



Katherine Beth "Kathi" Willis

January 1, 1955 - December 17, 2023

Katherine (Kathi) passed away December 17, 2023 of an unexpected and brief illness, leaving a large hole in our lives. Kathi was born December 1, 1955 in Tacoma, WA to Raymond and Ruth (Herbener) Klopsch. She attended Western Washington University, University of Washington and Pacific Lutheran University, graduating with honors from PLU in 1980 with a double major in French and Education and a minor in Art History.

Kathi taught French and English literature in Seattle, Mukilteo, and Sehome High School in Bellingham for over 15 years. When her beloved daughter Kelsey was born, Kathi paused work, later substituting for K-12 throughout the Bellingham school system. She especially loved working in the school libraries and language classes.

Kathi's interests were nearly unlimited and she approached them with zest and serious inquisitiveness. She found joy in art, architecture, birdwatching, genealogy, travel and travel research, literature and poetry, music of all genres, history and lore, Mahjong, wine tasting, theater and museums. Her working notes on these are legion!

Kathi had an eye for beauty and she discovered quirky and delightful things everywhere. Kathi appreciated the people around her – her siblings, church family, book group, and neighbors – and shared her passions with them with

contagious enthusiasm.

In the last couple of years, Kathi had the opportunity to visit Scotland, Greece and, most recently, Egypt. Each experience was the culmination of much dreaming, research, and joy. We are comforted that in these experiences and innumerable other travels she was in her happy space.

Kathi is pre-deceased by her parents Raymond Klopsch and Ruth Daugherty, grandparents Otto and Elsbeth Herbener and John and Elizabeth Klopsch, and Uncle Mark Herbener. She is survived by her husband Kurt Willis, daughter Kelsey Willis, and her siblings Mark Klopsch, Carolyn Hall, Connie Daugherty, Theresa Radka and their spouses, her five nieces and three grand nieces, her cousins Jenny Pickett and Matthew Herbener, and our Elkhound Nika.

We grieve Kathi's loss and cherish the memories we have of her full life.
Reposez avec Dieu chère Kathi.

A memorial service will be held at Christ the Servant Lutheran on February 3rd, 2024 at 2pm.

Tribute Wall

WA

“*Madame Lien is how I knew her in high school. She was one of my favorite teachers. I had her for French and English. I was lucky enough to get to see her again when my kids were in elementary school and she was a substitute teacher. I am so sad to hear of her passing. Condolences to her family and friends. au Revoir Cher professeur.*”

Wendy Ardt - March 05, 2024 at 12:00 AM

WB

“*I enjoyed working with Kathi at Sehome High School. She was a very kind person, and fun to spend time with during work breaks.*”

Wendy Borgesen - January 09, 2024 at 12:00 AM

CW

“*Our condolences for the passing of dear Kathi. We will miss her! Heaven got brighter with her arrival. Blessings to those she leaves behind.*”

Connie Wilder - January 03, 2024 at 12:00 AM