

Louise Marie Bohning Knuth was born in South Newburgh Township (now called Garfield Heights), Cuyahoga County, Ohio on October 17, 1912. She was the oldest child of Martin and Pauline Ehlert Bohning, and big sister to Dor, Esther, Wally, Paul, Peggy, and Irene.

Louise entered elementary school at St. John Lutheran Church in 1918, and had a perfect attendance for 12 years. Shortly after graduation from Garfield Heights High School as salutatorian in 1930, she won the Ohio state shorthand competition, enabling her to enroll in Spencerian Business College. She became a legal secretary in the Cleveland Terminal Tower, being able to take Gregg shorthand at a speed of 125 words per minute.

Meanwhile a young man named Ervin Knuth spent part of the year 1931 as an apprentice teacher at St. John, and a great romance began to flourish after Louise had a chance to visit him the following year at his college in Chicago. Their engagement was announced on her 21st birthday. They wrote letters to each other every day, and spent many weekends together in spite of the 350-mile distance, thanks to special excursion fares on the Nickel Plate Rail Road. They were married on July 26, 1936, and made their home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Ervin had been called to teach at Emmaus Lutheran School. Their son, Donald Ervin, was born on January 10, 1938; their daughter, Paula Beth, was born on July 13, 1941.



1930

Just before he would have had Don as a student, Erv began to teach at Lutheran High School, then became an administrator at the High School Association of Greater Milwaukee. He and Lou loved to travel, first by train and then by car on extended family vacations to nearly every state in the USA. After their children had left home they regularly had weekend adventures in rural Wisconsin and occasionally also toured distant lands.

Erv died suddenly during the summer of 1974, having led an extremely active life, and Lou proceeded to carry on many of his activities. She also continued to enjoy worldwide travel, visiting every continent except Antarctica and spending her 75th birthday in New Zealand.

When Paula started to school in 1946, Lou began a career in real estate. At first she was secretary to the owner of the Banker's Building; later she became the manager of that building, after it had been sold and resold—eventually to

Towne Realty Corporation in 1964. By 1972 she had obtained a broker's license and was helping to manage eight large office buildings in downtown Milwaukee. She was affiliated for more than 40 years with the Building Owners and Managers Association of Milwaukee, being elected to every office except president of that nearly-all-male group. She continued to work part time for Towne Realty until the end of 2001.



1955

Lou and Erv moved to Menomonee Falls in 1962 after Lou had submitted a winning jingle that won Milwaukee's Home Show Home. But she continued to be an active member of Emmaus Lutheran Church in inner-city Milwaukee, singing in the choir for more than 60 years and serving on many committees including the Board of Trustees. She regularly attended national conventions of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, and actively supported Milwaukee's Lutheran High Schools.

At home, Lou often was hostess to teachers' groups and to the church choir, family, and friends. Each Christmas she built a gingerbread house. Her living room was decorated with hundreds of giraffes of many different kinds.

She was present at the baptisms, confirmations, and weddings of each of her parents' 16 grandchildren, as well as six far-flung grandchildren of her own. At the end of 2001 she was able to be with all of her offspring:

Don and Jill Knuth of Stanford, California; Paula, Lloyd, and Chris Darwent of Heffley Creek, British Columbia; John and Julie Knuth of Colorado Springs, Colorado; Jennifer Knuth and Greg Tucker of Oxford, England; John and Christyann Darwent of Davis, California; Jim Darwent, Louise and Corey Riley of Calgary, Alberta; and five great-grandsons (Rees and Kadin Tucker, Carter and Kevin Knuth, Hugh Darwent).



2002

Louise died on June 25, 2002, of complications following a stroke. Services to celebrate her life and work were held on June 29, 2002, at Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and a few days later at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Garfield Heights, Ohio. She was buried at St. John cemetery, next to her husband. Contributions in her memory may be made to The Ervin and Louise Knuth Memorial Endowment of The Lutheran High School Association of Greater Milwaukee, 5201 South 76th Street, Greendale, WI 53129-1197; or to the Selle Endowment Fund of Emmaus Evangelical Lutheran Church, 2818 North 23rd Street, Milwaukee, WI 53206; or to St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, 11333 Granger Road, Cleveland, OH 44125; or to the Mark Witzke Benevolent Fund at Key Bank, 6424 Royalton Road, Cleveland, OH 44133.