



Esther Donna Melcher

May 23, 1941 - May 5, 2022

Esther Donna Westby was born on May 23, 1941 in Chicago, Illinois. Her Norwegian parents were Margit and Clarence Westby.

Esther's father passed away when she was very young, resulting in the family moving to Seattle, Washington, to be closer to family. Esther grew up in Seattle and graduated from Lincoln High School, Seattle Pacific University and the University of Washington with a degree in nursing. She became a registered nurse following in her LPN mother's footsteps.

Her love of medicine and talent resulted in jobs at hospitals, clinics and schools in Seattle. In 1968 while visiting a friend in Juneau, Alaska, she took a job at the local hospital. Esther was visiting Skagway, Alaska, on July 4 when she met Jerry Melcher while waiting for the ferry to arrive from Haines, Alaska, for her return trip to Juneau.

After a two-year courtship in Alaska, Seattle and Salem, Oregon, they were married in 1970 on Esther's birthday, in Seattle. After a Hawaiian honeymoon they lived for a short time in Salem, Oregon, and then drove the mostly gravel Alaska highway to Anchorage, Alaska.

During their 30 years in Alaska Esther worked as a pediatric nurse, Jerry practiced law and they raised their two children, Maureen and Trenton. Esther

dearly loved Alaska and extensively traveled throughout the Great Land. Rivers, waterfalls, mountains and wildlife were her passion. She loved to sit by a fire near the banks of a stream.

In 2000 Esther and Jerry moved to Bellingham, Washington to be near their children and grandchildren Micah and Madeline.

Esther's passion for travel and the outdoors continued for most of the twenty-one plus years she lived in Bellingham. She and her husband loved road trips and cruising and as a result visited many states and countries.

Esther was able to fulfill her travel and waterfall love by visiting Niagara Falls, Victoria and Iguazu Falls in New York, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the border between Brazil and Argentina. Her wildlife passion was celebrated by visiting Denali, Yellowstone, and Glacier National Parks and the animal parks of South Africa where she thrilled at seeing the Big 5. Her love of friends and family resulted in several trips to Norway and countless gatherings of friends and family.

Her other passions included reading, crossword puzzles and hearing Jerry play the piano and sing. She was a member of the Bellingham Bookies for many years and she travelled with her husband and the Mt. Baker Toppers barbershop chorus to New Zealand and Finland.

Esther will always be remembered by her family for her vibrant sense of humor, her compassion, kindness, sweetness and enduring strength. She suffered in her later years with cancer but never gave it an inch. She almost made it to her 81st birthday and 52nd Anniversary. Her life was one well lived.

Esther was pre-deceased by her parents, older sister Camilla and brother Kenneth. Survivors include her husband Jerry, daughter Maureen and her

husband Andrew Skipton of Savannah, Georgia, son Trenton and fiancé Heather of Bellingham, her older brother Clarence Westby of Marysville, Washington, long-time special family friend Brian Gill of Lynden and many cousins, nieces and nephews in Norway and the U.S.

Please send any memorials to the Bellingham PeaceHealth St. Joseph Cancer Center in Bellingham in memory of Esther Donna who we will love forever and always. We are so blessed that she was part of our lives. We shall never forget her.

Esther's family invites you to attend her memorial service on Saturday June 25th at 2 p.m. Join us at Bayview Chapel, 2465 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham, Washington. A reception will follow.

Tribute Wall

DJ

“ *Jerry and family,
Our condolences on the loss of Esther. So sorry to hear it. We
would never have known her, she looks so different. Lovely picture
of her. Sad, but a relief that she is no longer suffering. Again, our
condolences to you all.*

Dolly and Mike Jens - May 20, 2022 at 12:00 AM