

Ruth Stafford Peale 1906 - 2008

(Mrs. Norman Vincent Peale)

Ruth Stafford Peale was the widow of the noted minister Dr. Norman Vincent Peale. Born in Fonda, Iowa, she had three children: Margaret Peale Everett of Sherman, Connecticut, Dr. John Stafford Peale of Palmyra, Virginia, and Elizabeth Peale Allen of Pawling, New York. Mrs. Peale graduated from Syracuse University and taught mathematics at Syracuse Central High School before her marriage in 1930.



Because of her dynamic spiritual achievements, Ruth Stafford Peale was considered a great influence to millions, making many contributions to religion in America.

Mrs. Peale was Chairman Emeritus of Guideposts, the pre-eminent media company, providing positive inspiration to the lives of millions of people through its leading magazines, book publications, web sites and outreach programs. The best known is Guideposts, with a paid circulation of 2.5 million, making it among the top 25 largest magazines in the United States. Instrumental in the launch of Guideposts in 1945, she also arranged for publication of her husband's sermons in an innovative program that grew into the Peale Center, located in Pawling, NY. Under Mrs. Peale's guidance, the two organizations blended their strengths in 1995 to form the current Guideposts organization. The outreach division of Guideposts, located at the Peale Center, transforms lives in lasting ways through a number of activities. The Ruth Stafford Peale Prayer Power Network, the worldwide prayer fellowship named in her honor, receives approximately 500,000 prayers a year and recently launched, OurPrayer.org, a new global online prayer community. The Knit for Kids program, distributes nearly 500,000 handmade sweaters worldwide to children in need. In addition, Guideposts distributes hundreds of thousands of free magazines and booklets each year to hospitals, nursing homes, military organizations and relief agencies.

Ruth Peale was a member of the Board of Directors of: American Bible Society, Interchurch Center, Institutes of Religion and Health, and National Bible Association. Mrs. Peale wrote numerous articles appearing in Reader's Digest, Women's Day, and Saturday Evening Post. She is the author of Secrets of Staying in Love published by Thomas Nelson, as well as her autobiography, A Lifetime of Positive Thinking published by Guideposts. She addressed numerous church, business and women's groups across the country, and appeared on national television broadcasts. Mrs. Peale was depicted in 1964 Hollywood production of Dr. Peale's life entitled, "One Man's Way."

Among other distinctions, Mrs. Peale was the first woman president of the National Board of North American Missions of the Reformed Church in America and the first woman chairman of the Planning and Program Committee of the National Council of Churches 1966 Assembly. She served for 10 years as national president of the Women's Board of Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church in America; served as vice-president of the Council of Churches of the City of New York and of the National Council of Churches; a trustee of Hope College, Holland, Michigan; Champlain College, Burlington, Vermont; and Syracuse University in New York. Mrs. Peale was also a member of the National Women's Board of Northwood Institute.

Mrs. Peale lived for almost sixty years on Quaker Hill, Pawling, New York, and is survived by her two daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth, her son John, eight grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Awards Received by Ruth Stafford Peale

The New York State Mother of the Year Award — 1963
Distinguished Woman of the Year from the National Art Association
Cum Laude Award from Syracuse University Alumni Association NY — 1965
Honor Iowans' Award from Buena Vista College — 1966
Churchwoman of the Year by the Religious Heritage of America — 1969
American Mothers Committee Religion Award — 1970
First Honorary Chancellor Weber College, 1972-1973
The Distinguished Service Award from the Council of Churches, NYC — 1973
Distinguished Citizen Award from Champlain College — 1976
Distinguished Service to Community and Nation, General Federation of Women's Clubs — 1977
The Governor's Award from the State of Nebraska
The Horatio Alger Award — 1977
Religious Heritage Award — 1979
The Frances E. Willard Award of Achievement of Alpha Phi Fraternity
American Achievers Award
Society for Family of Man Award (joint medallion with Dr. Peale) — 1981
Adlerson-Broadus Award — 1982
Bride's Magazine Marriage Achievement Award (on 54 years of marriage to Dr. Peale) — 1984
Golden Angel Award by Religion in Media — 1987
Adela Rogers St. John Round Table Award (with Dr. Peale) — 1987
Distinguished Achievement Award from American Aging Association (with Dr. Peale) — 1987
International Communications Galaxy of Fame — 1987
Salute to Women in Industry, YWCA — 1988
Paul Harris Award from New York Rotary — 1989
Arthritis Foundation Dutchess County Leaders' Award — 1992
International Platform Assoc. Norman Vincent Peale Award for Leader in Communications — 1994
Norman Vincent Peale Award for Positive Thinking — 1994
The Dave Thomas Well Done! Award — 1994
Member of Who's Who Worldwide, "Who's Who Registry of Business Leaders" — 1994
Master of Influence Award, National Speakers Association — 1995
A Special Citation from the Laymen's National Bible Committee — 1997
The Leadership Award, Worldwide Leadership Council — 1998
Certificate for Distinguished Service, New York State Federated Women's Clubs — 1999
Woman of the Year, American Association of University Women—2000
Candl Foundation Award — 2000
Key to the City of Huntsville, AL — 2000
Woman of Distinction by Reformed Church in America — 2001

Ruth Stafford Peale Honorary Degrees

Doctor of Laws, Syracuse University —1953
Doctor of Letters, Hope College —1962
Doctor of Humane Letters, Milwaukee School of Engineering —1985
Doctor of Humane Letters, Judson College —1988

Source: <http://www.ruthstaffordpeale.org/biography.html>