

## Half Staff – Elizabeth “Susie” Kinder

June 10, 2021



Manchester – On Thursday evening June 10, 2021, Susie Kinder, age 77, left this world as she wanted: quickly, at home, with a friend. The two had successfully launched Susie’s Bullseye sailboat, Speedwell, into the water at Sandy Bay Yacht Club in Rockport. The day had been productive and fun as they had reconnected with so many people they’d not seen in two years because of Covid. Chatting at the kitchen table with drinks, Susie was suddenly unresponsive. Susie had high expectations from life and those around her, and even death met those expectations. She is

survived by her two children, Curtis and Elizabeth and 6 grandchildren: Kellen Wise, Gillian Kinder, Jack Peter McDonald, Owen Kinder, Steel McDonald, and Toby McDonald.

Susie started life in Binghamton, NY, the youngest of three girls. In 1964, at 19 she graduated from Wellesley College, despite having spent most of her four college years playing cards and drinking with friends. After graduating, she began work in Boston as a computer programmer. She met Peter Kinder at a Christmas party and married him two months later in February. After the birth of Curtis, they moved to Manchester, tenants of Mary Anne and Norman Wood who became lifelong friends.

Right before Elizabeth’s birth, Peter bought the famed, “Japanese House,” Susie’s Shangri La for the rest of her life. She poured herself into making it a home: sewing curtains, knitting afghans, painting, and gardening. From atop the cliff, she seemed like the mayor of Manchester to her kids. At Brown’s Supermarket, Spiro would go to the back to get her the new Boston Bibb lettuce that had just come in rather than have her choose from the display. At Bob’s fish market, she always seemed to get helped first. Ben, the mailman, would stop in for coffee more often than not. Clearly adored by everyone around her, Susie was effervescent and magnetic.

When Curtis and Elizabeth were school age, Susie started a 40-year teaching career. She attained her M.Ed. in 1994 from Lesley College. Students and colleagues from Manchester High, Landmark School, Shore Country Day, and Brookwood recall her powerful voice and presence. Known for eliciting the best from everyone she touched, she was often acknowledged in PhD theses and the like for her hand in the writer’s education.

When she retired from teaching, Susie volunteered at the Council on Aging in Beverly. She was a healthcare ombudsman and a Shine counselor advocating tirelessly for the elderly, finding the right pharmaceutical plan for one person and ferreting out a low rate utility program for another, making irate phone calls to protect her clients’ interests. For herself, she joined various book groups and singing groups. She loved being on the water throughout her life, both fishing and sailing.

77 was too young for this powerful woman to leave us, but Susie had experienced a great loss from which she never fully recovered. After her divorce, Susie rekindled a long-time love with Dick Fahrenz, her high school sweetheart. They enjoyed 20 years together traveling, laughing, and loving. Their relationship was cut short when Dick succumbed to ALS in 2012. Susie's care for him throughout his illness inspired everyone. Crushed by that loss, she remained a loyal friend to many, devoted mother, and formidable grandmother. Having launched children and grandchildren to a suitable level of success, Susie orchestrated a quick and painless end. She was ready even if the rest of us were not.

Susie's memorial service will be held at St. John's Church in Beverly Farms on July 2, 2022 at 2 p.m. All are welcome. In lieu of flowers, donations to the SHINE Program, Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley and North Shore, 280 Merrimack St., Suite 400, Lawrence, MA 01843, are gratefully accepted.

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