



## Paul Masterson Elvig

May 16, 1942 - April 2, 2021

Paul Masterson Elvig was born to Kenneth Cochran Elvig and Margaret Masterson Elvig on May 16, 1942 in Bellingham, Washington. Paul spent his childhood on Roland Street with Whatcom Falls Park as his playground.

He often spoke of his childhood memories that included his three brothers, Jim, John, and Dan. Paul attended Franklin Elementary school, Carl Cozier Elementary School, Whatcom Middle school and graduated from Bellingham High School in 1960. He left after graduating and ended up in Minneapolis for a year, then returning home, and eventually ending up in the Vancouver area.

Paul took an interest in politics at the age of 14 when Eisenhower was running for president. He had no party preference at the time so he went to the Whatcom County Democratic headquarters and asked if he could hang out and maybe do something for them. They did not want a kid hanging around and told him so. Next, he went to the Republican headquarters and asked the same there. They were very happy to have the help. A woman handed him a broom and said if he could sweep the room, she would be most grateful, as she was very busy. He was happy to help and that started his journey in the politics of the Republican Party. Paul had many roles within the party from being a PCO and delegate and chaired numerous conventions. He was Chairman of the Whatcom County Republican Party and several years later Snohomish County Republican Party. He was also a member of the Electoral

College twice, and had met several presidents over the years. Paul also was involved in community organizations in both the Camas/Washougal area as well as the Bellingham/ Whatcom county area. He was a member of Young Republicans and a member of the Jaycee's, becoming president and Senator. He was also a member of Toastmasters and enjoyed the opportunity to learn debate and public speaking, often competing in speak-offs. Paul was also a registered parliamentarian.

Paul had a short career as a librarian with the Multnomah County Library where he drove the bookmobile up and down the Columbia River. That brought him back to Bellingham to work for the Whatcom County Library. While waiting for that job to start he lived in the upstairs apartment at Greenacres Memorial Park in trade for being the night caretaker. He was asked if he could also organize the records of the cemetery. Paul eventually turned down the library job to work full time for Greenacres, launching his career into the cemetery industry, which led to his management of Greenacres. During this time, the significance and respect for libraries never left Paul. He served as the Chairman of the Whatcom County Library Board from 1980 – 1988.

Paul quickly became involved with Cemetery and Funeral industry organizations within the State of Washington. He worked for the WA State Department of Licensing where he travelled the state doing audits of trust funds and was instrumental in writing cemetery law. This experience eventually led to his involvement on the national level with the American Cemetery Association, today known as the International Cemetery Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA). As Paul's career moved forward, he took the position of vice-president and later president of Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery and Funeral Home in Seattle, WA. He held many offices in the industry organizations including president of the Washington Internment Association and eventually had the honor of serving as President of the

International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association (ICCFA). This was the high mark of his cemetery career. Paul retired from Evergreen-Washelli in 2007 but remained very active in the industry. Paul represented the industry to the U.S. Senate Committee on Aging and the Federal Trade Commission and was interviewed by "60 Minutes". The ICCFA awarded Paul the prestigious Hall of Fame Award in 2018 but sadly, he became ill and was not able to receive it in person. He was truly humbled to receive such an honor.

Paul actually met his future wife, LaDonna, at Greenacres Memorial Park when she went there looking for a friend. They often joked: that is where she found him, and that is where she was going to leave him.

Paul enjoyed growing roses and cared for them for decades. He grew over 200 rose bushes at the peak of his hobby. He also enjoyed the hobby of photography, many of Paul's family; friends and colleagues will remember seeing him with a camera in hand, as he truly enjoyed capturing the everyday moments that made life special.

Paul was also involved with church activities at Northshore Christian Church including the memorial committee and missions committee.

Paul married the love of his life, LaDonna Rehberger in 1982 at New Life Fellowship in Lynden. Together they had two children. Ken was born in 1984 and Leslie was born in 1987. Paul travelled to South Africa to visit Leslie when she lived there and China to visit Ken who still currently lives in Beijing. He was so very proud of his family.

Paul has very much missed his mother and father since their passing and now

he does not have to miss them anymore. Paul's Nephew, Jason Elvig also preceded him in death.

Paul leaves behind his wife LaDonna, children; Ken and Leslie and her husband Douglas; Brothers; Jim and his wife Nancy; John, and Daniel; his Mother In-Law and Father-In-Law, Norine and Dale Rehberger, and Brother-In-Law Bryan and his wife Dawn Rehberger, as well as multiple nieces and nephews.

Burial will be at Greenacres Memorial Park on Thursday, April 8th, 2021 at 2:00pm.

A Memorial Service will be held on April 16, 2021 at 3PM in the Tribute Center at Evergreen Washelli Cemetery and Funeral Home in Seattle, WA.

# Tribute Wall

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“ Our sincere condolences to LaDonna and family at the passing of a longtime friend and fellow Cemeterian, Paul Elvig. Condolences also to the Rehberger family, also long time friends. Paul was my “go to” guy when I first stepped into the cemetery side of the business. He was a wealth of information not only for my orientation to Greenacres, but in my growth as a Cemetery manager. His contribution to the advancement of death care in Washington State, and also the national level will long be remembered. A truly great man.

*Rex & Dee Watt*

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**Rex E Watt** - April 12, 2021 at 12:00 AM