



Kathleen Adele Kerr

November 8, 1947 - December 3, 2021

Kathleen Adele Kerr was born November 8, 1947 in Chicago, Illinois to Harold John and Gladys “Denny” (Denninger) Kerr. She died on December 3rd, 2021 at the age of 74 in Cedar Falls, Iowa. She was united in marriage to the love of her life Thomas James Tritle on August 10, 1996, at the historic Tritle family log cabin in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Kerr earned a BA in Russian Language and Literature from Stanford University, during which time she spent a summer as a student at the State University of Leningrad, now once more St. Petersburg. She continued her graduate studies in Slavic Languages at Stanford until transferring to the new dance program, earning an MA in Dance Education. She subsequently earned a PhD in Dance and Related Arts from Texas Woman’s University.

In addition to teaching briefly at Stanford, the University of California at Santa Cruz and Texas Woman’s University, Kerr taught dance at Oregon State University in Corvallis for 15 years, was the director of the OSU Folk Ensemble dance company and the technical director and lighting designer for Oregon Dance, the modern dance company in residence at OSU. Kerr subsequently taught ethnic dance, ballroom dance and anatomy at the University of Northern Iowa for over 20 years and was the director of the UNI International Dance Theater. She retired in 2010 as Full Professor Emerita. Her husband Tom, with whom she shared so many amazing travel adventures, is retired from the UNI School of Music as Professor Emeritus. Kerr’s knowledge of Slavic languages enabled her to enjoy doing field work

(and to find the best food) in much of Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia as well as Hungary, Romania and Greece. She also served as interpreter for visiting Russian and Yugoslav athletic teams at Oregon State University and for visiting Russian scholars at the University of Northern Iowa. Professional presentations took her to China, Portugal, England, Canada, Bulgaria and across the United States. In addition, she led student dance companies on performance tours to Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and China, showcasing American dance and music. Kerr's fieldwork was presented extensively through her choreographies for the OSU Folk Ensemble and the UNI International Dance Theatre. She also choreographed for opera and musical theater in Oregon and Iowa and was invited to serve as guest choreographer for dance companies in Victoria, Calgary and Lethbridge Canada as well as groups in Oregon, Washington, California, Texas, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin.

Since retiring she enjoyed traveling extensively with her similarly adventurous husband Tom, spoiling their beloved cats, and involvement in various philanthropic activities. She especially loved volunteering at the local Habitat for Humanity Restore.

She was preceded in death by her mother Gladys (Denny) Kerr and her mother's longtime companion Helga Meyer, her in-laws, Dr. James Lester "Doc" and Mary Evelyn (Brodt) Tritle and her brother-in-law Robert Lester Tritle.

She is survived by her husband and one niece, Stephanie Spieker, one great nephew, Simon, and two great nieces, Kailey and Grace, all of Madison, Wisconsin, and her loving feline companions, Andrew the Immense, Surri, Mr. Tufts Jr., and Squoozle.

No services or other activities are planned at this time.

Memorials may be dedicated to Heartland Habitat for Humanity, or to animal welfare or environmental protection causes.

She is grateful to all of her wonderful friends and family and wants everyone to know what a wonderful time she had – "Life –

wow what a ride! Thanks, everyone!"