

## Suzanne “Suzie” Byford (Michal)

Suzie Byford passed away on April 16, 2024, at Wrangell Hospice. She had just had her 80th birthday and was born in Anacortes, Washington, on April 4, 1944, to Barbara and Donn Michal. Suzie attended Anacortes schools and was from the class of 1963.

Suzie had a flair for cooking and worked at restaurants in Anacortes. She also worked as a cook at Western Washington University in Bellingham.

She would drive up to Bellingham every day in her little old white Volkswagen Bug. During winter she drove through sleet, hail, snow, torrential rain and strong winds and none of that kept her from going to work. Sometimes she would have a mishap and would trudge through the nastiness to get to a phone and call for help. She was determined and well known for her spunk.

Her mom and dad introduced Suzie to her future husband, Ted Byford, and they were married on Nov. 19, 1970, in Anacortes. In 1972, Ted moved his bride to Wrangell. She immediately fell in love with the beauty of Wrangell and vowed to never move back down South. Suzie lived in Wrangell for 52 years.

Ted and Suzie built their first home together from the logs Ted salvaged from the water and beaches of Wrangell. They had two sons: Chris and Tony. Suzie loved her boys with all her heart and soul. She was totally devoted to them.

Suzie loved to go out clam digging. She could shuck a clam like nobody’s business, leaving those people who couldn’t shuck a clam in awe and wonder of her perfect technique. She could shell a whole crab in a matter of minutes. Once or twice a week she would clear off the dinner table with a flourish, slap down newspaper and serve her family a heap of crab or shrimp.

Suzie was a wonder in the kitchen and always pre-



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pared fantastic home cooked meals. She worked as a cook at Wrangell Hospital and Long-Term Care for 27 years. She loved cooking for the residents and would often make them special meals instead of serving quote, “That institutional crap from cans.”

Suzie was kind and thoughtful. She had a finely tuned knack for remembering birthdays and special occasions. She always sent her beloved elderly aunts a bouquet of beautiful flowers on their birthdays and holidays. When her uncle turned 100 years old she flew to Anacortes and brought him his favorite delicacy, halibut cheeks. Her sweet thoughtfulness had no boundaries and she was a treasure to our family.

Suzie always supported her family in their times of need. She would advise them to keep their chin up and help any way she could. She was tiny in stature but was strong and sassy. Heaven has received a special angel that will be terribly missed by her family and friends on earth.

Suzie was preceded in death by her husband Ted Byford, brother Patrick Michal, her very special niece Cristie Dunaway, and her parents Donn and Barbara Michal.

She is survived by her sons Chris Royster of Winlock, Washington, and Chris Byford, of Wrangell, and Tony Byford, of Juneau; grandchildren Tristan Byford, Alyssa Nichole Rei, Kenneth Alexander and Peighton Bangs; and three great-grandchildren; sisters Sandra O’Brien of Petaluma, California, Laurie (Carl) Pratt, of Coupeville, Washington; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Suzie’s life will be posted at a later date. In lieu of flowers, please donate to your favorite cause.

Sincere thanks to the wonderful nurses at Wrangell Hospice and the care team at Bartlett Hospital in Juneau who took such great care of our loving Suzie.