

Judith Evelyn Filler

1/14/1949 - 9/17/2016

Judith Evelyn Filler, January 14, 1949- September 17, 2016

Jude was the daughter of Louis and Shulamith (Burstein) Filler. Born prematurely in Ohio, Jude grew up in Yellow Springs, where her dad was a professor at Antioch College. While she was in high school, her parents divorced, and she and her mother moved to Israel for a few years. After returning to the US, Jude attended and graduated from Antioch College.

She traveled in Latin America, all the way to the southern tip of South America, and taught English in Brazil. She married, earned an MBA at Simmons College in Boston, and worked in New York City as an executive for CBS and American Airlines. This enabled her to travel widely. Single again, she moved to Dallas, still with American Airlines. In Dallas she found her calling, organizing for social change as a volunteer with Amnesty International, focusing on abolishing the death penalty. To better understand conditions on Death Row, Jude began visiting inmates and forged deep friendships with several of the men.

Moving to Austin, she became executive director of Texas Alliance for Human Needs, a coalition of grassroots groups working for social justice, and continued working against the death penalty. This work was one of the great passions of her life. David Powell, a long-term resident of Death Row, became one of her best friends. His 1999 re-conviction and 2010 execution were terrible blows to her. Diagnosed with neuro-endocrine, or carcinoid, cancer after David's re-conviction, her health took a turn for the worse after witnessing his execution.

Unable to work, she went on disability, yet continued to lend practical, moral and emotional support to others. In 1997 she had invited her elderly father to come and live with her in Austin, and cared for him until he died. She ran a bed-and-breakfast in her home, and an online bookstore, having inherited thousands of her father's books. She organized carcinoid cancer support groups in Austin and San Antonio, led a Jungian Dream group, taught English in Spain, cooked and gardened and participated in an ongoing book group.

Jude became a member of the Friends Meeting of Austin in 2004, and was deeply involved and active in the life of the Meeting for about 10 years. Peace and Social Concerns, Death Penalty Abolition, Community Life, Circle of Light and Nominating were all committees that she served on. Attending FGC Gathering several times, she led a weeklong workshop on Dreams at one session. She spent a semester at Pendle Hill, where she especially enjoyed Sally Palmer's Creativity classes. She welcomed David Price, an elderly single attender, into her home as a housemate, where he stayed as long as he was able to live on his own. Another longterm housemate, Gray Blanchard, became active with Quakers as well. For many years Jude was part of a "Friendly Sixes" supper group. Quietly, she connected with and helped many new attenders learn about Friends. Lillian Fredrickson, an elderly Friend, once commented that Jude's cooking was keeping her alive. Jude also helped her neighbors.

For many years, Jude had a support group, mostly made up of Friends, led by Terri English. She was deeply grateful to the members of her support group and to others who provided transportation and helped with other needs. Two Friends traveled with her to New Orleans to Carcinoid Cancer conferences, and others supported her in various ways. She did her best to learn about and understand her cancer and treatment options, and we tried to do likewise. In early 2014 she was diagnosed with acute leukemia, which explained why she felt so tired when walking her beloved dog, Grace. Deciding to go to MD Anderson in Houston took her away from her Austin support group and friends, and her dog, but Jude's cousin Jasmine Zowniriw and her daughter Vivien had moved to Austin and kept the household running. Members of the Live Oak Friends Meeting in Houston were generous and caring.

She endured five rounds of chemo, cut off all her hair and sent it to Locks of Love, aced a bone marrow transplant, and returned to Austin in time to celebrate her birthday at home. Sadly, she was not well enough to travel to Ohio for her 50th high school reunion this past summer. In September, after a valiant battle to regain her health and strength, she died quietly in the hospice at Christopher House, with her brother Jem and half-brother Stephen present. Her brother Vic and his wife Stella came from California and were with her for several days before she died. She chose to be cremated, and a plaque will be placed on the wall of the memorial garden at the Friends Meeting of Austin. At her memorial service, many told how she had inspired them and changed their lives.

In addition to the above-mentioned family members, Jude is survived by half-siblings Abigail Crome, Helen Filler, Jonathan Filler, Graham Filler and Emily Filler, and by her many friends. World traveler, connoisseur, gardener and cook, book and movie lover, spiritual seeker, animal lover and tireless advocate for the poor and marginalized--although she could be difficult at times, Judith Filler made a positive difference in countless lives.

Joanna Redfield Vaughn  
Friends Meeting of Austin  
Austin, Tx. 78721





**Judith Evelyn Filler (“Jude”)  
January 14, 1949 - September 17, 2016**

Jude was the daughter of Louis and Shulamith (Burstein) Filler. World traveler, connoisseur and cook, gardener, book and movie lover, spiritual seeker, animal lover, and tireless advocate for the poor and marginalized, she made a positive difference in many lives.

Jude was raised in Yellow Springs, Ohio, spent some high school years in Israel, and graduated from Antioch College. She traveled in Latin America and was an ESL professor in Brazil. After marrying, she earned an MBA at Simmons College in Boston, worked in New York as an executive for CBS and American Airlines, and moved to Dallas. There she found her calling organizing for social change as a volunteer for Amnesty International. AI members in Dallas still recall her energetic work to abolish the death penalty.

She moved to Austin to become executive director of a coalition of grassroots groups working for social justice, and continued to work against the death penalty.



Her work against the death penalty was one of the great passions of her life, driven by her personal concern for many of the inmates of Texas' Death Row. Among these was David Powell, a long-term resident of Death Row who became one of her best friends. His re-conviction in 1999 and execution in 2010 were terrible blows to her, and she often attributed her two great declines in physical health to these events: she received a cancer diagnosis after David's re-conviction, and her health took a turn for the worse after witnessing his execution.

She continued throughout all this time to lend moral and emotional support to others, even as she battled grave illness. She also took on new activities, becoming a member of Friends Meeting of Austin in 2004 and enjoying a rich Quaker life. Jude ran an online bookstore and a bed-and-breakfast, organized cancer support groups, and taught English in Spain.

She was generous in whatever ways she could be, and took David Price, an elderly single man who was a member of the Friends Meeting, into her home, and kept him with her as long as he was able to live on his own.

Jude is survived by brothers Stuart Filler, of Birmingham, Michigan, and Victor Filler, of Palo Alto, California; by half-siblings Stephen Filler, Abigail Crome, Helen Filler, Jonathan Filler, Graham Filler, and Emily Filler, by her cousin Jasmine Zowniriw and Jasmine's daughter Vivien, and by her many friends.

**Program**  
**Memorial Meeting with Attention to the Life of Jude Filler**  
**Friends Meeting of Austin**  
**October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016**

- Short video loop and still photographs in the meeting room (approximately 1:00pm to 1:25)
- Welcome, with a brief summary of Jude's life and explanation of Quaker memorial meetings. (1:30)
- Silent unprogrammed worship with vocal ministry
- End of worship with songs from the Threshold Choir
- Social hour with light fare
  - During social hour, Bob Karstens invites anyone who is interested to do a short interview in the library for a film that he is making on Jude's life.
  - Bob will also show in the meeting room a brief (20-30 minute) film that he has already produced featuring clips from recent interviews with Jude, and other information about her life.
  - Sympathy cards for Jude's family will be available in the social hall for us to sign

*Note as you leave the property by car: If at all possible, avoid making a left turn on Martin Luther King, due to the heavy traffic along MLK and the fact that we're just below a hill. When exiting the property pay attention to anyone who pulled out just ahead of you, as that car may have to wait to enter traffic and may block you from getting out of the oncoming lane.*