



## Michael Marino Zapico

May 20, 1953 - September 19, 2023

Michael Zapico, outdoorsman, educator, sailor, and passionate Argentine tango dancer passed away September 19 at the age of 70 after a difficult battle with frontotemporal dementia beginning in 2014. His son Lucas was at his bedside at the time of his passing in Burlington, WA.

Michael was born in São Paulo Brazil and grew up in Farmington, Michigan. He always enjoyed traveling and adventure in his early years. He was a proud Hippy and lifelong advocate for civil rights, empathy and equality. He was a roadie for a high school rock and roll band. He graduated from North Farmington High School in 1972, after which he received his Bachelor's degree in geology from Michigan State University. Later, he earned his Masters degree in Hydrogeology at the University of Waterloo, Canada. Michael later joined the Peace Corps and worked in the Ivory Coast, Africa, supporting water discovery and management. Michael learned to speak French fluently, and later in life, learned Spanish fluently.

Michael Zapico learned to sail in England, where he studied navigation. He sailed in the south of England in the English Channel. Michael worked in the petroleum industry prior to his work in Hydrogeology. Michael was an environmentalist, so his work in the petroleum industry was not in his long term plans. However, during his tenure in the petroleum industry, he was stationed offshore on an oil rig in the North Sea. A week after his departure

from the Kielland, a Norwegian semi-submersible drilling rig. The rig capsized in the Ekofisk oil field on 27 March 1980, killing 123 people. That disaster stayed with him for many years to come and contributed to his leaving the oil industry after his son was born.

Michael moved to Washington State soon after that, where he eventually went to work for the Seattle School District as a teacher's aide and assistant supporting English as a second language youths. He was an impassioned educator who went above and beyond helping refugee and immigrant families navigate their new lives. Michael had a showcase above the kitchen table of letters from his students thanking him for his unconditional belief and support that they could overcome the challenges they were facing and find paths forward that they and their families would be proud of.

In Washington State, Michael sailed, kayaked, backpacked summer and winter, and loved to Nordic Ski both cross-country and telemark. When he wasn't working on his house, he was dancing tango, or on the water or in the mountains. For a few brief years of his retirement before the disease prohibited him, he adventured around the Mount Baker area with his VW Eurovan Camper decked out with bikes and skies depending on the season.

Michael is held in the hearts of his brothers Matt and Mark, their respective families, and his dear friends, and his son Lucas.

His funeral will be held on Saturday, September 30 at 2 pm Greenacres Memorial Park Meadow, Moles Farewell Tributes 5700 Northwest Dr, Ferndale WA 98248

For any who choose to come, we would love to see your photos and hear your stories of Michael. Thank you to all who take a moment with Michael in your thoughts and prayers.

In lieu of cards or flowers, consider a donation to The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration (<https://www.theaftd.org/>)