



Kay Sommers Rivenes, 72, passed away after a long battle with breast cancer in the comfort of her home and surrounded by her loved ones.

Kay was born April 19, 1938 in Fort Collins, Colorado to Ralph and Bresis Sommers. Shortly thereafter, the Sommers moved to Idaho, first to Paris and then later to Rexburg. Kay attended Madison High School. Kay and her sister, Billie both attended the University of Idaho and were members of the Delta Delta Delta Sorority.



During summers while in college, Kay worked in and around the Yellowstone/Grand Teton parks, first at Moose, WY and later at the Union Pacific Dining Lodge in West Yellowstone. At West in 1959 Kay heard what she thought was the sound of her summer beau knocking on the window, only to discover it was the initial shaking of the Hebgen Earthquake – one of the largest earthquakes in modern history.

Shortly after earning her B.A. from the University of Idaho, Kay moved to southern California and took up residence on Balboa Island in Newport Beach. Kay became a seventh-grade English and typing teacher. Many of her girlfriends from those days on the island became life-long friends and it was there she met the love of her life, Jim Rivenes, a Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps and stock broker.

Kay and Jim were married in Rexburg, ID in December of 1962 and returned to southern California. At the birth of their son, Jim, Kay retired from teaching to become a full-time mom. A few years after the birth of their daughter, Traci, the family moved from Mission Viejo to Boulder, CO.

After three years in Boulder, Jim convinced Kay to move to Montana in order for him to accept a job at the new Big Sky Ski Resort. Jim had lived in Bozeman as a child and had spent most of his summers there. His family's ancestors had settled in the Gallatin Valley in 1864.

In transit to Bozeman, things soured with Big Sky and Kay and Jim found themselves in a new town with no income. Kay quickly met the challenge by sewing school clothes for her kids and finding ways to keep food on the table. In the meantime, Jim sold real estate until he was able to re-establish himself as a successful stockbroker. A year later they were able to buy a home north of Bozeman and eventually were able to build Kay and Jim's dream home at Bozeman's Riverside Country Club.

Kay loved downhill skiing and was a B-WAG and also a MadGal (Madison/Gallatin Ranch Women). In her 30s/40s, Kay became an active member at First Presbyterian Church, Riverside Country Club, a booster for MSU, Pioneer Society of Gallatin County and a devoted member of Chapter F PEO.

Kay organized her life around faith, family, and friends. Rarely did more than a week go by where Kay was not hosting or attending cocktail parties, playing golf, or attending a sporting event – often within hours of one another.

During her life, Kay loved to travel both in the country and internationally. Some of her fondest memories were traveling with Jim to Africa, Costa Rica, Bermuda, and Europe. Despite her love of seeing the world her two favorite places remained Yellowstone Park and Poi Pu Beach on the Hawaiian island of Kauai – the two places where she and Jim stayed on a regular basis.

Kay entered into her battle with cancer seven years ago. She was an active member of the Springhill Presbyterian Church and her faith in God allowed her to walk home with full confidence in the power of prayer and our Lord.

Kay's ultimate legacy was her five grandchildren; her triplet grandchildren in Bozeman and later her grandson and granddaughter in Dallas, TX. She had a close-knit group of friends from Balboa Island to Bozeman, many of whom became like family and remained so until she passed away.

Kay is survived by her beloved husband, Jim; her son, Jim and wife, Noel Rivenes of Dallas, TX (grandchildren, Tucker and Sloan); daughter, Traci and husband, Todd Sisson of Bozeman (grandchildren, Riley, Taylor and Allison); and her sister, Billie Buffington of San Clemente, CA.

A Celebration of Kay's life will take place at 1 pm Monday, December 6th at the First Presbyterian Church in Bozeman.

In lieu of flowers, Kay's wish was that donations be given to the Bozeman Deaconess Cancer Center, 931 Highland Boulevard, Suite 3130, Bozeman, MT 59715 or to the Gallatin Historical Society, 317 W.

Main Street, Bozeman, MT 59715.

