

Suzanne Croft Olson, 56



Suzanne (Suzi) Croft Olson, 56, was born in Salt Lake City, Utah on June 2, 1946 to Merrill and Melba Croft. She died in Spokane, Wash. on March 13, 2003, as the result of a brain aneurysm.

Funeral services will be held at 3 p.m. on Friday, March 21, 2003 at the Wellsprings Community Center home of Praise Church in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. An informal dinner will be held in the Trinity Lutheran Church basement following graveside services.

Suzi was raised in Salt Lake City and was the second of five children. She attended public schools and graduated from Highland High School in 1964. A talented student, Suzi graduated Phi Kappa Phi in three years from Utah State

University, with a degree in Elementary and Special Education.

While at college, she met her future husband, Steve Olson. They married on September 16, 1967, and embarked upon 35 years of loving adventure.

In the fall of 1968, Steve and Suzi moved to Moscow, Idaho to teach school for one year. For several years after that, they moved from Iowa to Nebraska, following jobs. They never forgot the beauty of North Idaho, however, and in the spring of 1972, they returned to Idaho to settle in Bonners Ferry, where they have resided for 31 years.

Upon arriving in Bonners Ferry, they purchased 40 acres in the Moyie Springs area and started building their home, where they still lived. On Aug. 7, 1972 their son Trevor was born in the midst of the building project.

Their spirit of adventure carried them through, even though they spent the fall in a tent before their home was ready to be occupied. Daughter Tiki was born three years later on July 10, 1975 to complete their family.

Suzi enjoyed being a stay-at-home mom as her children were growing up. She particularly loved country living in

beautiful Boundary County, and gardening, canning and sewing were her favorite hobbies. She was active in 4-H and served as a leader for swine, cooking, sewing, woodworking and outdoor survival classes.

In 1985, she worked with other community members to bring Head Start to Boundary County. She was hired as the first Boundary County Head Start Center director and worked in this position for the next seven years.

After a logging accident in 1991, Suzi nursed Steve back to health. The accident prompted their decision to begin a new phase of life. They both entered a graduate program in counseling offered by the University of Idaho in Coeur d Alene. They graduated together with Masters in Counseling and Human Services in May of 1996.

With her new degree in hand, Suzi went to work for Marley Community Services (now High Road Human Services) as a case manager. In this position, Suzi coordinated services for adults with handicaps or mental illness and continued in this career until her death.

Suzi served on the Governor's Mental Health Advisory Board and the Boundary County Hospital Guardianship Board. She was a Hospice volunteer for many years. During the past year, she had been active in the formation of the Far-North Chapter of NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill). She recently had been selected as president for this new chapter.

Suzi and Steve loved to travel and camp and looked forward to weekend get-a-ways at the cabin they built together on Priest River. Suzi's greatest joys were her family, especially her grandchildren, and sharing with and caring for others. Throughout her life, she gave unselfishly of her time and energy. She touched many lives and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Suzi is survived by her husband Steve, at the family home in Moyie Springs; son Trevor and his wife Yuli of Princeton, N.J.; daughter Tiki and her husband Dain Bell; Tiki's children; Tyler, Brandyn and Kayliana all of Bonners Ferry; her father Merrill; two brothers; David and wife Pam, George and wife Teresa, all of Salt Lake City; two sisters; Meryl Lynn and husband Rob Forsberg of St. George, Utah; Kim Monroe of Bonners Ferry; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her mother, Melba Croft.

Memorials may be sent, in care of the family, to the Far-North Chapter of NAMI.