



Arthur James "Jim" Lyons

September 18, 1935 - February 12, 2025

Jim Lyons passed away on Feb. 12, 2025, of dementia, at age 89. He is survived by his daughter Margaret "Maite" Lyons (Jon Dillon) of Bellingham and grandchildren, Elisa L. King and Rory L. King. He was preceded in death by his son, Michael Lyons, his wife, Rosa del Campo Lyons, and both sisters, Kathleen (Lyons) Moore and Margaret (Lyons) Lavery.

Jim was born on Sept. 18, 1935, coincidentally Chile's national holiday, in St. Louis, MO, to Arthur J. Lyons and Margaret M. (Yoch) Lyons, the third of three children. Jim was a proud third generation St. Louisan and always considered it home even while his wanderlust took him many places. Jim's extended family and friends were a constant throughout his life and, despite physical distances, he stayed closely connected with his sisters, cousins, and many friends, including from grade school, all of whom remained very close their entire lives.

After graduating from St. Louis University High School, Jim entered the Jesuit seminary. Although he realized that being a priest was not his calling, he stayed involved with the Jesuit mission of education and his Jesuit friends. First he joined the army and served for two years, then, after graduating from St. Louis University with a BA in European history, he moved to Cuernavaca, Mexico, teaching English through a Jesuit teaching mission for another couple of years. After finishing a Masters in International Education in just six months

back at St. Louis University, he moved to Santiago, Chile, in 1962 to teach at a Jesuit high school. While also teaching at the Chilean-American Cultural Institute, he met Rosa del Campo, a local Spanish and English teacher. They married in 1965 and moved to the USA so Jim could start a PhD at New School for Social Work in New York City. Their first child, Margaret, was born while there and two years later their second child, Michael, was born when they moved to Pittsburgh. In January, 1970, Jim returned with his family to Cuernavaca to study at Centro Intercultural de Documentación for a semester. They returned to Pittsburgh to wrap up their life there as they were due to move back to Chile with a Ministry of Education job in hand in late 1970; however, political changes eliminated Jim's position so they decided to settle in University City, St. Louis. They bought a house with a huge yard in a racially and economically diverse neighborhood, adopted a dog and a cat, and raised their children there. Over the years he and Rosa were able to travel back to Chile on various occasions as well as host family and friends from there, maintaining the strong connections with Rosa's people.

Jim spent 30 years as the Adult Education Coordinator for the St. Louis Public Library. As part of his work, he attended conferences and workshops on futures in information and technology. Along with Rosa, he was instrumental in founding St. Louis' chapter of the Green Party and in supporting Soviet-US citizen peace initiatives. He began keeping bees in his backyard and at friends' properties in the mid-1970s and continued for 35 years. As an avid and skilled gardener, he transformed the yard into various flower and vegetable gardens. He also loved reading and could often be found on the sofa or on the porch with a variety of books, magazines, and newspapers nearby. Weekend breakfasts and homemade bread were his favorite kitchen contributions to the family. Nonetheless, he maintained his enduring love of the outdoors and regularly went canoeing, trail building, camping, birdwatching, fishing, etc. He also took his kids on hikes and bike rides, and played handball twice a week after work for years. Unfortunately, his son,

Mike, drowned while visiting Chile at age 20, and his death was a deep blow to the entire family. Jim lost a little spark but picked up and kept going.

When Jim and Rosa retired, they sold the family home and moved to Bellingham in 2001 to be with their only grandchildren, who were then a preschooler and a newborn. They were his greatest joys in life, and he never missed an opportunity to show, teach, and share knowledge and skills with them. He took his grandkids on many adventures at parks, beaches, farms, events, museums, restaurants, and attended all their school and extracurricular events. And as he had done with his children, Jim enjoyed sharing his resourcefulness and creative fixes for items and problems, learned from his family's depression era needs.

As soon as he arrived in Bellingham, Jim immediately started his volunteering career in a myriad of opportunities: Mt. Baker Beekeepers Association, Marine Life Center, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, and SPARK Museum of Electrical Invention were his main weekly and monthly activities for many years. He was a docent at SPARK for 10 years and it was his favorite job; he loved being able to learn and teach history again and talk to people, young and old, from all over the world.

A funeral service and green burial will be held on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, at 2:00pm, at Moles Greenacres chapel.

In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate donations to SPARK Museum of Electrical Invention.