

Lois Marie Ekstrand



Lois Ekstrand, July 2010

Lois was born on August 10, 1929 in Chicago, Illinois, and spent the rest of her first summer at the family's cottage on White Lake, returning again every summer for ninety years. It was a long drive north in those early years, mostly along the West Michigan Pike with her parents, Florence and Roy, and grandparents, Augusta and Edward Hagelin. They would pack picnics, stopping at favorite roadside parks.

Lois lived on Chicago's north side in the home her parents built and moved into before she was born; it remained her home the rest of her life, full of memories and photographs, many of White Lake and her beloved cottage, Winnemac Lodge. She attended North Park Academy and Northwestern University, and went on to teach at Avoca West Elementary School in Glenview, Illinois. Many of her former students attended Lois' funeral in Chicago, remembering her as fondly as she them, in the many stories she told from her teaching years.

Lois always had a camera with her, and if you were with her for any amount of time you grew used to her taking photographs, of landscapes, houses, friends and laughter. She was a member of the North Shore Camera Club and the Chicago Area Camera Club, winning many awards for her work. As the years passed she became a judge for both clubs, a task she took very seriously.

After retirement Lois served as a docent at the Chicago Architectural Foundation for fifteen years. She enjoyed the position immensely, even on the harshest of cold winter days, giving tours to student groups and tourists from the states and around the world. Lois adored sharing the wonders of her much loved Chicago, its architecture and the history behind so many of the buildings.

Lois saved her summertime for her cottage on White Lake. From there she enjoyed years of sailing and boating, in all sorts of weather, deep into the fall, her cameras always ready. The White Lake Historical Society was profoundly important to her; she tried to never miss a meeting. She loved so much about the White Lake area, from the plays at the Howmet Theater, ice cream at Twisters or Pekadill's, Tuesday night concerts at the Bandshell, sodas at Lipkas Drugstore, the annual Fishboil, to the Smorgasbord at the Lebanon Lutheran Church.

While Lois never muttered she was feeling old, and would never tell anyone her age, she loved celebrating her birthday, doing so every year at her cottage, all the years of her life, surrounded by her many friends. Upon meeting Lois one had the feeling they had just met a very dear friend, one they would want to meet again, year after year.

Lois passed away on July 11, 2021, a month shy of her 92 birthday. She is greatly missed by all of her dear friends.