



Robert "Bob" Aegerter

July 15, 1935 - March 19, 2024

Bob Aegerter shuffled off this mortal coil on the first day of Spring, March 19th, 2024, his wife, and children holding vigil by his side with love and gratitude. He was eighty-eight.

Robert Ernest Aegerter was born in Mitchell, South Dakota to William Carl Aegerter and Dorothy Jane Aegerter (nee Morris), on July 15, 1935. He was the second of two children, joining older sister Margery.

Bob spent his high school years in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, attending Washington High School where he was active in debate and cross country running. During high school, Bob was selected to participate in Boys' State and subsequently, Boys' Nation in Washington D.C., youth leadership programs where Bob would eventually translate the lessons learned there into a lifetime of Environmental Advocacy.

After high school, Bob headed to Iowa State University, in Ames, Iowa, a move that proved nothing but providential: During the first week of classes, Bob came along with a friend to a freshman mixer, where also in attendance was Mary Jo Lindahl, a lithesome blond, blue-eyed local girl who happened to be his math professor's daughter. Looking for a dance partner, Bob espied Mary Jo, asked for a dance, and then another. Those first shy dances would evolve into a wedding on September 14, 1957, and a sixty-six-year

partnership that was imbued with the spirit of adventure.

After graduating with a degree in Architecture from ISU, Bob was hired by the architecture firm Sovik, Mathre and Madsen, first commuting to Northfield, Minnesota from Minneapolis where Mary Jo worked. In 1959 the couple settled in Northfield where they began to build a family. Paul was born in 1960, and William in 1963. Not only did Bob continue at S, M & M as an architect of mainly churches and dormitories, but from 1964-65, he designed and oversaw the building of a home for his young family.

In the early 1960s Bob's parents had quit the plains and left for the Pacific Northwest and its magnificent mountains. A visit to his parents' new home near Olympia, WA with its view of Mount Rainier inspired Bob and Mary Jo to follow suit and seek the charms of the West. In the winter of 1967, they loaded up their Valiant station wagon and drove through a snowstorm to get there.

Bob's first job in the PNW was as the college architect working for Barney Goltz at Western Washington State College, now Western Washington University, in Bellingham. During his tenure at Western, from 1968 to 1976, Bob oversaw the building of the Wilson Library addition; the Performing Arts Center; Arntzen Hall; The Environmental Studies Building, the home for Huxley College, and Fairhaven College. Bob was also responsible for several sculpture installations, including "Sky Viewing Sculpture" by Isamu Noguchi, "For Handel" by Mark Di Suvero, and "For India," by Anthony Caro. In addition, he drafted the Environmental Impact Statement for WWSC and was an officer for the Association of University Architects, hosting an AUA summer conference at Western.

In 1970, daughter Brenna was born in Bellingham.

After leaving Western, he founded ECOS and Associates with Theo Mittet and

worked in the planning department for the city of Bellingham. In 1979, the family relocated to Seattle where Bob held several positions as a project manager for Sea First Bank and SRO Theaters. Other experience included working in the Seattle School District and the Seattle Parks Department where Bob was involved in the Green Lake trail upgrade project in the 1990s. All these places of employment had one advantage, and that was their proximity to Mount Rainier. In 1985, Bob was a founding and faithful member of Mount Rainier National Park Associates, a citizen's organization wholly independent from the National Park Service, whose mission it is to "maintain, restore, nurture, protect, and appreciate the values of its namesake."

When Bob and Mary Jo retired in 2003, they moved back up to Whatcom County, where they could be close to son Paul and family. Retirement provided the opportunity to travel to the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Denmark. Bob also focused on local Bellingham and Whatcom County environmental activism, served a term on the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission's Wolf Advisory Group, and was a devoted champion of the Whatcom Chapter of Washington Conservation Voters, RE Sources, and the Mount Baker Chapter of the Sierra Club. For these endeavors, he was honored as one of RE Sources "Environmental Heroes" in 2017.

His family holds a debt of gratitude to him for instilling in them a deep appreciation of the natural world, giving them many opportunities to enjoy camping, skiing, hiking, and mountaineering.

Bob is survived by his wife Mary Jo; sister Margery Belding of Lacey, WA; sons Paul Aegerter (Cecily), Bellingham, WA, and William Aegerter (Joanne Hossack), Portland, OR; daughter Brenna Aegerter (Scott Larwood), Stockton, CA; grandchildren Evan Aegerter, Ian Aegerter, Paul Larwood, Gwen Larwood; step-grandchildren Niki Hossack, and Levi Marks.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to RE Sources for Sustainable Communities: <https://www.re-sources.org/donate/>

Sierra Club: <https://www.sierraclub.org/>

“We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

There will be a memorial service for Robert held at the Squalicum Boathouse on Sunday April 21st, 2024 from 5:30PM-9PM. The address is 2600 N Harbor Loop Dr, Bellingham, WA 98225

Tribute Wall

JL

“ I met Professor Aegerter at WWSC in the mid '70s. He did a design class for Huxley (now the Environmental College). Then he let me do a Noise Pollution self study class. Over the years, we ran into eachother, especially after I moved back to Bellingham and started working for the Planning Department. We even did coffee together, once. He was skilled, smart, compassionate, and passionate: A great human being. To Bob's family, I'm so sorry you've lost this gem.

Jackie Lynch - April 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

BG

“ Bob mentored me in becoming an environmental activist. He was the best of mentors: knowledgeable, patient, interesting, committed, and wise about what works and doesn't work. I learned a lot from him and ever grateful for his generously sharing who he was and what he knew, with me.

Betsy Gross - March 29, 2024 at 12:00 AM