

### Linda Jeanne Earl, 78

Linda Jeanne Earl, 78, passed away on Aug. 8, 2022, at home after a brief illness.

She was born on June 25, 1944, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to Donald and Geraldine (Hunter) Krause.

She was the oldest of eight and is survived by two sisters, three broth-



ers and her three children, John, Bryan and Michelle Jonas, along with three grandchildren.

Linda married her high school sweetheart,

Billy Earl, in 2011 and moved from Tampa, Florida, to Montana.

A memorial service will be held at a later date at Northwood Presbyterian in Clearwater, Florida.

Memorial gifts may be given to the Auxiliary to the Association of Aviation Ordnancemen

at 20812 Flour Mill Ct., Great Mill, MD 20634 for college scholarships.

Memories and condolences may be sent to the family at [www.lakefuneralhomeandcremation.com](http://www.lakefuneralhomeandcremation.com). Arrangements are under the care of The Lake Funeral Home and Crematory.

### Edward Clarence Eberly

Edward Eberly passed in the early morning hours of Oct. 8, 2022, surrounded by family.

Born April 5, 1941, in Salt Lake City, the son of Clarence Eberly and Leathia Coomes Eberly. Ed graduated from the University of Montana with a Bachelor of Finance and Business degree. He married his loving wife, Marilyn, in 1964. The couple went on to adopt two wonderful children, Angela and Mark. The family moved from Helena to Kalispell in 1992 where Ed continued his career in Workers Compensation Insurance.

Ed spent much of his life serving others. He was a member of the National Ski Patrol, the Flathead Valley Nordic Ski Patrol, and taught CPR classes for the Red Cross. A loving husband and father, he always

considered his family's well-being his highest priority.

In his free time, Ed enjoyed traveling around Montana to photograph the state's natural beauty, frequently hiking with the Over the Hill Gang. In the winter, he enjoyed both cross-country and downhill skiing and often spent his weekends on the slopes.

Ed is survived by his wife Marilyn Eberly, son Mark Eberly, daughter Angela Davis, and his five adoring grandchildren.

Friends are invited to share their memories of Ed with his family during the memorial service at Christ Church Episcopal, 215 Third Ave. E., Kalispell, MT 59901, on Tuesday, Oct. 18, at 1 pm.

Johnson-Gloschat funeral home is caring for Ed and his family.

### William 'Bill' Edens, 83

William "Bill" Edens, a loving husband, father, and grandfather, lost his battle with Parkinson's on Dec. 30, 2021, at the age of 83.

Bill was born on May 18, 1938, in Grandfield, Oklahoma, and ultimately ventured into Cut Bank with his family as they followed the annual wheat harvest to Montana. There, in high school, he met the love of his life, Metha Meade, whom he married in 1959 after proudly serving in the U.S. Navy.

With a high school education, common sense, and a hard work ethic, he started a few businesses and purchased his father-

in-law's fuel distribution business, Dodd's Wholesalers, in Cut Bank.

There he and Metha raised their children, Corey and Trudy, and he became deeply immersed in the community.

In 1994, they sold their businesses and moved to the Flathead Valley, where he enjoyed being closer to family and forging new friendships in his remaining years.

Bill was an avid read-



er, loved home renovation, new challenges, and casual conversation. He cherished the time spent with his family on the lake, traveling in their motorhome, and watching the Dallas Cowboys (especially when they were winning).

He is survived by his devoted wife, Metha, his children Corey Edens and his wife Kay, Trudy Gebhard and her husband John, and his much-loved grandchildren John Gebhard, Shelby Culp (Rob), Will Gebhard and Blaine Edens, and great-grandchildren Eleanor and Wallace Culp. Bill was family to many others — most notably

Robert, Jackson and Peyton Walker.

Bill was predeceased by his father Robert, mother Retha, and brother Bob.

By request, there will be no services.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Cut Bank Educational Foundation and Alumni Association in the name of Bill Edens. The address is 101 3rd Ave. SE, Cut Bank, MT 59427.

Friends are encouraged to visit the website [www.buffalohillift.com](http://www.buffalohillift.com) to leave notes of condolence for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory is caring for the family.

### Arnold R. Edwards, 92

Arnold R. Edwards passed away peacefully on Friday, May 20, 2022, at the Immanuel Lutheran Home in Kalispell. Arnold was 92 years young, born Dec. 16, 1929, in Ravalli, Missouri.

He served his country as a Marine during the Korean War. He received three Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star medal and was held as a prisoner of war for 10 1/2 months. He married Florence Notley in 1955 and they

resided in Hideaway Park, Colorado. They moved to Columbia Falls in 1958. He worked the majority of his career at Plum Creek Lumber Company, but also worked con-



structing the Libby Dam. Arnold was an avid hunter, trapper, and fisherman throughout his life. He was well known for his lively conversations on these subjects.

Arnold was preceded in death by his wife Florence in 2016, his father James Edwards, mother Vera Edwards Anderson, sister Joan Jobe, brothers Warren and James, and two infant daughters.

Survivors include his children, Tami Prather (Anchorage, Alaska) and Arnold O. Edwards (Columbia Falls), as well as grandchildren Brandon Head (Kalyn) of Homer, Alaska, Melissa Peterson (Kai) of Anchorage, and Emilia Bain of Kalispell. Great-grandchildren include Ahren, Addyson, Aryanna and Aubrie Peterson (Anchorage).

Per Arnold's wishes, no services will be held.

### Darwin David Ekstrom, 87

Darwin David Ekstrom, 87, of Polson, passed away on Friday, July 29, 2022, at Logan Health Medical Center in Kalispell.

He was born on Feb. 18, 1935, in Britton, South Dakota, to Edwin and Ethel Ekstrom. As a young man, Dar lived in Anaconda where he later graduated from Anaconda High School. Upon graduation, he worked at the smelter then later enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Dar served four years in the Navy and then attended Montana School of Mines (Montana Tech). He graduated with a degree in metallurgical engineering.

On Nov. 23, 1961, he married Rosemary M. Martens of Anaconda, the love of his life, in Deer Lodge. After a short time, the couple moved to Concord, California, where he was employed by a steel company. He spent the rest of his career working for several aluminum companies.

Dar was an avid baseball fan. He spent his spare time playing baseball with his brothers in the summer and later played for the School of Mines. He enjoyed coaching baseball for his sons' baseball teams. He spent his retire-



substitute teaching. He thoroughly enjoyed teaching and touched the lives of several of the students. He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather to his family.



He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Rosemary; his daughters, Holly and Heather; and sons, Jeff and Joe. He also leaves behind granddaughters, Clare and Kelly, and grandsons, Jake, Alex, Tanner, Mason and Richard, as well as a brother and four sisters and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers and two sisters.

His funeral Mass will take place on Saturday, Aug. 20, at 10 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Polson. A private burial will follow.

Memories and condolences may be sent to the family at [www.lake-funeralhomeandcremation.com](http://www.lake-funeralhomeandcremation.com). Arrangements are under the care of The Lake Funeral Home

### Tamara Elder, 59

Tamara "Tammy" L. (Franzwa) Elder, 59, of Hungry Horse, passed away on Dec. 4, 2022.

Tammy was born on Jan. 27, 1963 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin to her parents Jim Franzwa and Ellen Simonson. Tammy was a smart, funny, outgoing person. She met her best friend, love of her life and soulmate, Joe Elder, in Thompson Falls and they married on March 8, 1997.

Tammy loved spending time at her home in Hungry Horse with her girls, Klesha and Pita.

She loved to cook and have family game nights. Her true light shined most when she was out on the Thompson River with her husband and family, where she enjoyed fishing and camping.

Tammy was preceded in death by her parents, Jim Franzwa and Ellen Simonson.

Tammy is survived by her husband Joe Elder of Hungry Horse;



daughter Lisa Austin (Phil Salvatore) of Trout Creek, Montana; son Michael Austin (Tess Austin) of Hungry Horse; brother Tracy Franzwa (Stephanie Ross) of Florida; and brother Terry Franzwa of Arizona. Along with her 6 grandchildren (all boys) and numerous friends.

Friends are encouraged to visit our website at [www.buffalohillfh.com](http://www.buffalohillfh.com) to leave notes of condolences for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory caring for the family.

### Neil Harvey Eliason, 90

After 90 years of living a vibrant, accomplished life, Neil Harvey Eliason passed away on Aug. 25, 2022, in Kalispell. Growing up in a ranching family in the Deer Lodge Valley, Neil developed an admirable work ethic and a deep respect for family, friends, and the natural world. He fished and hunted with great enthusiasm. After graduating from Powell County High School in 1950, Neil started his college career at Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa, and later finished at the University of Montana, Missoula, with Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees. One memorable year in New York City, Neil earned a Professional Diploma in Counseling from Columbia University. While at the U of MT, he met Carol Nelson, whom he married in 1954. In their 67 years together they raised three children and several golden retrievers. After college, Neil pursued a career in teaching, counseling and coaching. He started in Brady and followed up in Hot Springs, Kalispell, Bozeman, Swan Valley, and finally Bigfork. Throughout this time, he developed a strong, positive reputation as a leader. People recognized him as a man with a vision.

Though proficient in coaching a range of sports, Neil will be remembered best as "Mr. E," the man who realized before most of his contemporaries that girls and women deserved a track and cross country team of their own. His coaching



resume and knack for bringing people together to achieve shared goals earned recognition from athletes, their parents, fellow coaches, and the public. He earned the trust and respect of athletes of all ability levels. No one was left out, and no free passes were granted to the blue chip athletes — even the ones who would later compete in the Olympics. On Mr. E's teams, everyone was expected to perform. With timber trees upon the chests of their uniforms, they were the girls, Montana's best. While he was the head girls track coach at Flathead High School from 1961 to 1971, Neil's teams won every varsity girls track meet during that period. Later, as head coach of the women's track team at Flathead Valley Community College, he coached his athletes to great success, time and again. In 1975, Neil received the Flathead Legacy Award for "civic and volunteer spirit that spans a lifetime and creates a legacy for the community." Just two years later, he improved upon that legacy, as the FVCC Mountaintettes won the Junior College National Championship in women's track and field.

After that stunning achievement, Neil and his family moved to Bozeman, where he first became the head women's track and cross country

coach and then the assistant women's athletic director at Montana State University. This period of his life also saw Neil embark upon a second successful career, as a real estate agent-broker. His competitive fire and keen ability to connect with people led him to enjoy significant success in Bozeman, where he once earned Realtor of the Year, and then in Bigfork. His coaching career culminated at Bigfork High School, as an assistant coach to Sue (Bronson) Loeffler, who, several decades prior, had competed on one of Neil's best teams. Bigfork won three consecutive Class A state championships in cross country in Neil's last three years coaching. Neil was inducted into the Montana Coaches Hall of Fame in 1983, and the Montana Officials Hall of Fame in 1987. He finally retired from coaching in 2004, after 50 years of encouraging young people to see sports as a way of making sense of life.

This proud man was more than just a successful teacher, coach, and businessman — he also encouraged family members to find their own ways to live. Neil's generosity would come out in thoughtful suggestions, but he was not pushy. With his family, Neil could step back and let circumstances unfold. He did not have to control the tone or tenor of a conversation. His path, his success, did not overtake anyone else's. He loved doing things for family, whether it was funding a trip to Disney World

or helping a grandchild learn to fish. All those who knew Neil appreciate all he provided them, and the gorgeous dahlias he nurtured, and the years he volunteered through Sunrider Lions Club and other groups. He will be remembered for the deep impressions he made on others as they ran, threw, and jumped past the obstacles he helped them overcome. Neil Eliason would be there for you in the final lap of a tough race.

Neil was preceded in death by his parents, Harvey and Helen; sister, Marilyn Chappelow; and his elder son, Richard Eliason (survived by his partner Maggie Lander and her daughters Ellie and Elizabeth).

Surviving Neil are his wife, Carol; daughter, Lauri (Mark Miron); and son, John (Alexandra Voorhees; as well as Neil's grandchildren, Erik and Patrick Miron and Sophia and Ian Eliason.

The family will hold a private celebration of life for Neil. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to these organizations: Highlander Track and Cross Country, P.O. Box 7250, Kalispell, MT 59904; Glacier National Park Conservancy, P.O. Box 2749, Columbia Falls, MT 59912; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, 5705 Grant Creek, Missoula, MT 59806.

Friends are encouraged to visit the website [www.buffalohillfh.com](http://www.buffalohillfh.com) to leave notes of condolence for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory caring for the family.

## Lawrence Michael "Mike" Elliman

Lawrence Michael "Mike" Elliman, 85, of Bainbridge Island, Washington, passed away peacefully on July 29, 2022, at PeaceHealth St. Joseph Hospital in Bellingham, Washington. Mike was born on May 8, 1937, to Rhea Munroe Elliman and Lawrence Bogart Elliman. Mike grew up in New York, New York. He attended grade school at St Bernard's School. Mike attended high school, was an honor student, and played hockey at St Paul's Episcopal School in Concord, New Hampshire. He attended Princeton University where he played hockey and graduated in 1959 with a degree in Latin American Affairs. Mike spent eight years with Chase Manhattan Bank in Panama where he was known as "the flying banker." Mike spent two additional years with Chase Manhattan Bank in Nassau Bahamas before returning to the United States where he became the founding director of Pacific Union Bank and Trust in Menlo, California. After several years in the banking industry, Mike shifted his focus to asset management and real estate development. He started a video and

satellite TV store in St Helena, California. Mike was the founder of the Lawrence Gallery of Fine Art in Yountville, California. He retired in 1994 to Whitefish, Montana with summers spent on Blakely Island, Washington. A true renaissance man, Mike was determined from an early age to use his talents to the fullest potential. He learned to sail and fly in his early 20s, two passions he would go on to celebrate for the next 50 years of his life. Using his unique opportunities for good, he spent years flying doctors, nurses, missionaries and supplies into the Sand Blas Islands of the Kuna Indian Tribes in Panama. Mike participated in the Angel Med Flight Program in San Francisco, California. Mike was involved in the Big Brother program in Whitefish, Montana where he remained active in one family's life for 16 years. Mike could be found in the early hours skiing down the ski runs on Whitefish Mountain Resort. He loved interesting conversations and was endlessly curious about the lives of others. Art was his love language, as he enjoyed the creativity of others. The

only thing that eclipsed Mike's love of art was his love of dogs. He preferred rescues over purebreds, and many joked that when they died, they "hoped to come back as one of Mike Elliman's dogs." Mike was a member of the Episcopal Church in Whitefish, Montana where he met his wife, Sally. They were married in Kauai in 2001. Mike and Sally would go on to spend the next 22 years as co-pilots in a fun-filled life of great adventure. Mike was preceded in death by his father Lawrence Bogart Elliman; his mother Rhea Monroe Elliman; his sister Rhea Alexander; and his faithful rescue pups Cody, Lucky and Lucy. He is survived by his wife Sally Elliman; his daughters Michele Elliman; Jackie (Robert) Leonard; his sons Christopher Elliman; Jonathan (Sarah) Elliman; stepchildren and grandchildren. There will be a Celebration of Life Service on Saturday, Sept. 3, 2022, at 4 p.m. at St Barnabas Episcopal Church on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Please sign the Book of Memories, light a candle and leave your condolences for the family at [www.JernsFH.com](http://www.JernsFH.com)

## Dolores 'Dodie' Jane Marie Tambellini Ellingson, 79

Dolores "Dodie" Jane Marie Tambellini Ellingson was a caring wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend. She went to be with Jesus on Feb. 6, 2022, at the age of 79. She was born to Santino "Sam" and Pearl "Pia" Tambellini on Feb. 10, 1942, in Black Eagle, Montana. She had two sisters, Teresa Marn and Dena Eidsvig. Her parents and siblings preceded her in death. Dodie was married to her high school boyfriend and loving husband of 61 years, Vincent Ellingson, from Great Falls. Together, they were blessed with three children, Mark Ellingson (wife Janie), Marcy Percival (husband Jeff), and Greg Ellingson (wife Elsa). They have eight grandchildren, Kent, Keith, Kylie, Katelyn, Austin, Kristen, Greg Jr. and Bryce. They also have six wonderful



great-grandchildren, Iris, Rosemary, Theo, Oliver, Sadie and Stevie Jo. She and Vince lived in Yorba Linda, California, for 30 years and then moved to Kalispell in 1996. Dodie loved spending time in her kitchen cooking. She was a devoted housewife and mother, enjoying each task that she applied herself to. She was fun, spicy, caring and loved her family. She enjoyed sitting at the piano, working in the yard and creating a home in which everyone wanted to come sit, have coffee and visit. She was a committed Christ follower, serving Jesus all the days of her life. She will be so very missed. Arrangements are under the care of Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home.

## Gerri Ellingson

Geri Ellingson was born in Roseville, California, on the first day of spring 1930 to Ethel and Walter Saathoff, a railroad man. Her nickname was "Kicky," though she was a little shy compared to her older sis Frieda. She loved her family's succession of pet cats, all named "Cat-Cat," and her many lifelong school friends.

In her first year of Bethel Bible College in San Francisco, 17-year old Geri accepted an invitation from a classmate to attend an evening church service in Hayward.

When the classmate was instead hospitalized with appendicitis, his older brother Chet came to visit (Chet happened to be in town buying war

surplus goods to resell back home in Kalispell). Ever the gentleman — and obviously infatuated by the prospect of a Hayward church service — Chet offered to take over his poor, stricken brother's chauffeuring commitment.

The sermon must have been soul-stirring, because Chet and Geri agreed they should review its themes again the next day — over lunch.

After that lunch, Chester L. Ellingson went off to serve in the war ... surplus business back in Kalispell (having served during World War II in both the U.S. Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force) — but he left his heart in San Francisco. And Geri began to imagine what her life might be like in the mountains of Montana.

Absence — and several letters — made the hearts grow fonder, and Chet decided a few months later he was in desperate



Francisco . . .

Chet and Geri soon made a date for another momentous church service, and tied the knot on Aug. 6, 1948. On their honeymoon Chet rolled their new Packard on a rainy road in Washington, but they made it otherwise unscathed to Kalispell. Geri took over management of their home, and Chet was hired to help manage Kalispell Lumber Company. Chet also contracted the building of

a few houses, including three that Geri and the kids called home over the years. Geri then helped Chet found Ellingson Agency for Insurance and Real Estate.

Mom first took on that title in 1951 with Greg, following with Jeff in 1953, and her long hoped for ski-buddy Kristin in 1966. Mom taught her children by example to ski and golf (including how to hit a hole in one) and hike and swim and waterski — and socialize.

Mom particularly delighted in those early spring days when she could ski and golf in the same day. Even in the shortest days of winter, though, Mom would sometimes gather up little Kristin in the middle of the week and head to Big Mountain for a few runs. Kristin reciprocated last year by taking Mom back up to Big Mountain to share some apres-ski memories, including savoring a red beer and lots of laughter with other ski-moms at

the Bierstube, Ptarmigan Room, or Alpenglow Inn. (Unlike the old days, though, this time Kristin did not crawl under the table to take a nap.)

Geri and Chet made summertimes a kid's paradise, including at Bitterroot Lake. Geri roughed it in a tent or primitive cabin the first few summers, until her intimate encounter with a rat in the outhouse inspired Chet to install indoor plumbing "or else." After the boys were in college, Chet and Geri moved off their leased lot and built their dream cabin on the west side of the lake, where Mom was the hostess with the most, sharing her appreciation of Montana's beauty with family and friends.

Geri and Chet often joined their many friends at each other's homes, or at the First Presbyterian Church, Rotary functions, Alert banquets, the Beaux Arts balls, Sportsman Ski Haus parties, and dancing at the Outlaw Inn. Geri was deeply proud to be a P.E.O. sister and, later in life, she especially enjoyed her Bible study group and her fellow Thursday morning coffee ladies at Norm's News.

Mom loved having Kristin and granddaughter Ruby move in with her and her pets Mollie and Poppy five years ago, along with Ruby's cat Agent Six and dachshund-mix Gulliver. Mom's former relative solitude was thereafter transformed into a wild and wacky sit-com experiment in multi-generational, multi-pet living.

Grandma G was especially grateful to spend time last summer at Bitterroot Lake with granddaughter Courtney Burks (Dustin)

and great-grandchildren Danika and Decker, who came to visit from Zurich, and with Kalispell granddaughter Kiersta (Justin) Turner and Kiersta's daughter Imrie and baby Pierce.

Throughout the years Geri happily shared her wisdom and humor with the next generations at many waffle-fests (extra whipped cream, please) and other feasts with Jeff and Susan, Ruby and Kristin, Kiersta and Justin, Greg and Kris, grandson Camas, granddaughter Lindsey Bennett (Dan Simonson) and "the girls" Verona, Jules and Aneea, and with Susan's children, Anna, Evan and Daniel (Heather) Hilderman. Mom also celebrated a special

Grandma Geri connection with Correia and Walker and their parents Janet and Andrew Borba, and with Jamie, Joseph "JJ" and his mom Marguerite Martins.

Geri's sparkly blue eyes and beautiful smile radiated her appreciation of life, curiosity, and encouragement to everyone she met.

Mom was preceded in death by husband Chet, her sister Frieda, and cherished granddaughter Brandi.

She is survived by Greg (Kris Allen), Jeff (Susan), and Kristin, and their above children and grandchildren, and a whole bunch of family dogs and cats.

Friends are invited to join family at a celebration of Geri's life at the First Presbyterian Church in Kalispell at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 6, followed by a reception at Buffalo Hill Golf Course from 4 to 6 p.m.

As paramedics were helping Mom get ready

to leave her beautiful home for the last time on Jan. 21, 2022, dachshund Gully stayed close to comfort and protect his Geri, while Kristin's cat Agent Six made sure Mom heard him meowing at her feet. In a voice reserved for pets and little children Geri reassured everyone present, "See you in heaven, Kitty." We hope all who had the pleasure of meeting Mom will take comfort in knowing our beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and dear friend Geri will keep watching over us, in God's embrace, with Chet and Brandi and a host of other loved ones gone before.

## Jon Elliott, 80

Jon Elliott's wandering days are a thing of the past. His life on earth ended the day after he went body surfing in Mazatlan and sipped his favorite Mexican Reposado one last time on April 29, 2022.

Born Nov. 21, 1941, to Howard and Maxine Elliott, Jon grew up in Steamboat Springs, Colorado; a spirited youth until his last breath. His tales of outrunning the local police as he and his childhood friends pulled their shenanigans were endless. Fortunately, his parents instilled in him a love of the outdoors and got him into skiing at an early age. Eventually ski jumping was his passion and he became a U.S. Ski team member. He went on to become a Cowboy when he skied for the University of Wyoming.

Jon met the love of his life, Pat, in high school. They married and shortly after began their family. His days of ski jumping were replaced with days of hauling his family around on every adventure possible. He introduced his children to backpacking at the ages of 3 and 5 when he first took them into the Wind Rivers, his most special place on Earth. Living in Jackson Hole, it wasn't much of a jaunt for a yearly summer vacation exploring the Winds, and it wasn't long before he

didn't have to drag the family along; they came willingly. Memories of him flipping pancakes, frying fresh golden trout and baking brownies over the embers of a campfire are treasured. His love of the Winds was passed on to his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, along with countless friends.

A land surveyor by trade, Jon moved the family to Alaska in search of new opportunities and adventure. There he discovered a passion and talent for designing and building cross country ski trails, which would take him and Pat to many locations around the country over the years. Always searching for something new, Jon loaded up the family in 1975 and drove to Montana, settling down on an old homestead north of Polebridge. The cabin became a place the entire family loved and would serve as home base for the rest of Jon and Pat's many adventures together. Jon enjoyed pushing people's buttons, usually in a lighthearted way, but always with his wry sense of humor. He was decidedly opinionated but always in a gracious



and mischievous way. He loved to jest his father that he just couldn't keep a job, which naturally produced the desired effect.

Travel ignited Jon's passion for living. He was curious about how other people lived and wanted to learn as much as he could about the world. Jon and Pat went to Taiwan to compete in dragon boat races; they traveled to Portugal and Spain with dear friends (where he seriously was hoping to run with the bulls); and biked in Belgium with Melissa and her husband Dave, where he and his son-in-law were determined to test whether or not Belgium beer could give you a hangover. It never did.

Jon and Pat bought a motorhome, or rather a string of them and abandoned the confines of a permanent home until Pat rebelled seven years later. They traveled the U.S. visiting friends and family and made new friends along the way. His love of the game of golf grew during this time when he played some of the best courses in the U.S. and was finally able to shoot under his age when he turned 75. Although he was able to make two holes-in-one, he remained disappointed his first one didn't count because his playing partner was late

for their tee time.

He and Pat spent several winters in southern Utah where they loved scrambling over red rocks and mountain biking single tracks lined with cactus. While in Utah and summering at the cabin in Polebridge, Jon took up watercolor, which had been a simmering talent. As with all his endeavors he approached it with a genuine passion and treated it like a job. He became quite accomplished and was pleased when he gifted his paintings to friends who hung his work in their homes. His curiosity about how all things worked made him a lifelong learner. He was always trying to learn more and do more. His was a life well lived.

Jon and Pat were married for 62 years. It was hard to tell where one of them started and the other ended. They were one. He has left behind Pat, his daughter, Melissa Cloud, son, Jef Elliott, their spouses, Dave and Suzy and his grandchildren, Jamie and Lacy, along with their spouses and five active great-grandsons whom he loved dearly. He also leaves behind his brother, Jere Elliott, and many sister- and brothers-in-law, as well as extended family and numerous friends.

### Elmer Elzig, 94

Elmer Elzig's hands shook, but they felt as strong as ever when he squeezed his family's palms in the ICU at Logan Health in Kalispell on Jan. 10. Elmer was proud of his iron-tight grip — one he needed for his lifelong work as a mechanic.



machine and ride his three-wheeler. He helped build two cabins next door to each other in Seldovia, Alaska, for himself and his cousin



Two days later, on Jan. 12, 2022, Elmer let go. He was 94 years old. Elmer was born prematurely on Aug. 2, 1927, and he said he always thought that helped make him tough. His parents, Gerald and Helen (Gardner) Elzig, placed Elmer in their stove — a makeshift incubator — to help keep him alive in the first month of his life. Out of the fire, Elmer grew and used his hands to build a life that meant more to his family and friends than the wrenches he turned.

His hands helped craft the stories he loved to tell later in life, ones that live on with his family and friends.

Stories like the time he snuck onto Okinawa Island late in World War II as a 17-year-old Merchant Marine fresh from his hometown of Margie, Minnesota.

Despite the serious nature, he'd chuckle as he'd point to the scar on his forehead that he received from a Japanese sniper bullet. "An inch closer and none of you'd be here," he'd say, before recounting how he was able to hide behind a bulldozer blade that was then used to topple the shack where the shooting came from.

He displayed the stern and somewhat intimidating demeanor of a Marine in his younger years,

often judging a person by their work ethic, valuing a good one. That softened over time though, as he'd display his childlike — and sometimes dark — sense of humor.

His nurturing nature showed more as he reached retirement age, too. Instead of running to the woods on the weekend with his buddies, he was more apt to take one of his grandchildren. He would often watch his youngest grandson play outside for hours on electric four-wheelers and wagons Elmer would fix. He was always up for a game of cribbage, which is his family's go-to card

Bob Elzig, so they'd be closer to the halibut. The door to Elmer's cabin was rarely locked, and he left a guestbook inside for uninvited guests to sign.

But Elmer's family home in Anchorage was his basecamp. From there, he worked as a service manager for Terex Emslie and then as the state superintendent mechanic for Alaska's Department of Transportation, where he retired at age 69.

When he wasn't gone, for work or out in the woods, he'd spend countless hours in the shop. His longtime friend George Colby and he built an airboat in the 1960s that the two piloted up the North Fork of the Flathead River. He built a 1956 Corvette from the ground up. He had countless projects, but he'd always work on his friends' vehicles free of charge. He always woke up early, ate a bowl of oatmeal, rarely drank, and when it came to helping family and friends, there was nothing too difficult and there was always time.

He said his wife of 50 years gave him, "All sorts of hell," for how much he was away. Still, Elmer said that Ruth always had a warm meal waiting for him when he returned.

He cried when she passed away on Oct. 10, 2001.

Along with his wife, Elmer was preceded in death by his six younger siblings, Lester, Bob, Loretta, Jerry, Marshall and Franklin, as well as Elmer's daughter, Janis, and son, Richard.

Elmer is survived by his children, Byron and Cheryl; his daughter-in-law, Rosali; his grandchildren, Kyle (Houghtaling), Hillary, Bryce, Marley (Miller) and Parker (Miller); and his great-granddaughter, Delilah (Houghtaling).

A military service and remembrance will be held later this year.

game.

He had plenty of hunting and fishing stories from his younger years, too. They were more abundant than the meat from the trip where he and his friends put over 2,000 pounds of moose and caribou in the locker while venturing to the Alaskan bush in a cat track that he built.

In fact, it was his love of the wild that led Elmer from Minnesota to the Marines, then to Kalispell — where he met his wife, Ruth (Smith) Elzig, and bought his first home. He was ultimately drawn to the Last Frontier, though. Elmer said he went for a week job as a tractor mechanic to Alaska and didn't leave for more than 40 years before he eventually returned to Kalispell later in life.

He homesteaded a cabin on Nancy Lake in Alaska so he could ice fish and have a place to snow-

### Shirley Ann Emslie, 88

Shirley Ann Emslie, 88, passed away on May 4, 2022, peacefully in her sleep.



(Shelley) Emslie; daughters, Lisa Wrbelis and Heather (Jim) Ackerman;

Shirley was born April 6, 1934, in Waukesha, Wisconsin, and graduated from Waukesha High School.

Shirley married the love of her life, Robert Emslie, in 1953 and raised their four children, Scott, Lisa, Todd and Heather. After retiring from teaching in 1990, they moved to Bigfork to be near their grandchildren.

She loved her special education children as her own. Her caring and compassion in her teaching were beyond compare. Anyone who met Shirley immediately knew what a beautiful woman she was. She had the ability to make everyone feel her love. Her faith in God was her strength and foundation, as well as her church family.

Shirley was preceded in death by Robert two years ago after 67 years of marriage, and beloved grandson Matthew Scott Emslie.

Shirley is survived by her sons, Scott (Anna) Emslie, and Todd

grandchildren, Amanda (Lee) Sells, Adam Emslie, Cole Wrbelis, Logan (Jesse) Wrbelis, Emily Lorbecki, Braden Lorbecki, Alexander Emslie and Hattie Emslie; and great-grandchildren, Leif Sells, Elliot Sells and Colter Wrbelis.

She was the heart of our family, and the best part of all of us. She loved each of us as if we were all her "favorite." Funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, May 11, at Bethany Lutheran Church in Bigfork. Burial will follow at Bethany Lutheran Cemetery.

The family suggests donations in lieu of flowers to a charity of choice. Friends are encouraged to visit the website [www.buffalohillfl.com](http://www.buffalohillfl.com) to leave notes of condolence for the family.

Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory is caring for the family.

### Charlette Enquist-Moran, 74

Charlette Marie Enquist-Moran, 74, died on Monday, Dec. 26, 2022 at Northern Montana Hospital of natural causes.



Survivors include her daughter Alicia Coursey; sister Darlene Klem Graham of Hungry Horse; sister Penny Filler of Spokane; and grandson Jordan Coursey of Havre.

A spring celebration of life will be announced later as the date gets closer.

### Dirk Allan Erektion

Dirk Allan Erektion of Columbia Falls lost his battle with cancer and died peacefully at his home Thursday, June 9, 2022.

Born to Charles and Allana Erektion in 1960 in Cheyenne, Wyoming, he was soon on his way to Whitefish at the age of 3.

Dirk attended Whitefish High School where he was an avid, accomplished athlete in football, swimming and baseball, receiving a baseball scholarship to Montana State University in Bozeman. He still holds the home run record at Whitefish High School. Dirk worked in the construction and car industry in California, moving back to Montana, where he owned and operated his own construction company. For the last 11 years Dirk was a top salesman for Don K Subaru.

Dirk was a true sportsman, loved football, golf, swimming, fishing, floating the Flathead River, as well as snow skiing, traveling

to Europe on occasion to ski the Alps with his sisters. Dirk was known by all his

family, friends, and all who met him for his fun-loving personality and sense of humor. He loved all sports, rock 'n' roll, and living life to the fullest.

Dirk leaves behind his wife, Holly; children, Tyler and grandson, Wesley; stepson, Cyril Burguiere and family (Tiffany, Erica and Isabel); and sisters, Kim, Kris and Kori.

A celebration of life service will be held at 2 p.m. on June 26 at the Whitefish Assembly of God, 150 Lamb Lane, Whitefish, immediately followed by a gathering of family and friends.

Memorials in Dirk's name may be made to Wings Regional Cancer Support, P.O. Box 7852, Kalispell, MT 59904; wingsmtcontact@gmail.com.



### Ayden Conner Erickson, 17

Ayden Erickson, 17, passed away unexpectedly on May 22, 2022, in Sacramento, California, after suffering a traumatic brain injury in a tragic accident.

Ayden was born on Sept. 17, 2004, in Phoenix, Arizona. When he was 5 years old, Ayden and his mother moved back to the Flathead Valley to be closer to family. Throughout the years, Ayden attended school at Glacier Gateway, Edgerton Elementary, Kalispell Middle School, and Glacier High School.

Ayden was an athletic child. He loved anything he could do outdoors. He especially loved doing tricks on his BMX bikes, skateboards, and scooters. He was the envy of his neighborhood when he rode his miniature Harley.

In his younger years, Ayden played soccer, baseball, basketball, and football. As he got older, he enjoyed hiking and fishing, and, in the summer, you could always find him at a lake with his friends. He loved driving his truck and enjoyed fixing it up with his uncle Bill.



Ayden loved spending time at Ashley Lake at his great-grandpa's cabin. He loved all

family gatherings, especially when his grandma and aunts were cooking. Ayden was blessed to have a very special group of close friends; he loved them dearly, and they loved him just as much. He made friends of all ages everywhere he went. Ayden also loved spending time with his girlfriend, Renee. Many friends would stop by for one of his special hugs when they were feeling low or just to see his infectious smile or to hear him laugh. His giggle was contagious.

Ayden is survived by his mother, Jamie Erickson, of Kalispell; his father, Kevin Desmarais, and family, of Kalispell; his stepisters, Rikki Gahr (Justin and family) of Arizona, and Hannah Graham (Mike and family) of Columbia Falls; mater-

ial grandparents, Randy and Denise Erickson and Carol Cluka, all of Columbia Falls; paternal grandparents, Robert and Karen Desmarais, of Nevada; great-grandmother, Mary Baril, and great-grandfather, Marvin Erickson, both of Columbia Falls; aunt and godmother, Brittney Erickson Hughes (Scott) of Martin City; aunt, Alanna Erickson (cousin Lexie) of Columbia Falls; aunt, Eleanore Pritchett (Bill) of Kalispell; aunt Jennifer Moulton (cousins Harper and Veronica) of Hungry Horse; and cousin and godfather, Scott Brown (and family) of Kalispell. He is also survived by many other great aunts, great uncles, and second cousins.

Ayden was preceded in death by his great-grandfather, Charles Baril; great-grandmother, Rose Erickson; aunt Colleen Gordon; and uncles, Dennis David and Ron Long, Jr.

Ayden will forever be remembered as kind-hearted, adventurous, stylish, and fun-loving. He

will be dearly missed by all, but especially by his mother, Jamie.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Flathead County Animal Shelter, where Ayden adopted his beloved dog, Jaxson (225 Cemetery Road, Kalispell, Montana 59901).

A celebration of Ayden's life will be held at Marantette Park in Columbia Falls on Aug. 5 at 1 p.m. Please join us for an afternoon of honoring Ayden. Bring your favorite memories and stories to share.

The family would like to thank the entire health-care team at UC Davis Medical Center for their compassion and kindness. The family would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Sierra Donor Services. Ayden was an organ donor, and, through his gifts, many other families have been given hope for a brighter future.

We love you, Ayden. We will hold you in our hearts until we see you again.

### Betty Lou Erickson, 89

Betty Lou Erickson, beloved daughter, sister, wife, mother, grand-mother, aunt and friend, passed away on Monday, Jan. 10, 2022, at Polson Health and Rehab, at the age of 89.

She was born on March 9, 1932, in Conrad to Mildred Simms and H.W. "Pat" Hart. She spent her early years in Conrad before the family moved to the Finley Point area in Polson. She attended Polson schools where she met the love of her life, Fred B. Erickson Jr.

Betty and Fred were married on May 21, 1947 and remained married for 64 years until Fred's passing. Together they raised

their five children.

Betty began her nursing career in 1956 and worked in various positions in that field. She was a wonderful nurse and caregiver who treated all her patients with love and compassion.

Betty enjoyed camping, reading, sewing, crocheting, ceramics, cooking, baking (her cinnamon rolls were bake-off winners — so delicious!), and playing cards and board games with family and friends but, most of all, she loved her family,



friends, and all the fur babies she had over the years. She was a faithful member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and she dearly loved her church family as well.

She was preceded in death by her parents Mildred and Pat Hart, her father-in-law and mother-in-law Fred Erickson Sr. and Hattie, her husband Fred Erickson Jr., daughter Laura Corcoran, great-grandson Zachary Gafford, and her three brothers.

She is survived by daughters, Charlotte (Perry) Fall, Debra Gafford and Kathi Sanders, son Patrick Erickson, sister Dorothy (Dr. Wayne) Hoss,

10 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandson, and numerous nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Betty's life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to St. Jude Children's Hospital, Mission Valley Animal Shelter, or to an organization of your choice.

Messages of condolences may be shared with the family online at [www.lakefuneral-homeandcremation.com](http://www.lakefuneral-homeandcremation.com). Arrangements are under the care of The Lake Funeral Home and Crematory.

### Billie Rae Noyes Erickson, 88

Billie Rae Noyes Erickson, a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother and friend died May 28, 2022, at Brendan House in Kalispell of natural causes. She was 88.



Billie enjoyed taking pictures, playing pinochle, fishing, camping and boating, helping at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse, and making Christmas candy with Fred. Billie and Fred divorced in 1987 and she moved to Missoula working at Zales. She decided to go into real estate and returned to Kalispell in 1990, working for Chuck Olson and Windemere Realty. Fred and Billie reconnected and remained companions and caretakers of each other until his death in 2006.

In 2016 Billie moved into Brendan House in Kalispell where she lived until her passing. Billie was a joy to be around, smart, witty and caring, and loved by all who knew her.

She is survived by her sisters Caryl (E.L.) Luckett of Chinook, Renee (David) McLure of Phillipsburg, Tori (Larry) Reinlasoder of Billings, and Carla (Andy) Scheidecker of Billings, brother David (Lori) Noyes of Billings, daughter Donna (Keith) McKinney of Washington, sons John (Opal) Mortensen of Idaho, Rick (Alice) Erickson of Lolo, Dan Erickson, nieces and nephews Leah (Joe) Benski and Michael Noel of Great Falls, Jeff (Alisha) Samek, Jake (Lea) Samek, Jason (Tracy) Samek, Ryan Estel and Dane Estel, Lacy Noyes (Jeff Perea), Molly (Lottie) Reseland, and Seth (Kailee) Noyes, all of Billings, and Toby (Angle) Balsam of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, grandchildren Donovan McKinney and Donovan Rose Nelson, grandson Zack (Kate) Erickson of Mississippi, great-grandsons Damian Blackmore and Bjorn Lars Nelson, and very dear friend Janet Monk of Bigfork.

Billie was born on October 28, 1933 in Havre, the first child of Carl and Charlotte Noyes. She was joined by sister Caryl in 1938. The family moved to Great Falls where Billie graduated from Great Falls High School in 1951. In 1954 she married Don Mortensen and they made Conrad their home, where they had two children, Donna and John. Billie moved to Chinook in 1956 following her divorce from Don. In 1959 she met and married Fred Erickson and moved to Great Falls, and expanded their family with sons Rick and Dan. Billie and Fred moved to Bigfork in 1976 with Fred's company Crop Hall Management. In the Flathead Valley, Billie found her home, raising her children and enjoying the beautiful scenery and her beloved hummingbirds. Billie

In 2016 Billie moved into Brendan House in Kalispell where she lived until her passing. Billie was a joy to be around, smart, witty and caring, and loved by all who knew her.

She is survived by her sisters Caryl (E.L.) Luckett of Chinook, Renee (David) McLure of Phillipsburg, Tori (Larry) Reinlasoder of Billings, and Carla (Andy) Scheidecker

A celebration of Billie's life will be held at the Monk Ranch in Pleasant Valley on Aug. 13. The family asks that you remember Billie by considering a donation in her name to Brendan House in Kalispell or the Bigfork Summer Playhouse in Bigfork.

### Catherine Mary (O'Connor) Erwin, 75

Catherine Mary (O'Connor) Erwin peacefully passed away on Jan. 25, 2022, in Duluth, Minnesota, with her husband by her side.

Catherine was born on May 1, 1945, in Gary, Indiana. She attended the inaugural class of Andean High School in Merrillville, Indiana, where she participated in Varsity cheer. Catherine held a Bachelor of Arts degree from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and eventually earned a master's degree in education from Lesley University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In the 1970s, Catherine moved from the Midwest to Colorado where she was a reporter for the Boulder Daily Camera. As a reporter, Catherine interviewed many interesting individuals over the years, including Lucille Ball. Catherine had two children, Mary Catherine, born in 1979, and Frank Michael, born in 1982. After spending



her children's earliest years with them at home, Catherine embarked on a

35-year teaching career, and officially retired from both the Denver and Aurora, Colorado Public Schools. Catherine's favorite city to visit was Paris, France, where she skipped the popular tourist destinations. With a pen and crisp unlined paper in hand, Catherine enjoyed observing Parisians in the industrial outskirts of the city, speaking their beautiful language, and living authentically. She kept a journal throughout her life.

Catherine married her husband in Foulso, Washington, on Aug. 3, 2008. During their marriage, Catherine and Royce spent eight years traveling the United States. During their travels, they visited her son

and daughter who both served in the U.S. Marine Corps. During this period, Catherine and Royce discovered Echo Lake, Montana, where they served as camp hosts for four years. In 2018, Royce and Catherine permanently moved to Hibbing, Minnesota, where they purchased a home and retired from life on the road.

Catherine is survived by her husband, Royce; sister, Kerry O'Connor, of Mesa, Arizona; brother, John (Alice) O'Connor, of Grand Junction, Colorado; daughter, Mary Catherine (Kaminski), and her husband Tim Anderlonis of Arlington, Virginia; grandkids, Michael Stanley, Thomas James and John Francis of Arlington; her son, Frank Michael, and his wife, Leslie (Wilson) Kaminski of Miami, Florida; stepchildren, Sandra (Larry) Hauta, Melissa (Rob) Szama, and Jeff Erwin; 10 step-grandchildren, Olivia Nicole, Michael,

Thomas, John Francis, Kenny (Rebecca), Kristina (Adam), Khai (Brandon), Christina, Max and Mitchell; and 13 great-grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her parents, Jeremiah and Dorothy; brother, Dennis; and her sister, Grace.

Catherine appreciated that humans are inherently flawed. She regularly educated people on brain development in young people, especially teenagers, the disease of alcoholism, and the discriminating effect of learning disabilities. You can honor Catherine by demonstrating patience and empathy towards others, especially the imperfect. In other words, just be kind.

A private service was held.

Family services were provided by Anderson-Daniels, a Bauman Family Funeral Home, in Hibbing. To express condolences online, please see [www.baumanfuneralhome.com](http://www.baumanfuneralhome.com).



### Charles 'Chuck' Daniel Evans, 74

Charles "Chuck" Daniel Evans of Naples, Florida, and Germantown, Wisconsin, and formerly of Bigfork, passed from this world and into heaven peacefully on Jan. 5, 2022, in the Naples Community Hospital after a long battle with heart disease. His first heart surgery was 25 years ago, so he fought the good fight.

He was born Feb. 23, 1947, in Great Falls, Montana, to George and Ina Mae Evans. He attended high school in Bigfork, graduated from Montana State University in 1970 and later from the University of Dubuque, Iowa, with a Master of Business Administration degree.

Chuck spent a career of about 40 years in human resources and labor relations. He worked for John Deere for 32 of those years. He finished his career with FMCS (Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services) in the Chicago office.

Over the years he pursued many interests, including downhill skiing in Montana, British Columbia and the upper Midwest, upland bird hunting with his beloved English setters, fly fishing, riding his Harley, golf, and an interest in "muscle cars." He was thrilled he was able to ride his Harley with other riders to the mountains of Colorado when he was 65.

He is survived by his loving wife Darlene of 48 years, his daughter

Jessica Staff (Andrew) and grandson Trevor of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, brother Gerald Evans of Missoula, sister Randi Colby (Clay) of Kalispell, and half brother Russell Kastner (Janice) of Conrad.

He was preceded in death by two brothers-in-law, Chuck Seeley and Edward Ulve. Having been part of Darlene's family for all those years, he will be greatly missed by sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, Rita and Timo Novinska, Debra and Keith Mintz, Sharon Seeley, Charlotte Ulve, and Delores and Jerry Boury. He will also be fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews.

Because Chuck was registered with Legacy Donor Services in Florida, it is of comfort that as he left this earth, he gave a gift of hope and healing to others.

Visitation will be held on Saturday, Feb. 5, from 11 a.m. until the time of the memorial service at noon at Schmidt & Bartelt Funeral Home - Menomonee Falls, N84 W17937 Menomonee Ave., Menomonee Falls, WI 53051.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to one of the following charities or your own favorite charity: Grace Place For Children and Families at [www.graceplacenaples.org](http://www.graceplacenaples.org), or Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida at [www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org), or Milwaukee Rescue Mission at [www.milmission.org](http://www.milmission.org).

### Larry D. Evinrude, 74



Larry D. Evinrude passed away peacefully at home in Kalispell on Oct. 10, 2022. Larry was 74 years old.

Larry was born in Glendive, where he attended school through his junior year in high school. The family then moved to Eureka where Larry completed his senior year and met his future wife, Ella, the love of his life. Larry attended Dawson Community College after high school. Larry and Ella were married in late 1967 in Eureka. They were blessed with two children Teresa and Jeff.

Larry was known as

a hard worker and family man. Larry started his career at the Anaconda Company Smelter in Helena. He worked many long hours in the logging industry in both the Libby and Bozeman areas. Larry retired after 24 years at the USPS as a contract driver, hauling mail from Kalispell to Missoula and then driving several local routes in the Flathead Valley. As hard as Larry

worked, his first love was his family. His door was always open for visitors. He loved his furry, four-legged family members; he was known to enjoy a good game of Greed (dice) with family and friends and looked forward to NASCAR races on the weekend.

Larry was preceded in death by his father, Russell; and his mother, Bertha.

He is survived by his wife, Ella; and his two children, Teresa of Billings and Jeff of Kalispell; his sisters Janet (Ralph) Hieb of Leander, Texas, Karen (Larry) Wahl of Scobey,

Sheila (Cory) Knutson of Billings, and Gale (Teresa Ann) Evinrude of Billings; two granddaughters, Tasha (Brad) Ward of Bozeman, and Morgan (Daylin Huskey) of Billings; two great-grandsons, CJ and Timber Ward of Bozeman; and numerous in-laws, nephews, nieces, and cousins.

Larry will be sorely missed by his family and friends. A memorial and remembrance service will be held at the family home in Kalispell on Sunday, Oct. 16, at 1 p.m.

### Bruce Emmett Ewing, 68

Bruce Emmett Ewing passed on March 11, 2022, surrounded by his wife Renee and children Erin and Rob. The week after Christmas, Bruce was diagnosed with stage 4 sarcoma. He left a large legacy of love, which included family, friends, practical and creative labor, and everything associated with the great outdoors.

Bruce's philosophy in life was to master whatever field he chose to pursue. Ironwork, welding, metal work, woodworking, skiing, fishing, rafting, sports, hunting, and many other hobbies drew him in. Bruce was always extremely resourceful, and he excelled at "MacGyver-ing" anything and everything as the situation demanded.

He loved his family and friends, and he enjoyed teaching the youngsters in his life how to do the things he enjoyed, such as fishing, skiing, and responding to the call "Go fast, Uncle Bruce!" when a ride in the big red boat was offered up. In his numerous adventures, he radiated joy and provided a warm grin or a joke to those he met along the way. Bruce made friends wherever he went, whether it was on the ski lift, the shuttle to the Going-to-the-Sun Road, the job site, a hike, or on the ice.

Bruce Ewing was born on Dec. 1, 1953, in Kalispell to Perry and Bob Ewing. He was the second of three siblings, Steve, Dan and Sheila Ewing.

In 1973, he graduated from Flathead High School. Fun, friends, football, and State Wrestling Championships characterized his high school years. He never met a stranger and had a large number of friends among his classmates and teachers, many of whom he kept in touch with over the years. In 1973-'74, he wrestled and took communication studies at Montana State University. In 1976, he moved to Tempe, Arizona, to join his future wife, Renee, where he worked at Sea-Ray, a luxury watercraft manufacturer.

He married Renee Bennett of Kalispell in 1978. Bruce and Renee moved to Lacey, Washington, after completing his ironworker apprenticeship, where Erin was born in January 1983. They went to California a month after she was born, finally settling in the San Francisco

Bay Area, where Rob was born in 1985.

"You can't eat the scenery!" he would say when asked why he would leave Montana for California.

Bruce raised his family in the Bay Area, participating in a variety of activities including hiking and bicycling in local and national parks, beach days, museums and sporting events, to mention a few.

Bruce began his career at S.O.S. Steel in 1985 as



a journeyman ironworker welder for Local 377, San Francisco, where he excelled at his craft. While progressing to field superintendent, he enjoyed his profession and

developed lifelong friends. He became the go-to guy for figuring out how to get things done safely and quickly in the field. He'd just lament the fact that he had to "work off some crazy plan that a "never been in the field" engineer drew up!" He relished the opportunity to accompany a project manager to the job site and educate them on the ins and outs of structural steel construction.

His commitment to demanding work and rarely missing a day or an opportunity to show a new apprentice how to do things "right" allowed him to retire back to the beautiful Flathead Valley in 2012.

Bruce began returning to all of the picturesque locations, reuniting with friends, skiing, and searching for the "drug of the tug" on every local lake in his easily recognizable red Thunderjet fishing boat, as well as traversing the untamed rivers of Montana and Idaho in his distinctive seafoam green raft. He was definitely in his happy place, doing everything he enjoyed!

Bruce had a strong desire to do the right thing, to be there for his friends, to establish a life for his family, and to live life to the fullest. His life's connections, the lessons he taught his children, and the impact he had on his community will be deeply missed. His family and friends will mourn him more than mortal words can convey, and his brilliant smile and contagious laugh will be missed by all who knew him.

The Ewing family wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude for the love and support of so many family members and friends, both near and far, who have assisted Bruce and his family on their journey. Every phone call, hug, dinner, card and visit from someone who cared was immensely appreciated.

Bruce's family was appreciative for the opportunity to give his corneas so that someone else might see and have a better quality of life.

The Jewel Basin Center in Bigfork will host a celebration of life on Saturday, June 11, from 5 to 9 p.m. It will be a joyful and upbeat evening for everyone, as Bruce has requested. We look forward to seeing you there!