

Liv Alterhaug Ames

died Sept. 3, 2020, at the age of 72, peacefully and at home in San José, California, succumbing quickly after a 9-month battle with pancreatic cancer.

Liv is survived by her husband of 42 years, Lawrence (Larry) Ames; three sons: Lewis (with wife Ginger and sons Jules and Pasqual), Logan (with husband John Olson), and Leif Ames; her younger sister, Marit Alterhaug Irvin, of Norfolk England; and her younger brother, Odd Gunnar Alterhaug, of Oslo Norway.

Liv was born December 5, 1947 to Odd and Ingrid Alterhaug, in Mo i Rana [pronounced "MOO EE RAH-nah"], Norway, about 20 miles south of the Arctic Circle. (It was so cold there that, according to the family story, her father's hat froze to the table in the nursery when he went to see his baby daughter.) After a couple months, the family moved to Stjørdal ["stehYOUR DAHL"] where both Odd and Ingrid worked for the state telephone company.

Liv went to elementary school in Stjørdal, and then high school and college in nearby Trondheim ["TROND HIME"], graduating with a Masters in Chemical Engineering from NTH, the Norwegian Technical University. She worked summers in Yugoslavia and The Netherlands, and also worked as an au pair in London to better learn English. After graduation, she went to Paris for a year on scholarship to learn French, then returned to Norway and worked at a hospital in Elverum ["EL-veh-ROOM"].

Liv found life too quiet and sedate in Elverum, and so in 1976, she came to the US -- despite all the images on TV and in the movies of a violent America -- to accept a job offer in the microbiology lab at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. She met Larry when she and some coworkers attended a party thrown by a group of physics graduate students. They got married in Madison on Dec. 17, 1977 -- two weeks before she'd have had to return to Norway due to an expired visa. Larry completed his PhD in May 1979, and they could move away from the cold when Larry accepted a job offer in Cupertino.

Liv quickly found a chemical engineering job, working at Collagen Corporation in Palo Alto, helping with the lab tests for FDA approval of the new cosmetic compound. She returned to work after the birth of her first son, Lewis, but decided to remain home as a fulltime mother when second son Logan arrived.

Liv loved biking. During one college break, she biked from Trondheim to Eidsvoll ["IDES vawl"], roughly 300 miles and a 10,000 ft. climb through the Norwegian mountains -- on a two-speed bike. Later, she joined Larry on numerous bicycle vacations, including a nearly 600-mile tour of New England, a trip from Vancouver BC to Portland, from Minneapolis to Milwaukee, and from Pittsburgh to Washington DC, as well as on numerous California rides and a bike tour of Tuscany Italy. Her last bike vacation, at age 69, was a 250-mile ride from Scranton PA to NYC. On her 72nd birthday, she went on a 25-mile evening ride to attend a bike club party.

Liv loved cross-country skiing. In Wisconsin, she could ski for months, even in the local city parks; in California she was limited to a once- or twice a year trip to Yosemite or Tahoe. She passed along her love of skiing, and introduced her sons to the joys of snow at a tender young age.

Liv loved exploring. She visited all 50 US states, and also over two dozen countries in Europe, Asia, and the Americas.

Liv loved nature: exploring it, working to preserve it, and teaching others about it. She regularly volunteered for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MidPen) in Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve as a Nature Center docent and as a leader of field trips for elementary school-age children. She and some friends would go on weekly hikes of our many nearby trails. And she also supported, and spurred her husband to participate in, numerous environmental and trail organizations, commissions, and committees.

Liv loved kids. Besides raising their own three, she also served as almost a second mother to a number of their friends and classmates, with all the game-nights, sleep-overs, and pizza-parties. She also helped mentor some refugees from Rwanda, helping them adapt to the language and culture.

Liv loved photography. She studied both darkroom technique and digital image processing. She worked for a while part-time in a mall portrait studio, and then volunteered extensively for MidPen, Open Space Authority, League of Conservation Voters, and Green Foothills. She took many of the photos for the book, *"Touring Willow Glen -- Ten Walking Loops"*, and gave an invitational one-person show at the 2009 dedication of the Joyce Ellington Branch Library.

And she loved her family.

She was much loved.

She led a full and meaningful life.

She truly will be missed.

~Larry Ames, Sept. 10, 2020

[Liv will be inurned at Oak Hill Memorial Park in San José in a small family service.
no flowers: please give of your time to enjoy and protect nature.]