

ALVIN BENEDICT "AL" KOETJE
June 20, 1930 -
October 28, 2019

Alvin Benedict "Al" Koetje passed away peacefully at home in Oak Harbor on the evening of October 28th, 2019, surrounded by family and friends; he was 89 years old.

Al was born in Oak Harbor on June 20th, 1930, to Benjamin and Henrietta "Hattie" (Meeter) Koetje.

Ben was the first Fire Chief for the City of Oak Harbor, appointed in 1930. Hattie passed away when Al was a teenager, Ben then remarried Margaret Hoekwater.

Al finished grade school in Oak Harbor, then attended Mount Vernon middle and high schools when the family moved there in 1944.

He was an avid sports enthusiast, excelling in both baseball and basketball.

A few years after high school, Al joined the Air Force and bravely served his country during the Korean War conflict, from 1951 to 1954.

He was stationed in Japan for 2-1/2 years, then finished his service at Fairchild AFB in Spokane.

He was awarded a basketball scholarship at Whitworth College, attending from 1954 to 1958, playing both baseball and basketball. In 1958, Al was a team captain for the basketball team and was selected as a Small College All American.

The City of Oak Harbor was taken by storm when Al graduated from Whitworth College. Al decided to return to Oak Harbor and join his older brother Henry "Hank" in the insurance and real estate business. The Koetje Agency was very successful and still in business to this day.

Al chose this career in lieu of coaching basketball, although he did receive a coaching offer after college. Al was very involved with the community, his service in many ways is unprecedented.

His extensive list of achievements includes: 8 years as Oak Harbor council member, starting in 1964, 24 years as mayor or starting in 1972, president and member of the Navy League, president and member of the Association of Washington Cities, president and member of Rotary International (55 years of continuous attendance) and recipient of the Paul Harris Fellowship Award, inducted into the Skagit Valley College Hall of Fame in 1996 (Public Official and Strong Supporter of Education), and Best of Whidbey Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.

Al was very thankful to the City of Oak Harbor and its constituents; it was with great pleasure that he was given the opportunity to serve in this manner.

He loved people, knew most by name, and would always exchange greetings, a story and a laugh.

In his final days, he wanted to make sure that the citizens of Oak Harbor knew how much he appreciated their support and how much he enjoyed the opportunity and journey to lead.

City accomplishments under his leadership include: construction of the city marina, partnership for the construction of a new Skagit Valley College Library, the John Vanderzicht Swimming Pool, partnership with Naval Air Station Whidbey Island for construction of a domestic water pipeline, the OH Senior Center and successfully keeping the Navy base off the base closure list for decades as committee chair for Save NASWI.

The most important things to Al were God, country, community and family.

He was a member of the First Reformed Church in Oak Harbor for over 60 years, serving many years as a deacon and Sunday school teacher.

Al loved serving his

country and the people of the City of Oak Harbor, this was his greatest joy.

Al was a beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

He was loved by all for his kindness, generosity, quick wit and love of life. He really enjoyed those around him, laughter was always part of the equation.

Al always had a love for sports and bird hunting. He was a fierce competitor at baseball, basketball, tennis and handball. He always wanted to play someone better, to improve himself and hone his skills. Once he stepped on the court, small talk was over, it was time to show no mercy and compete! After the battle was over, he enjoyed discussing the events of the day "over a pop or a glass of milk", which was anything but.

He loomed large amongst his family and friends; he touched many lives in a very positive and uplifting way. Al Koetje was exemplary as a celebration of life.

So now it is an end to an era, of a life lived to the fullest. Al would be the first to say "thank you" in all circumstances and was very appreciative of the blessings he received in life.

He knew that the Good Lord is faithful, and that the cornerstone of truth and knowledge is to trust in the Lord. Christ Jesus his Savior has taken home His good and faithful servant.

Al is survived by his loving wife Cherita; they were married for 40 years. From a previous marriage, Cherita had a daughter Cory (Smith) Russell (husband Bill, son Jason, daughter Olivia and son-in-law Justin, step-son Ryan), whom also resides in Oak Harbor.

Al was previously married to Janette (van Slageren) Ellis who preceded him in death in 2017, with whom he had two children: Alana Morris of Seattle (daughter Antje and son Isak), and Randy Koetje of Woodinville (wife Yan, son Timothy; step-son and daughter-in-law Daniel and Brittany Kirk, grandchildren Isla and Arlo; and step-son Sean Hu).

Al is also survived by his sisters Burleigh Smith (husband Garry) and Kathy Bos (husband Stan), and brother Jim Koetje (wife Balisa); and also numerous cousins, nephews and nieces. His family loved him very much and always enjoyed spending time with him at the beach cabin on West Beach.

Al was preceded in death by his parents, brothers Henry and Lester, and sister Louise.

The family also wishes to express their deepest gratitude to Dr. Douglas Langrock, Hospice of the Northwest and Skagit Valley Hospital for the wonderful and exemplary care and comfort they provided for Al and the family through this difficult time.

A memorial service for Al will be held at First Reformed Church of Oak Harbor on Thursday, November 21, at 2:30 pm with a reception to follow.

Pastor Matt Waite and Chaplain David G. Lura, USN (Ret.) will be co-officiating. Al will be laid to rest at Maple Leaf Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Al's name may be made out to The Rotary Club of Oak Harbor Foundation online at: <https://ohrotary.org/sitepage/foundation-donations>

Or by post to: Rotary Club of Oak Harbor Foundation P.O. Box 442, Oak Harbor WA 98277; and WAIF (for pet dogs Alex and Patch) online at: <https://waifanimals.org/donate/>, or by post to: WAIF P.O. Box 1108 Coupeville, WA 98239.

Arrangements entrusted to Wallin Funeral Home, Oak Harbor, WA.

Please visit Al's page in our Book of Memories online at www.wallinfuneralhome.com to share memories and leave condolences.

For more information about obituaries, please call 360-424-4567 or Fax 360-424-5300 Monday through Friday 8am - 5pm

DEATH NOTICE GAIL JACOBS TILTON

Gail Jacobs Tilton, 71, of North Pole, Alaska, and Anacortes, Washington, died November 3, 2019, in Mount Vernon, Washington.

Arrangements are pending and will be announced by Hawthorne Funeral Home and Memorial Park in Mount Vernon.

EUGENE T. "TOM" MOHLER
August 3, 1945 -
November 5, 2019



Eugene T. "Tom" Mohler, 74, a lifelong Sedro-Woolley resident, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at United General Hospital in Sedro-Woolley.

Tom was born in Sedro-Woolley on August 3, 1945, the son of Eugene & Jean Mohler. He was raised and attended school in Sedro-Woolley, graduating from SWHS with the class of 1963. Following high school Tom worked for the city of Sedro-Woolley for a few years. He then began a long career as a fork lift operator, first for Cascade Cannery in Burlington for almost 20 years and then for Commercial Cold Storage in Mount Vernon for over 25 years.

Tom was united in marriage to Donna Allen in 1966 and together they made their home and raised their family in Sedro-Woolley. Besides working at the canneries, Tom and Donna also operated the Quik Stop Market in Sedro-Woolley for several years during the 1980's.

Tom was an avid pinochle player, enjoyed attending concerts and theatrical events, was a BIG Seattle Storm fan, he also enjoyed going camping and over the years doting on his several dogs.

Tom is survived by his daughter, Kelli Peksenak and her, fiancé Bob Rathvon of Birdview; son, Eugene Mohler and his wife, Cresel of Glenhaven; five grandchildren, Josh and Brandon Murdock, Karissa Serna (Travis) and Brittany and Brianna Mohler; two brothers, Daric Mohler and his wife Linda of Clear Lake and Jerry Mohler in Korea and numerous nieces and nephews.

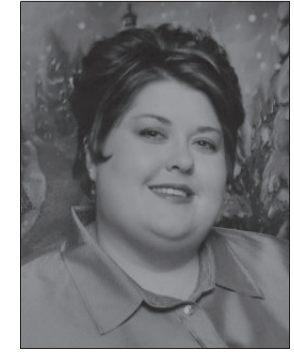
He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife Donna and an infant daughter, Molly.

Private family services will be held at a later date. The family suggests memorials in Tom's honor be made to the NOAH Center, 31300 Brandstrom Road, Stanwood, WA 98292 or to any theatrical or arts organization.

Cremation arrangements are under the direction of **Lemley Chapel**, Sedro-Woolley.

Share memories of Tom and sign the online guest register at www.lemley-chapel.com.

JENNIFER ALICE GILLESPIE
March 31, 1973 -
November 1, 2019



Jennifer Alice Gillespie, resident of Mount Vernon for the last 11 years, passed away at Skagit Valley Hospital from sur-

gical complications on November 1, 2019.

Jenny and her twin brother Rob were born March 31, 1973 in Barron, Wisconsin. Her family moved to the Pacific Northwest in 1978.

She was a graduate of Cascade High School (Everett) in 1991 and held two Associate degrees, one from Skagit Valley College and one from PIMA Medical Institute.

Jennifer is survived by the love of her life Neil Morrison, her parents Richard and JoAnn Gillespie of Everett, her twin brother Robert, sister Donyce Gillespie Ness and her children Richard Judd and Brenna Joy Lankow (Joseph).

A Celebration of Life will be held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Everett, WA) on November 23rd at 1:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Children's Hospital in Seattle.



LEROY SUTHER
March 11, 1953 -
October 17, 2019



Roy Suther, 66, of Sedro-Woolley passed away on Thursday, October 17, 2019, losing his brave struggle with liver disease.

Entering this life on March 11, 1953 in Hoquiam, Washington, Roy was the fourth born child and only son of LeRoy O. and Ellen L. (Peterson) Suther.

Roy spent the majority of his younger days in the cedar mills of the Pacific Northwest, working as a shake rat in many sawmills around Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

In the early 90's, he finally succeeded at finding his niche in the dedicated care and treatment of those in rehab and recovery from drug, alcohol, and substance abuse, working first for five years at the Detox of John King in Mount Vernon, and then for twenty-one years at the treatment facility of Pioneer Center North on the campus of the old Northern State Hospital in Sedro-Woolley.

Roy managed to help countless others with his steady understanding and experience and mainly, with his simple empathy for those who may need an encouraging word, a hand up, a ride, a good laugh, or just a smile.

Roy was an avid fan of football, all football, from college to pro, the Seattle Seahawks to the Washington Huskies . . . he never missed watching his football games. He loved listening to good music, especially the blues; going to classic car shows; quiet hikes in the woods; and enjoying the birds, bunnies, deer, and elk that often wandered across his path.

Roy vowed to come back as a Trumpeter Swan, to be reincarnated with the spirit and the strength of those majestic birds who he always admired in his drives thru this country.

Roy is survived by his only child, his son, Joshua Harmon (Tara), of Post Falls, ID; daughter, Annalee Gould Torrey (Michael), of Oakland, CA; four dearly loved grandbabies, Isaiah and Saralyn Harmon and Maya and Theo Torrey; older sisters, Marlene Bruher (Bob), Linda Merrill (Steve), and Janice Young; numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins; his former wife, Lynn Willison, and stepson, Jeff Fenstermaker; his mean old fat black

kitty, Skagit and his life partner and wife, S. Rose Leeper, at their home in Sedro-Woolley. Peace to all who have loved him.

To honor Roys wishes, there is no memorial service and to honor the life that Roy led his family suggests making donations in his name to the Friendship House of Mount Vernon, WA; to the Didgwalic Wellness Center of Anacortes, WA; or Hospice of the Northwest, Mount Vernon.

Cremation arrangements were made under the care of the **Lemley Chapel**, Sedro-Woolley.

Share your memories of Roy and sign the online guest register at www.lemleychapel.com.

PATRICIA "PAT" ANN WOODS (MACDONALD)
March 18, 1933 -
October 17, 2019

Patricia "Pat" Ann Woods (MacDonald) was born on March 18, 1933 in Billings, MT.

Pat passed away on October 17, 2019 in Mount Vernon, WA. She was 86 years old.

Pat married Ralph Woods on December 5, 1952. Ralph's career working for phone companies led them to Laurel, WA where they raised their family. In 1977 they moved to Silverton, OR, which was close to her siblings, then to Mount Vernon, WA where they gained the title of Grandparents, before Ralph tragically passed away in 1984.

Pat treasured being a grandma and eventually becoming a great-grandma. She enjoyed volunteering at the hospital, square dancing, performing with the Wild Women of Woolley, tending to her yard, and many other adventures.

Pat was preceded in death by her husband Ralph and her siblings Berna of Salem, OR, Betty of San Jose, CA, and Don of Bremerton, WA.

She is survived by her sons Kenneth (Debra) of Ferndale, WA, David (Kara) of Everson, WA, daughter Patricia J. Anderson of Mount Vernon, WA, 4 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, and her brother Eugene of Salem, OR.

Pat's final wish was to be cremated and buried with Ralph in Corvallis, OR. The family will hold a celebration of life at Bethany Covenant Church and burial in the spring.

RICHARD WORTS TUDOR EYTON
December 13, 1937 -
October 28, 2019



Richard 'Rick' Worts Tudor Eyton, 81, of Anacortes passed away peacefully at his home on Monday, October 28, 2019, with his wife, Amy, and daughter, Ericka, by his side.

Rick was born in Vancouver, BC on December 13, 1937.

At 19, he moved to Hermosa Beach, CA, where he spent many years working in the clothing industry.

Years later, he returned to the Pacific Northwest to reside at his place on Silver Lake, near Maple Falls, WA. Silver Lake was Rick's place of peace and remained so until his passing.

In 1989, Rick met his wife, Amy. They resided at Silver Lake through the birth of their daughter in 1990. Rick and Amy were married on September 22, 1990 in Sidney, BC at the home of Rick's brother and sister-in-law. Soon after, they moved to Bellingham, where they raised their daughter.

In 2000, Rick purchased Pioneer Trails RV Resort and Campground in Anacortes. He developed Pioneer Trails into the beautiful RV Resort that it is today. Rick loved Pi-

oneer Trails and poured his heart and soul into the resort while owning and operating it. He enjoyed his daily interactions with the people he met over the years and the bond curated between the employees, which will forever be his Pioneer Trails Family.

Rick was diagnosed with cancer in July 2017. Through his treatment, Rick maintained his hardworking nature and continued to oversee the resort while recovering from surgery. After treatment, he remained in remission for a year. In February 2018, Rick sold Pioneer Trails, and he and Amy continued to reside in Anacortes.

This past April, the cancer returned. Rick underwent several more treatments, but ultimately, the cancer had progressed, rendering the treatments ineffective. In early September, he returned home on hospice. Rick remained strong until his final days. He will be truly missed by many.

He is preceded in death by his father, Geoffrey Tudor Eyton, mother, Edwina Mary Worts Eyton, and brother, Geoffrey Tudor Eyton.

Rick leaves behind his wife, Amy Eyton of Anacortes, daughter, Ericka Eyton of Portland, OR, brother and sister-in-law, Rhys and Lynn, and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life with reception following will be held 1 p.m. on Friday, December 13, 2019 at **Evans Funeral Chapel**.

Private Family Graveside will be held at Fernhill Cemetery in Anacortes.

To share memories of Rick, please sign the online guestbook at www.evanschapel.com

ROSEMARY SNEERINGER
May 28, 1921 -
October 28, 2019



Rosemary Margaret Brown was born on May 28, 1921 in Emmetsburg, IA, the sixth of William and Gertrude Brown's eight children. She passed away in Seattle on October 28, 2019.

Rosemary graduated first in her class from Ruthven HS. She received her teaching certificate from Iowa State Teachers' College and taught at Brown Country School for two years before enrolling in Iowa State University where she earned a BS degree in dietetics (while raising chickens to pay tuition).

Rosemary moved to Seattle to work as a dietitian at Doctors Hospital. Later in life, Rosemary would acquire her real estate license, and help more than a few young families find their own Seattle homes.

Her sister Kay introduced Rosemary to Ray Sneeringer, a childhood friend of Kay's husband, Barney Hyde. Ray and Rosemary married in 1946. They raised their six children in a home in Shoreline near St. Luke Parish. The Sneeringer kids all attended St. Luke school, and graduated from Blanchet HS before going off to college.

Throughout the years, Rosemary's abundant hospitality made the Sneeringer residence a gathering place for generations of family and friends, where all were welcome and well fed. Rosemary lived in the family home until the final weeks of her life.

Ray and Rosemary, along with the Hydes and all the kids, took frequent road trips back to Iowa, the family vehicles overloaded with luggage and laughter. In later years, the couple enjoyed traveling abroad, to Europe, Israel, China and elsewhere.

The family spent July 4th holidays on Whidbey

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