Mickey L. Ellenbecker, 72, of Pickwick died Sunday, March 9, 2014, at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, La Crosse, Wis.

Mickey was born Dec. 26, 1941, in Fairmont, Minn., to Milo and Dora (Wagner) Ellenbecker. He graduated from Fairmont High School. He attended Hamline University and graduated from Mankato State. He attained his master's degree from University of Wisconsin-Madison. He was a former professor at Winona State University and taught criminal justice and sociology, retiring in 2000. Prior to teaching, he worked in the Winona County court system as a probation officer and he worked with dependent adults, providing a home and adult foster care over the years.

He was a member of First Congregational Church, Winona, where he was active in its leadership, choir and other volunteer duties. He was a well-known caregiver in both his professional and personal life. His passion for making others smile was an important part of his charisma and his witty ability to lighten a mood was a signature trait of Mickey. We know that Mickey will continue to bring a smile to our face knowing we are celebrating his life, not his departure.

He is survived by a son, Mark (Minako) Ellenbecker, Waikiki, Hawaii; daughter, Autumn French McNally, Winona; a stepdaughter, Melissa Fitz, Minneapolis; a granddaughter, Macy McNally; two sisters, Marsha (Skip) Smith, Mound, Minn., and Arlene (Dick) Greengo, Alexandria, Minn.; and other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Services to remember Mickey will be 11 a.m., Saturday, March 15, at First Congregational Church, Winona, with the Rev. Timothy Forester officiating.

Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday, March 14, at Fawcett-Junker Funeral Home, Winona, and beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday at the church.

Words of sympathy or remembrance may be left at www.fawcett-junkerfuneralhome.com. Services entrusted to Fawcett-Junker Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Winona.