



Judith L Franklin Spannagel

March 20, 1941 - July 19, 2025

Judith Lynn Franklin Spannagel

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Judith Lynn Franklin Spannagel passed away peacefully at home on July 19, 2025.

She was born on March 20, 1941, in Portland, Oregon, to Lloyd and Helen Franklin. She graduated from Jefferson High School and went on to attend the University of Oregon and Portland State before earning a B.A. in Journalism from the University of Montana in 1963.

Judy married Bob Spannagel in Billings, Montana in 1966, and together they had a son, Zachary Robert Spannagel. She raised Zack in Portland while maintaining strong ties to Montana, where he spent summers and holidays with his father and on the family ranch.

Judy was a trailblazer in the fields of journalism, broadcasting, and public relations, at a time when few women held such roles. Her career took her from Portland to Los Angeles, Billings, Washington, D.C. and Seattle, and she brought her trademark intellect, creativity, and curiosity to every project she touched.

In Montana she served on a Governor's Commission and, with a partner, founded an advertising agency. In Portland, she worked both in front of and behind the camera, reporting the news and producing promotional segments for local television stations. She became the market's first female general assignment TV news reporter for KPTV, and later worked as promotions

director for KGW. She worked for the Hallock Agency as co-creative director, where her talents shaped campaigns for clients ranging from U.S. senators to the Portland Zoo. She won national and regional public relations awards for copywriting, print concepts, TV campaigns and direct marketing.

In the early 2000s, Judy returned to Montana, a place she had always loved, to be closer to her son, and took on a new role as a student advocate at the University of Montana in Missoula. Her passion for mentoring and supporting others made a lasting impact on the campus community. In 2017 Judy relocated to Lincoln City, Oregon following the passing of her son, Zack.

There, she found peace near the ocean, spending her final years surrounded by the natural beauty she had always cherished.

Judy was a woman of style and substance; elegant, discerning, and deeply principled. She was a loyal, generous friend, always ready with a listening ear or thoughtful advice. She celebrated the accomplishments and joys of others wholeheartedly, and made sure people felt seen and valued. Her quick wit and well-timed humor could break tension in an instant, and her unique perspective left a lasting impression. A voracious reader and lifelong learner, Judy kept up with current events and global affairs with the same intensity she brought to conversation. She had a flair for design, an eye for beauty, and always dressed with signature elegance. Above all, Judy lived life with originality, warmth, and courage.

Judy was preceded in death by her parents, her longtime companion David Clark, and her beloved son, Zachary Spannagel. She will be interred next to Zack in Montana later this year. To pay tribute to Judy's love of animals and nature, friends who would like to make a donation in her memory are encouraged to direct them to the Oregon Zoo in Portland, or the Connie Hansen Garden Conservancy in Lincoln City.

We trust she's now editing the great beyond—red pen in hand, surrounded by books, a few cats, and Zack fly fishing close by.

Video Slideshow: <https://youtu.be/dmqX0dhnlNY>

Tribute Wall



“ Pacific View Memorial Gardens & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Judith L Franklin Spannagel



Pacific View Memorial Gardens & Crematory - August 06, 2025 at 12:11 PM

TM

“ Judy was such a wonderful person. Missed her dearly when she moved away from Missoula,MT. Terri Mandelko

Terri Mandelko - August 23, 2025 at 06:54 PM

DD

“ I absolutely loved, loved this beautiful lady. I had a short time with her here in Missoula. It felt like a forever time. She impacted me in the most powerful way with her grace, wisdom and humor. I felt so much love for her in such a short time. My daughter Liz rented from Judy and just recently got her Masters in journalism. Judy was very proud of her for that. My daughter DeNae and I cleaned for her, it wasn't just cleaning it was falling in love with her! We will all miss her so much. Good bye my friend until we meet again.

Deniese Dempsey

Deniese Dempsey - August 06, 2025 at 09:42 PM



“ Great slide show and interesting history of her life. She was quite a trailblazer! Judy was so supportive of Zack's venture into Boardofmissoula during the startup years. Far beyond her means. I was always impressed by that. I enjoyed her hospitality during our trips to Seattle as well. So glad I was able to spend time with her after Zack's passing, despite the circumstances. She will be greatly missed, but never forgotten.

Raf France - August 06, 2025 at 08:58 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Sabrina Spannagel - August 06, 2025 at 06:12 PM