



Helen "Bette" Zech Obituary

Helen Elizabeth "Bette" (Eakin) Zech lost her battle with cancer and passed away peacefully at home on February 27, 2022. Bette was born March 22, 1927 in Wendell, Idaho, the first of four children. She grew up on the family ranch in Jerome, ID. Bette received a nursing scholarship to attend Saint Catherine's Nursing School in Omaha, Nebraska. While in nursing school she met her husband, Ralph, a medical student. They married in 1949 and settled in Seattle, Washington. Bette and Ralph had eight children. They also welcomed many foster babies and foreign exchange students into their home. Bette was always quick to "adopt" anyone she felt needed an extra mother. While in Seattle, Bette completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, with a minor in nursing education at Seattle University.

When the family moved to a farm in Enumclaw, Bette used her green thumb to grow food and flowers for family and many others, including the sharing table at Sacred Heart. Her nursing education helped her care for residents and train staff at Bethesda Manor. She shared her musical talents playing the organ for many local churches; and her lovely voice singing whenever possible, including Plateau and Sacred Heart choirs. Bette used her organization skills everywhere, but especially on the Board of Directors to help build St. Elizabeth Hospital. She was involved in the community: Cemetery Board, Rainier School Patient Advocate, and her 8 children's activities. Bette had an adventurous spirit which led her to travel around the world. She never met a stranger and always welcomed others with her warm and engaging personality.

Bette is preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Doris (Fountain) Eakin; two brothers; and two children, Theresa and Edward R. Zech MD. She is survived by her brother William Eakin; her children, Dr. Ralph Zech II (Leslie), Dr. Jean Zech-Manhart, Joan-Marie Gerth (John), USA, Ret., Thomas Zech, Charles Zech (Deborah), and Katherine Kioshi (Pat), USNR, Ret.; 17 grandchildren and 13 1/2 great grandchildren.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Monday, March 14, 2022, at 11 AM at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 1614 Farrelly St., Enumclaw, WA. Burial will be at 2:30 PM at Evergreen Memorial Park, 23717 SE 416th St., Enumclaw, WA.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Rainier Foothills Wellness Foundation. Please share a memory of Bette with her family on the tribute wall.