Mary Elizabeth Rieder

EYOTA, Minn. — Mary Elizabeth Rieder, Ph.D., 68, of Eyota died at her home in Eyota, surrounded by family on Tuesday evening, July 20, 2010, after a long and courageous encounter with ovarian cancer.

Mary was born Feb. 18, 1942, to Francis and Elizabeth (Hesse) DePauw in Grand Rapids, Mich. She graduated from Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, receiving her bachelor of arts degree. She continued her education at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, obtaining her Ph.D. in economics. Mary and Edmund Rieder were married Aug. 29, 1964, in Grand Rapids. They lived in Des Moines, Iowa, for five years before moving to St. Charles in 1971, where they reared their four children. In 1992, they moved to their farm in rural Eyota.

Mary was a professor of economics at Winona State University until her retirement, except during 1979/1980 where Mary took a leave from WSU to work as a senior economist for the Federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare’s division of Medicaid Cost Estimates, where she served as interim director. Mary, a beloved teacher to her students at WSU, served as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Acting Dean of the Library and Director of the Rochester Center at the university.

In addition to Mary’s esteemed academic career, she made time to contribute to her community in numerous ways: Mary served as the economic advisor to Congressman Tim Penny, she ran for U.S. Congress twice and until her death was a member of the State Council of Economic Advisors. She worked in the South East Minnesota Rural Education & Resource Center for those in need, in St. Charles, until illness precluded further involvement. She was a member of St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Elba.

Mary loved cooking and socializing; she took great pleasure in art, photography, bridge and gardening. She especially enjoyed time with her family. Mary had an exuberant personality, a great sense of humor and a wonderful smile.

Mary is survived by her loving husband, Ed; her four children; three daughters, Maurya (Mike Jenner) of Sydney, Australia, Killian (Jeff Julkowski) of Minneapolis, and Jocelyn Rieder, M.D. (Derik Fettig) of Edina, Minn.; and son, Thaddeus of Benton Harbor, Mich.; her sister, Ann Hesse of Madison, Wis.; Tessie, her beloved Bouvier dog; and Max the cat, heritage of many varieties. Mary also has five grandchildren, Tomalin, Max, Jax, Delia and Grier who brought great joy to her heart.

A funeral Mass will be held at 10:30 a.m. Sunday at St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Elba, with Father Paul Breza officiating. Burial will follow in St. Aloysius Cemetery. Friends may call from 5 to 8 p.m. today at Hoff Funeral and Cremation Service in St. Charles. They may also call one hour before services at the church on Sunday. Share a memory of Mary and view her tribute video when it becomes available at www.hofffuneral.com.

Memorials, if desired, can be sent to the Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Association, 4606 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55407.