



Emily Hurlbert

July 9, 1944 - August 24, 2024

Emily Cecilia Hurlbert passed away at her home in Shell Beach, California on August 24, 2024, at a very young 80 years of age. Emily was an optimist who never backed down from a challenge. She lived by the saying, “bloom where you’re planted,” and not only did she make the most of any opportunity, but she also lifted family, friends, and strangers to do the same.

Emily was born on July 9, 1944, in Flagstaff, AZ, to John Johnson and Emily Novak Johnson, who died during childbirth. Her father married Mabel Vathing Johnson, and they raised Emily and her brother in Mankato, Minnesota and Huron, South Dakota. Emily graduated from the University of South Dakota in 1966 and married Dene Hurlbert the same year. They hopped in the Chevy SuperSport and began their 58 years of marriage with two years at “Fort Bliss” in El Paso, TX. Emily loved her homes in Aberdeen, South Dakota and Dillon, Colorado, where she raised her children and made lifelong friends. After overcoming health and economic speed bumps, she and Dene found themselves planted in California. Emily found great satisfaction in her master’s degree in English from CSU San Bernardino and subsequent teaching career. While she enjoyed adjunct positions at Colorado Mountain College and Mt. San Jacinto College, she really blossomed as a Professor of Academic Development at Bakersfield College, where she taught for 16 years. Emily inspired her colleagues and students with tireless passion for teaching reading and writing to underprepared college students. She was honored with the Shirley Trembley Distinguished Teaching Award in 2008. In addition to

supporting her students and her children, Emily was a sounding board to Dene and a board member of JTS Companies.

Following retirement in 2009, they relocated to Shell Beach where Emily's quilting talent and her philanthropic interest in improving the lives of women and children matured. She became active in P.E.O., serving as president for 4 years, connecting dozens of local women to educational grants, and bringing a new weekend chapter to fruition. She also served as co-chair of the Women's Legacy Fund working to improve the lives of women and children in SLO County. Emily's generosity extended to People's Self-Help Housing Corp and The Land Conservancy in San Luis Obispo. Emily was an ardent supporter of the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts at Allan Hancock College, not missing a show for almost 20 years, sponsoring shows, and underwriting new positions.

Emily was preceded in death by her parents and survived by her husband Dene, their three children: John (Beringia) of Bakersfield, Mary Beth of Visalia, and Sarah (Rob) Rijnen of Shell Beach, and her three grandchildren: Darby Hurlbert of Prior Lake, MN and Hannes and Mabel Rijnen of Shell Beach. She is also survived by her brother Larry (Pat) Johnson of St. Paul, MN and her beloved nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life is scheduled for September 13, 2024, 2:00 pm at the UCC of San Luis Obispo located at 11245 Los Osos Valley Road.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to one of the organizations closest to Emily's heart:

Women's Legacy Fund - Next Year's Grants, 550 Dana Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

<https://www.cfsloco.org/donate/?fund=3966>

P.E.O. Chapter YB – Program for Continuing Education, c/o Beth Merritt Miller,
372 Highland Dr., Los Osos, CA 93402

PCPA Foundation, 237 Town Center W #106, Santa Maria, CA 93458

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

SEP **13.** 2:00 PM (PT)

UCC of San Luis Obispo
11245 Los Osos Valley Rd
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Tribute Wall



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Emily Hurlbert.* ”



September 12, 2024 at 02:31 PM