A memorial has been planned for Ruth Fortson Anderson, age 85, of Grinnell, Iowa, who died on Friday, July 26, 2013, of complications from pancreatic cancer at the Mayflower Community Health Care Center in Grinnell.

The memorial will be held on Saturday, December 7, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 1026 State St., Grinnell. As per her wishes, her body has been deeded to the University of Iowa for anatomical research and her remains have not yet been returned to the family. The memorial will provide an opportunity for those who knew and loved Ruth to gather and remember her in her home church. When the remains are returned from the U of I, Ruth has requested that her ashes be scattered in the mountains of New Mexico.

Ruth was born the daughter of Gordon Russell and Inesse Yount Fortson on December 1, 1927, in San Francisco, California. She spent her childhood in their hometown of Susanville, California, and later attended Colorado College where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in biology.

During her more than 50 years in Grinnell, Ruth spent her professional life at the Grinnell Travel Center and most recently in reception at Iowa Valley Community College. The greatest joy of her retirement years was caring for her beloved dogs. Additionally, she enjoyed nature and wildlife photography, was an avid reader, and supported a variety of non-profit animal protection organizations.

Memorials may be made in Ruth's name to D.E.L.T.A Animal Rescue, P.O. Box 9, Glendale, CA 91209 www.deltarescue.org or the Poweshiek Animal League Shelter www.helpPALAnimals.com. Memories and condolences may be shared on the Smith Funeral Home website at www.smithfh.com.

Ruth is survived by her sons, Jeremy Kurtz of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Gordon Kurtz of Corvallis, Oregon; and her cherished dogs Leise and Chaco.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents; husband, John Anderson; and her aunt, Dorothy Yount Gonzales.