



Nancy Ruth Anderson

April 6, 1935 - May 18, 2026

Nancy Ruth Anderson passed away peacefully on May 18, 2026 in Santa Barbara, California at the age of 91, with her family by her side.

Born in New York City in 1935, Nancy was the only child of Weston and Lois Ruth. She grew up in rural Napanoch in a loving home; her father was a prison nurse and her mom – a former telephone operator - was a church volunteer. Nancy attended nursing school in Troy, New York, where she met Don Anderson; they were married in 1956. Don and Nancy moved to Altadena, California, in 1958 to pursue academic careers.

Nancy continued her education part-time throughout the 1960's and '70's, and later became part of the clinical faculty at the UCLA School of Nursing. She continued to expand her career as a health educator and anthropologist and earned a Ph.D. from UCLA in 1987. She retired as a full professor in the mid-2000's and remained active in her field for another decade. Much of Nancy's work and research took place in Central Juvenile Hall in Los Angeles, and included topics on transcultural nursing, adolescent pregnancy and parenting, and perception of AIDS/HIV risk among adolescents. Nancy spoke enthusiastically about her work with students and although she was their teacher and mentor, she always emphasized how much she learned from them.

Don and Nancy moved permanently to Cambria on the central California coast in 2010, where they had been part-time residents since 1987. They each enjoyed an active retirement and frequent visits from their family – including

granddaughters Karley and Blair Rodriguez, and Kendall and Brooke Anderson. Nancy held leadership roles in the nonprofit Cambria Greenspace, and was dedicated to preserving Cambria's forests and preserves.

In 2019, five years after Don's death, Nancy moved to Santa Barbara and resided in the Valle Verde retirement community, where she made new friends, hosted old friends, and was always used her superb listening and mentoring skills. We are deeply grateful to the Valle Verde community and staff, and the team at Assisted Hospice Care, for their compassionate care and support for Nancy in recent months.

Nancy is survived by her daughter Lynn Rodriguez (Steve), son Lee Anderson (Anne); and 4 granddaughters Karley and Blair Rodriguez and Kendall and Brooke Anderson. She is predeceased by her husband Don Anderson.

Nancy's legacy of love, service, health education research, and teaching inspired her family, friends and colleagues and she will be deeply missed by all.