



## Deborah Anne Pfeiffenberger

June 12, 1948 - August 29, 2005

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The City of New Britain lost one of its most valuable life-long residents on the morning of August 29, 2005 when Deborah Anne Pfeiffenberger died at New Britain General Hospital after a five-week valiant battle against leukemia and related complications. She was born to Veronica and William H. Pfeiffenberger, Jr. on June 12, 1948.

Deborah, a graduate of New Britain High School, received her Bachelor of Science degree in Art Education from Central Connecticut State University in 1972 and her Master of Science degree, also in Art Education from CCSU, in 1986. Her curatorial and museum management training included internships at the Peabody Museum at Yale University, the American Museum of Natural History in New York City in the department of archaeology and the University of London, also in archaeology. It was her love of children's book illustration that drew her to the New Britain Youth Museum in downtown New Britain where she was curator of exhibitions and collections until she was appointed director of the downtown facility in 1995. A second museum site, Hungerford Park, is in Kensington.

Deborah's long career at the Youth Museum brought many exciting exhibitions to the greater New Britain community. Her contacts among some of the

country's most important illustrators and museum professionals allowed significant works of art and artifacts to be displayed at the Youth Museum. Her years collecting illustrations and researching American illustrators strengthened the Youth Museum's collections and brought an invaluable perspective to the public offerings. She believed strongly in helping children learn about their culture and past through exposure to high quality museum exhibits. Deborah curated and designed hundreds of exhibitions. Some memorable ones were Classic Comic Games, including rare board games that spanned over two hundred years. The Illustrated Child, that brought works by Norman Rockwell, Jesse Wilcox Smith and Joseph Christian Leyendecker to the Museum and Toys of Paper, Toys of Steel which was a unique look at paper toys that included the Art of Betsy McCall and Toys from the Amato Toy Collections. Deborah's unfailing dedication to her profession, creativity and imagination went into every exhibit up to her very last, Get Dressed! Clothing from The Youth Museum's Collection. Her vision of childhood and its place in our society touched countless school children and adults throughout her years at the Youth Museum.

Another major contribution during her tenure is Garden Tales, a delightful garden illustrating children's stories, which she designed and created in collaboration with the Junior League of New Britain.

She was deeply involved in other organizations in the area including the Sanford B.D. Low Memorial Illustration Collection Committee at the New Britain Museum of American Art, and as an Associate Member of the Society of Illustrators in New York City; she was a founding board officer of the Greater New Britain Arts Alliance; a member of the New Britain Lion's Club; member of the board of Vision New Britain; member of the American Association of University Women; board member of the Central Connecticut Tourism District; and had been an active volunteer at the Prudence Crandall Center for Women. An avid bicyclist, Deborah was eager to promote the

creation of more bike trails in Central Vermont, and especially in New Britain connecting its parks.

She is survived by her beloved mother and best friend, Veronica Pfeiffenberger of New Britain, brother William H. Pfeiffenberger, III, of Harwinton, and cousin Jane Whiting of Meriden. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Carlson Funeral Home, New Britain. There are no calling hours. A memorial service will be held in October at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in New Britain.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to the New Britain Youth Museum at 30 High Street, New Britain, CT 06051.

Please share a memory of Deborah with her family on our online guestbook by clicking on "GUESTBOOK" at the bottom of this page.

# Tribute Wall

CW

“ I am deeply saddened to hear of Deborah's passing.I knew her in the turbulent 1960's and 1970's when we were undergrads @ CCSU; I shared many good times with her & her family before moving to FI in 1976...somehow we lost contact over the years...I shall miss that vast inquisitive mind and intellect. Peace for your soul and peace to your bereaving family...Always, " uncle Charlie"

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**Charles Wayrynen** - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RR

“ On behalf of myself, my family, and all the board members of the New Britain Youth Museum, I offer my sincere condolences to the family of Deborah. Her devotion and professionalism to the programs of the Youth Museum will be greatly missed. I considered her not only a colleague, but also a friend. May God grant her eternal peace and joy.

*Sincerely,*

*Robert Ramsey-Board Chairman*

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**Robert Ramsey** - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DA

“ I will always be grateful to Debbie for teaching me my first chords on my S&H Green Stamp guitar. Debbie introduced me to folk music in the girls’ gym office at NBHS, playing her guitar before school. She opened my eyes to world affairs when so many our age were totally self-absorbed. I’ve continued to think of Debbie as I’ve stood silently at vigils for peace and justice over the last 30 years. Philosophy wasn’t even a word in my vocabulary before I was privileged to sit in on discussions of existentialism and the like between Debbie and Joan Belmore. Thanks, Deb, for being there for me at such a critical time in my growth in to adulthood and the real world.

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**Diane Albert** - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Deb was a faithful member of the Lions Club of New Britain and a caring and creative community leader. In her quiet way she helped others, but especially children, know the importance of art, culture and tradition. She will be sorely missed.

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**Douglas Bray** - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SA

“ Debby was a friend in children’s book collecting, illustration, and museum work. It is difficult to imagine our intersecting worlds without her great good humor and creativity and energy. I send my sympathy to her mother and brother. I truly share their sorrow.

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**Susan Aller** - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM