent her childhood on her family's farm on the Indian Mission. When she was school age she attended the Winnebago Indian School, Neillsville, WI. Frances graduated from Black River Falls High School. After high school, she attended Mission House College (now Lakeland University) and she graduated with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Medical Technology. While in college, she excelled academically and enjoyed playing ping-pong.

While at Mission House College, Frances also met the love of her life Roger Wentz. They were married December 30, 1955 at the Ho-Chunk United Church of Christ. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 2005. Reverend Roger Wentz had several congregations in Milwaukee, WI, Kaukauna, WI, Sauk City, WI, and Canton, Ill. As a minister's wife, Frances took her role seriously and was a gracious, kind, friendly, and empathetic with her spiritual gifting to her church community. In life, she loved and was loved by many. Roger and Frances retired and lived on the family homestead near Black River Falls. They had one child, Renee Wentz. They raised two dogs, Daisy and Suzy.

Frances and Roger lived quietly in retirement. She was an excellent seamstress and sewed Roger's suits for work. Frances had a green thumb and grew many plants, and her specialties were pony tails and orchids. Frances was a first speaker of the Ho-Chunk language, and the family very often called her for advice on how to interpret English to Ho-Chunk. She assisted Dr. Nancy Oestreich Lurie, of the Milwaukee Public Museum with the biography of Stella Stacy (Mountain Wolf Women) by interpreting Ho-Chunk to English. Frances had a competitive spirit and she enjoyed winning when she played cards. She collaborated with her sisters in an "Immersion" type of Ho-Chunk language learning activities for members of the family and other cultural traditions such as: black ash basket making from tree to basket, finger weaving, traditional Ho-Chunk moccassins, paaxges, shirts, and wajes (dresses), etc.

She was one of the founding members of the Ho-Chunk Nation Institutional Review Board that protects Ho-Chunk Nation Information. She was also a member of the Consistory on the Ho-Chunk United Church of Christ and served as secretary for many years.

Frances is survived by her husband, Rev. Roger Wentz, her sisters Lillian Thundercloud and Hattie Thundercloud Walker and many sons, daughters, and grandchildren through the Ho-Chunk relationship. Frances is preceded in death by her parents; Daniel and Lydia, her siblings David, Samuel, and Lawrence, and her daughter Renee Wentz.

Following CDC, Wisconsin, and Ho Chunk Nation COVID-19 guidelines, there will be no visitation. A private family funeral will be held Wednesday, December 9, 2020. Please, respect the family's wishes and stay safe at home. In lieu of flowers, the family prefers that memorials be donated to the Ho-Chunk United Church of Christ (Mission Church), P.O. Box 9, Black River Falls, WI 54615.

Buswell Funeral Home of Black River Falls, WI is assisting the family with arrangements.

## **Tribute Wall**

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