



## John Henry Lysaker

December 22, 1943 - September 20, 2017

On September 20, 2017 at 8:15pm, our beloved John Henry moved on to begin his next adventure, and to reconnect with his family members and assorted friends.

Born in Crookston, MN on Dec. 22, 1943, John Henry attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison to play football, a game he adored throughout his life. He met his first wife there, had three kids, and moved to the Pacific NW in 1969. In 1976, he started his own sauna and cedar lumber company, Cedarbrook, and married his beloved wife, Betty, with whom he shared a life overflowing with the sorts of adventures and travel most of us only dream of.

John Henry's version of heaven-on-earth was a raucous party with no one left out, everyone wearing odd and/or little clothing while enjoying hot-tubbing, music, copious quantities of food and free-flowing beverages. He loved gardening and cooking - preferably in his 50-gallon wok from which he served guests with a garden hoe by asking whether they wanted "a whole-hoe or a half-a-hoe," at some sort of huge celebration - watching sports, traveling, and writing myriad to-do lists (for other people) on various scraps of paper. He co-published a cookbook in 1974 called Get It on in the Kitchen which was a huge source of pride and joy, and whose title perfectly embodied both his philosophy toward cooking, and of life in general. He kept a rubber-band wallet that he called his "Norwegian wallet," was always generous with its

contents, and had a propensity for amassing good-deal treasures at auctions and yard sales - whether they worked or were needed, or not.

John Henry and Betty lived in various homes in the Seattle and Portland areas, most notably on a 30-foot boat called the John Henry, and on the SeaTac, a 110-foot steamship from the Pacific Northwest's Mosquito Fleet that they moored on Lake Union and on the Snohomish River. In 1990, they bought a mill in Cashmere, WA and so moved "east of the mountains" to run Cedarbrook, and to return to the small-town roots in which John Henry had been raised.

John Henry held tremendous pride for his Norwegian-American heritage, and regaled whomever was around with his (bad) Norwegian jokes and (better) Norwegian food. He loved the color orange, never let a few stains or rips keep him from wearing his favorite t-shirts, loudly trumpeted the "On Wisconsin!" fight song whenever an opportunity presented itself, and rarely deviated from using bar cocktail-napkins as stationary while writing to his kids in college. He was a man of many paradoxes, so could be audacious while also being focused and reflective. He illustrated a steadfast work ethic that deviated regularly toward pleasure-seeking tendencies, and held the political and social proclivities of both a part-time red-neck and a liberal hippie.

John Henry left this realm exactly as he lived it: with optimism, stubbornness, grit, and friends and family surrounding him, singing his beloved John Denver's Take Me Home, Country Roads as he zoomed off to party with St. Peter. While he would have like to have had further time here to extract more from the marrow of life, he understood that he was one heck of a lucky man for the rich, blessed life he led - fortifying his 73 years with an immeasurable amount of life. John Henry passed his torch and legacy on to his wife, three children, four grandchildren, and two brothers. Rest in peace, John Henry - you are beloved and treasured.

John Henry's memory will be honored with donations to the Cashmere Cares program, Providence Guest House, and the University of Minnesota-Crookston Foundation. His Celebration of Life will be held in the spring of 2018 in Cashmere, WA.