



Peter J. Elich

December 18, 1932 - April 10, 2018

“Twilight and evening bell,

And after that the dark

And may there be no sadness of farewell

When I embark”

-Crossing the Bar by Alfred Lord Tennyson

Peter J. Elich, age 85, passed away on April 10, 2018 with his wife Margaret Ann and their children by his side. He died as he lived with character, dignity, and grace, surrounded by those who loved him dearly.

Born in Bellingham, Washington on December 18, 1932, Pete’s heritage was with the south-side Croatian Community. At the encouragement of his father Pete abandoned his potential career as a commercial fisherman when he was offered a scholarship to attend college and play football at the University of Washington. After completing his degree, he taught at Whatcom Junior High and then Bellingham High School where he also coached football for a couple of years.

Upon completion of his PhD at the University of Oregon in 1961 Pete began his career at Western Washington University. He was hired as a professor in the Psychology Department, served as chairperson of that department, and ended his career as Dean of Arts and Sciences. Pete loved his job at Western, did it well, and was admired and respected by students and peers. Of the many accolades that he earned during his long career the two that made him most proud were being selected by the students as the Outstanding Teacher of the Year and The Peter J. Elich Excellence in Teaching Award, started in his honor by the faculty at Western.

Commercial fishing was in Pete's blood and a life long passion. As a young man he crewed on purse seiners in Puget Sound and in 1972 bought his own gillnetter, "Baja". Pete and Margaret Ann fished the Baja together in Puget Sound for over 20 summers, often with their son Peter as crew. Pete was an active member of the Puget Sound Gillnetters Association for many years and in later life Saturday mornings at the Web Locker sharing stories with local fisherman was a source of considerable enjoyment.

An avid fly fisherman, Pete was a long-time member of the Fourth Corner Fly Fishing Club. He enjoyed tying flies, fishing trips with family and friends, and the Friday Fishermen's Club lunch at Boundary Bay.

Family meant more than anything to Pete, and he was everything to his family. He met Margaret Ann at a skating rink in 8th grade—and the rest is history! An anchor, a guide, and a leader to us all; true to his convictions; his wisdom, judgement, compassion, and most of all companionship will be sorely missed.

Pete was preceded in death by his parents, Catheryn and Tony Elich; his sister, Sandra Frostad; and son, Stephen Elich. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Margaret Ann, daughter Karen Mulholland, sons Matthew (Georgene) and Peter (Julie); 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grand children, and

his good friend and cat, Magee.

A celebration of Pete's life will be held on July 28th 2018 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM at the Squaticum Harbor Boathouse. Further information to follow. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to your favorite charity.