



Mary Lawnin Moseley Armstrong

May 15, 1934 - March 6, 2024

It is with profound sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of our beloved mother, Mary Lawnin Moseley Armstrong on March 6th, 2024, at the age of 89. She left this world surrounded by the love of her family and friends. It is said that you can't beat cancer, but in keeping with her strong will and determination, she gave it a go for 4 1/2 years.

Born on May 15th, 1934 in Evanston, Illinois, Mary went on to live an extraordinary life filled with adventure, travel, sports, friends and family.

She attended John Burroughs High School in St. Louis, Missouri, Skidmore College, then transferred to the University of Wisconsin from which she graduated with a degree in Elementary Education. Her summers as a camp counselor at Camp Minne-Wonka in Three Lakes, Wisconsin shaped the rest of her life as she developed a love of canoeing, hiking and the outdoors. She continued that love of nature with her family in the Pacific Northwest, leading them twice on long hikes across the Olympic National Park and multiple hikes in the Cascades. She avidly supported the Green Bay Packers, attended the famous "Ice Bowl" and remained a Packer fan to the end. As her three children were growing up on Mercer Island, Washington, the family fell in love with soccer. Mary formed and coached the first girls' club soccer team at Mercer Island High School and played on a women's team until she was 55 years old.

Mary's career was focused on education and she was an elementary aide in the Mercer Island School District for nearly 30 years, primarily working one on one with students. She was known as the playground "Duty" and had a reputation of being strict during recesses at Island Park and Lakeridge elementary schools.

In the 1980s, Mary's big adventure was travel; with a goal of reaching all 7 continents. She, of course, succeeded in this. In doing so, she made friends with people around the world and continued to communicate with them throughout her life.

Mary loved being around young, active people and her house on Mercer Island had a constant buzz of young people in and out and much laughter during "Sunday Night Dinners."

After one of her many summer hiking trips in the North Cascades, Mary fell in love with a piece of land in Mazama, Washington and decided to purchase it. The family built a small cabin which became a focal point for Mary and her family over the next 42 years. It is where she met her second husband, Lyle Armstrong.

Mary and Lyle lived in Winthrop the last 25 years of her life, enjoying the valley's beauty, hiking and recreation. She spent many hours volunteering with Methow Trails, Methow Valley Youth Soccer, Mazama Pancake breakfasts and refereeing youth soccer games.

Mary continued to pour her heart into her family, starting a tradition of traveling with each grandchild once they reached 10 years old. Those times are still treasured by each of the 6 grandchildren. She spent countless hours watching their soccer and basketball games, along with her 3 children's adult sporting

events.

For over 60 years, another constant in Mary's life were her dogs. Whether a rescue, stray or purebred, large or small, she loved them all. They became family to her and accompanied her on many of her adventures.

Surviving family include her husband Lyle Armstrong, children Mary Lee (Tom), Jeff (Julie), Scott (Mary) and grandchildren Abigail, Kathryn, Jamie, Emma, Jace and Mia.

She was preceded in death by her parents Nelson and Dorothy Lawnin, brother Michael, and former husband George.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made in Mary's memory to the Okanogan Regional Humane (<https://ok-humane.org/about>) . This reflects her passion that all animals will be wanted and loved, and the contributions will continue her legacy of generosity.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all the family, friends, and caregivers who provided love, support and comfort during this difficult time. Your presence and kind words meant the world to Mary and the family.

I come here to find myself, it is so easy to get lost in the world. -John Burroughs

The Mountains are calling and I must go. -John Muir.

A Private service is being held.

Tribute Wall

NW

“ I first met Mary over 40 years ago when she was an aide in my Mercer Island classroom. We became good friends, and I have many fond memories of our outdoor activities together with my late wife, Carol. Mary was one of the most positive and helpful people I have known. I will miss her greatly.



Neil Williams

Neil Williams - March 12, 2024 at 01:42 PM

DJ

“ My husband and I have been meeting Mary and Lyle at Banks Lake campground for many years. After a long day of fishing we would meet by the campfire tell stories and share a glass of wine. What a wonderful and i interesting lady! I always loved her scrapbooks! Every year hearing new stories of family and friends and places visited! She was a wonderful friend and I will miss her smiling face and wonderful smile. Im sure she’s finding a mountain to climb!

Diana Hendren Johnsen - March 11, 2024 at 04:50 PM

ST

“ I only had the pleasure of meeting Mary on two occasions in 2021, (Emma's bridal shower and Emma and Nelson's wedding), but she left a lasting impression on me. She had such a beautiful smile and full personality that I felt blessed to have met her even if it was just for a brief time. Our prayers are with her family.

Sue Taylor - March 10, 2024 at 03:21 PM

ST

“ 2 files added to the album Mary at Emma's bridal shower 7-10-21



Sue Taylor - March 10, 2024 at 03:11 PM

CM

“ *I met Mary many years ago when we were both teaching at Island Park on Mercer Island. She and I worked together in my first grade classroom, and her connection with the children was magical. She also did recess duty, which she absolutely relished. She taught the children games they could play, always stressing sportsmanship, and the children adored her. As we became friends, we did activities and outings outside of school, chief among them was a backpacking trip along with two other women (and two dogs!) on the Pacific Crest Trail. We hiked for four days, never seeing another human being, and enjoyed every single moment. Mary was a marvelous friend, kind, caring and always there for me and for others. I will remember her always in my heart and in my mind. Love always Mary.*

Carole Muth - March 10, 2024 at 03:10 PM

“ I was deeply saddened to hear of the death of my dear friend Mary, but her passing has prompted a parade of celebratory memories of our adventures together. I first met Mary when, working as a mountain guide in Mazama, I was assigned to lead a one-week backpacking trip in the Pasayten Wilderness for a women’s soccer team from Seattle. Those trips for Mary’s team became an annual event and somewhere along the line Mary adopted me into her clan. During the off-season she hired me for building projects, and then, inspired by her mother who was a great traveler, she asked me to organize and guide her on adventurous longer excursions to remote and exotic places, mostly in Asia.

It was in the fall of 1987 that we landed in Lhasa, Tibet just days before the 40th anniversary of the communist victory in China. The date inspired violent protests of the Chinese occupation of Tibet, and we ended up being close observers of a crackdown that killed seven Tibetans and led to a lockdown of the city. We had fallen in with a group of Irish, Dutch, and American travelers and, after a week of marshal law, our group was allowed to be the first to leave Lhasa on a five-day bus trip over the Himalayas to Kathmandu. Before our group disbanded in Nepal we made plans to rendezvous for Christmas at the beach resorts of Goa, India. About a dozen of us made it to Goa, and on the day before Christmas we all went into the nearest village to buy toys for each other. A tiny Christmas tree was heaped with the hundred wrapped gifts, and, after a Christmas feast, we opened our presents and took the mass of toys to the beach to play. Our group of pale-skinned tourists soon attracted a crowd of Indian children amused by the spectacle of our playing in the sand with painted cars, battalions of plastic soldiers, miniature animals, and a raucous game of cricket with a plastic bat and wiffle ball. Just at the high point of our hilarity, Mary spontaneously gestured to the children that our games were over, and the toys were all theirs now. As if we had planned and rehearsed it, the rest of us got the drift of her intention and offered gifts to the throng who were now shouting in excited Hindi. An English-speaking mother verified our intention before the children gleefully dove in and

showed us how play was really done.

Of the memories of our journeys together, this one really captures for me how this diminutive woman with her boundless kindness, out-sized heart, and effervescent joy enriched everyone around her. I will miss her greatly.

Doug Veenhof

Doug Veenhof - March 10, 2024 at 01:51 PM

BD

“ *I met Mary in northern Wisconsin. I am from St Louis and had no experience with lake activities. Mary worked hard to teach me about sailing and water skiing. I “sort of got it”. I remember her standing perfectly balanced on the bow of the boat and giving me directions. I was in awe that she could do that and not fall in the lake. I have appreciated her friendship and will miss her.*

Barbara Dammkoehler - March 10, 2024 at 01:27 PM

KM

“ *My father-in-law, Patrick McGinnis, saw Mary as one of his very best friends. He met her through the hiking community, and he introduced me to Mary when I joined his family and we started hiking together. Mary's warmth and generosity knew no bounds, and I sincerely hope that she and Patrick can enjoy some more walks together now.*

Prayers for peace and healing during this difficult time of transition from Rita McGinnis and Kevin and Leah McDonald.

Kevin McDonald - March 09, 2024 at 03:12 PM

DM

“ Mary and I met hiking in the Pasayten Wilderness. Mary left such an impression on me and organized us to do many more backpacking adventures. We spent the years laughing, getting lost and laughing some more. We had so much fun. I will miss all the laughs we had. It is so hard to lose a great friend. Love you Mary! -Dorothy Mitchel

Dorothy Mitchel - March 09, 2024 at 09:37 AM

RF

I first met Mary in the fall of '79 when I joined her women's soccer team. It was all up from there! We played soccer together for several years. She kept asking me to join her backpacking "group" each summer but it was usually late in August and I had to be back in my classroom. In '82 it worked out that I could join. We set off on a two week epic adventure in the Canadian Rockies. After that trip we went on several more adventures - in the North Cascades, along the PCT, and in Wyoming. We became a hiking crew because of Mary's persistence. She became a lifelong friend. As I left on a trip this year, in late January, I received an email from her wishing me a good trip. I was going on a hiking adventure. She sent good wishes and lamented that she wished she could go on such an adventure. She was the consummate adventurer and encourager. She started me on my journeys of hiking and soccer (which I play to this day). Mary was an important part of my life in so many ways. I will miss her but know that she's free from pain. I will honor her legacy by continuing to do the things she introduced to me many years ago. Much love to her family at this difficult time. Mary will always be a part of my life and memories.

Renee Fife - March 09, 2024 at 04:48 PM

MM

And hugs to Dorothy!

Mary Lee Moseley - August 18, 2024 at 01:02 PM

NF

“ Never will forget the afternoons we spent in her backyard in the treehouse playing spin the bottle with Charlie Edison and George someone. We had ,any joyous times thru the years from kindergarten on. Nancy fordyce

Nancy Fordyce - March 08, 2024 at 11:23 PM

BD

I met Mary in northern Wisconsin. I was from the city and had no experience around lakes. She made a valiant effort to teach me to sail and to water ski and I sort of "got it". I will always be in awe of her ability to stand perfectly balanced on the bow of a moving sail boat and not fall off. I will miss her friendship.

Barbara Dammkoehler - March 09, 2024 at 01:59 PM