



Birdie Elaine Westerdahl

November 6, 1935 - September 15, 2024

The sun shone brighter and the water sparkled more brilliantly as heaven welcomed Birdie Elaine (Thies Bagley) Westerdahl on September 15, 2024.

Birdie was born November 6, 1935 in Florida where her lifelong love of the sun and water took hold. She spent her childhood in Wisconsin and Minnesota and proudly graduated from St. Louis Park High School in 1954. She went on to the University of Minnesota where she became a lifelong member and supporter of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority. Graduating in 1958 with a Bachelor's Degree in Education, Birdie began her lasting passion for teaching and special education. Countless students in Minnetonka and St. Louis Park were the recipients of her patience, knowledge and talents. Never one to stop learning, she went on to complete her Masters at age 50.

In 1959, Birdie married Donald Bagley and they began their family welcoming two amazing kids - John and Linda. Their loving home on Claremore Drive was always filled with neighborhood parties, book clubs, sewing clubs, a central gathering spot for kids, all animals from dogs to cats to ferrets and snakes. Everyone was always welcome and felt seen, loved and celebrated by Birdie. She shared her talents with many organizations including the School Board, League of Women Voters, Junior League, Glen Lake Home School and even finding time to do some modeling for Ruth's Toggerty!

After losing Donald, Birdie was reconnected with her high school sweetheart Bill Westerdahl with whom she spent the next 40+ years. Birdie and Bill were the ultimate travel partners visiting 60+ countries. No matter where they were in the world, Birdie could find a beach and share a glass of wine with a new friend.

Her greatest title "Gammy" came with the arrival of her grandchildren whom she celebrated with her whole heart. Always attending their events, she was easily spotted as the loving grandma with the yellow iPad recording every goal, serve, row and performance.

Birdie lived life with zest, elegance and intention. Her retirement years found her on the golf course, playing tennis, joining a dance line in Arizona, making rag rugs, needle pointing, attending Broadway shows and volunteering. Her family joked that she was truly bionic with amazing healing powers as she bounced back (in her spring heeled tennis shoes) from surgeries in record time over the years. And everyone can attest to, she never met a themed sweater or fur coat she didn't love!

A full life was balanced by her love of just enjoying nature. Whether on the beaches in Mexico or on the shores of her beloved cabin on Ten Mile Lake, Birdie found the peace and healing powers of the sun on her face and her toes in the water.

Our hearts are full knowing that she is reunited with so many that have gone before her. Birdie is survived by son John Bagley, daughters Linda Dornbach (Greg), Cappy Breuer (Jay), Amy Wexler (Chris), and her grandchildren Brooke and Casey Dornbach (Val), Haley and Donald Bagley, Catherine Johnson (Brady), Will Delaney (Nellie), Ali Miller and Kate Wexler and 4 greatgrands.

In Birdie's own words in an article in the Star Tribune, May 1970, "I am high on life. There are so many exciting things to do". What a legacy she gifted to us all.

There will be a private funeral service for family. Our apologies, due to technical difficulties , the webcast of Birdie's funeral service is not available.

Memorials in Birdie's name to Ten Mile Lake Association,
www.tenmilelake.org.

Tribute Wall

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“ Nancy Wright lit a candle in memory of Birdie Elaine Westerdahl



Nancy Wright - December 23, 2024 at 03:05 AM

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Birdie came to live next door to me on Grandview Lane in Edina for approximately 5 years just before she moved into The Waters. She would always call me up and say "Come on over and bring that puppy of yours, Buster". She loved my dog, Buster. She would always tell me how much she missed Bill, her husband. Now they are together, resting in peace. I miss Birdie. I loved her like family. She was the Best of the Best!!

Nancy Aliene Wright - March 05 at 04:54 PM