

## Gerri DICKSON



DICKSON, Gerri  
September 28, 1946-August 10, 2016  
Geraldine Dickson

Born on September 28, 1946 in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, Gerri died on August 10, 2016, following a lengthy illness. At her side throughout, was her loving husband Murray. Gerri was the second of five children of Al and Grace Pine. She is survived by her spouse, Murray Dickson, sons Brennan and Michael and grandchildren Andrew, Breanna, Michayla, and Andrea, sisters Suzanne, Kathleen, Bette, brother Jim and several nieces and nephews.

Gerri attended school in Saskatoon, graduating from high school at Sion Academy. She went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan. She followed this with a Master of Public Health from the University of Hawaii and a PhD in Community Health and Epidemiology from the U of Saskatchewan.

When Gerri was 21, she married her longtime boyfriend, Murray Dickson. Shortly after this they moved to Portland, Oregon for Murray to do post-graduate work in Pediatric Dentistry. Thus began their lifetime of adventures. Gerri and Murray were strongly committed to cross-cultural and international development work, a commitment which shaped their lives. Their first assignment was a two-year CUSO posting in Nigeria. This was followed by two years in Papua New Guinea and two years in Mozambique. In between was time with the then-Department of Northern Saskatchewan in LaRonge.

In 1986 Gerri was appointed as a faculty member of the College of Nursing at the U of S. While in this position, she contributed to planning the Training for Health Renewal Program (THRP) that partnered the University of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Health in Mozambique. After several years, Gerri moved to the College of Medicine and directed THRP at the rural health training center in Massinga that THRP had helped establish. Gerri was passionate about this project and her love for Mozambique, its people and its music filled her life with joy and a strong sense of purpose.

Gerri's other passion was working with First Nations people. For her PhD thesis she worked with Aboriginal grandmothers. Many years earlier she and Murray adopted two First Nations boys, Brennan and Michael. They encouraged the boys to be in touch with their heritage and in so doing, they developed an appreciation and respect for First Nations peoples and their culture. As a Nursing Faculty member Gerri helped design and coordinate the Northern Native Access Program to Nursing that transitioned indigenous students into post-secondary life. Gerri and Murray have established a study award for First Nations and Metis students entering the field of Health Sciences in post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan.

Gerri's hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed. Among the many awards she received was being included as one of the 100 Alumni of Influence as part of the University of Saskatchewan's Centennial celebration in 2007, the J.G. Ivany Internationalization Award in 2004, and a Global Citizen Award given by the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation in 2003.

Many other interests filled Gerri's life. She was an avid runner who completed a marathon and competed in the World Masters Games in Edmonton. She loved reading and watching Masterpiece Theatre on television. She and Murray loved travelling and visited many countries. She was passionate about her politics and put her views into action whenever she had the opportunity. As a **breast cancer** survivor, she was part the group that conceptualized the Hope Cancer Help Center.

Gerri will be greatly missed by her many friends and family. There will be a private family funeral. A celebration of her life will be held on October 8th at 2pm at Station 20 West in Saskatoon (1120 20th Street West, Saskatoon). In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Grandmothers for Grandmothers campaign in memory of Gerri/ Geraldine Dickson at [www.stephenlewisfoundation.org](http://www.stephenlewisfoundation.org).

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<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestarphoenix/obituary.aspx?pid=181254348>