

In 1941, in Brooklyn, New York, a little girl named Judith Laura was born. Her parents were musicians, her mother a pianist. Judith and her family moved to Manhattan, New York when Judith was just one year old, but eventually moved to Trenton, New Jersey, where her father had gotten a job. She attended a primary school, a new junior high school, and a new high school. Judith also started learning piano at the age of six, however, quit and switched to the cello in junior high school. Eventually, she quit cello, as well.

Judith grew up on a street that had no individual houses, but had mostly small apartment houses. Most of her friends were boys, as there were not too many girls in the neighborhood. She lived there until secondary school, when she moved two streets away. Judith started socializing more at school than at home, and being friends with many boys, she learned and played softball with them. Sometimes, since girls usually played softball, and boys usually played baseball, the girls and boys switched, and the girls would play baseball, and the boys would play softball.

Judith liked school, where her favorite subject was English. Judith started to write her own stories in 2nd grade, after she learned to read and write. Her mother wanted Judith to become a pianist, or a teacher, but Judith, her mind set on being a writer, strongly said no. She knew what she wanted to be at a very young age, which was to be a writer. Judith's favorite teacher had been her language teacher, who taught her Spanish and French. Her teacher did not make them translate from English to French, which was unusual at that time. No

English was spoken in the class. Judith was considered smart at school, and, being smart, she was one of the first ten or fifteen people to graduate.

Judith went to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, on a scholarship. She went there because they had a good journalism program. She found the biggest difference from high school was that, being from a Jewish family, the Jewish and the non-Jewish kids socialized. When Judith talked to other people in college about religion, they said that she didn't seem Jewish, she seemed more of a Unitarian or Universalist (U-U). So, Judith's beliefs started to change, and eventually, she did become a U-U, where there were few rules, she was given religious freedom, and she was able to celebrate any holiday she wanted! She, in fact, celebrated fewer holidays than before, as she didn't "have to celebrate" them. During her time at OU, there was a lot of competition between the journalism majors (which was her major), and the English majors. Many people wanted Judith to switch over to English, but she didn't switch because really wanted a job in journalism.

After graduating, Judith got a job at the Trenton Times, a newspaper, so she could live at home, which was her parents' wish. At that time, people didn't allow women to be part of the news department, so she and another woman were the first two women on the Trenton Times staff. Judith was only 22, while the other woman was 40. Judith was assigned general assignment reporting, which meant that whatever wasn't assigned to someone else, she would do, although she ended up writing reviews, which she had done in college, on dramas, plays, and

music, mostly. Judith liked that the most. Judith left the first newspaper, and wanted to work for a newspaper in Denver, Colorado, where she had some friends. It just so happened that one of the editors of the Trenton paper was good friends with one of the editors of the Denver paper, so Judith was sent on her way with a letter of recommendation. She tried getting a newspaper job in Denver, however, due to a gender bias, she wasn't able to. She worked on ads at an ad agency. An interesting story goes that one weekend, Judith's boyfriend didn't show up, and she found that he was dating somebody else *while* he was dating her! Imagine that! Many years later Judith bumped into his wife, who is a poet, on Facebook. The guy had been a poet and artist, but had died early.

Judith met her husband at a folk dance in the back of a Princeton University dorm, where he was living as a graduate student at the time. They eventually went on an adventure to Europe, where they went to France, Germany, Austria, but, sadly, never made it to England. Ms. Willis said that she was lucky to go there because she never had the chance again.

Judith lost her husband to cancer in 1975 and retired from her job in 2000. The hardest time for her had been when her parents died, and then when her husband had died.

The best advice Judith could give is that when you choose your career, do what you like and go into a lifetime career. Other people believe that Ms. Judith's greatest accomplishments were her books, three on Goddess religion and two novels, one of which is named after Johannes Sebastian Bach's invention, the

three part invention, Two of the 3 Goddess books are mixed-genre and contain poetry. Her books have been given awards and strongly positive reviews. For more info, see www.judithlaura.com/books.html. Many people wanted her to republish her books, and one company even wanted to make one of them into a movie, but Mrs. Judith Willis declined. Judith also has put together one book of her poetry. At this date, it is unpublished although many of her poems have been individually published.

These days, Ms. Willis enjoys her daily life, which includes eating Marie Callender's small and large size turkey pot pies (the chicken pot pie has too much spice), and more frequently eats the small size. She enjoys eating buttered toast and Dannon peach yogurt and will usually have decaffeinated tea, and not having to go to work daily. She also sometimes dips her lunch sandwiches into orange juice, though she also sometimes dips them into decaffeinated tea. She recently celebrated her 80th birthday. Happy Belated Birthday Ms. Judith!