



JoAnn Winifred Nelson

August 12, 1940 - March 29, 2019

Beloved daughter, sister, mother, grandmother and friend. JoAnn Winifred Nelson went to heaven on March 29, 2019.

JoAnn was born August 12, 1940 to Joseph and Nina Vitaljic in Bellingham, WA. She was the youngest with three older siblings Katherine, Andy, and Vera. Growing up within the Slavic fishing community in Fairhaven, Bellingham shaped her commitment to family, value for hard work and love for the sea.

She left Bellingham when she married in 1965. A Washingtonian her whole life, she ventured to Auburn, Lake Tapps and Kent but found her way back to her first love: Chuckanut Drive, Bellingham Bay and tulip fields of Skagit Valley.

JoAnn graduated Bellingham High School in 1958. She was a stay-at-home mom for the duration of her 20+ year marriage to Ed Nelson. As a single mother, she went to Green River Community College and got her Associate Degree as a Computer Support Specialist. She started at Boeing at an entry level position and through training and hard work she earned her way to a System Analyst enjoying a 20-year career.

Anyone that spent time with JoAnn would soon learn about her passions:

being a Grandma, loving her cats, singing her heart out to Neil Diamond and working out in the garden. She proudly wore her Seahawks and Mariners gear as she traveled the US and the world. Her faith in God led her to be incredibly generous: volunteering her time, sharing her resources and serving those in need. She loved to tell stories, go on adventures with friends and hunt for a good bargain.

The last ten years she worked at Hannegan Properties to help run the day to day activities of the community farm. She loved being a part of the partnership with Christ the King church and working alongside the 250+ volunteers. Together they grew and harvested more than 70,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables each year for food banks throughout Whatcom County. As a tribute to JoAnn's legacy, a third green house is under construction and will be named in her honor.

She is survived by her children: Kim (Eric) Porter, Aaron (Kristi) Nelson and Eric (Tara) Nelson and her grandchildren Emily, Abby and Maverick Nelson.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 6th, 2019 at 11am at Moles Farewell Tributes (2465 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham)

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Whatcom Humane Society.

Please feel free to add your memories of JoAnn below.

Tribute Wall

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“*JoAnn and I were neighbors raised on 13th Street, part of the Croatian fishing community. From me and my family our condolences go out to her family at this time of their loss.*”

Nicholene Costanti - March 29, 2019 at 12:00 AM