

Bennett—*Peter Golthwait Bennett*, 84, died on March 17, 2010 in Langley, Wash. Peter was born on January 13, 1926 in New Haven, Conn., the first child of Roger Williams Bennett and Margaret Rand Bennett. His father was an Episcopalian minister whose strong peace concerns arose out of his experiences in WWI. He worked during Peter's early childhood at St. George's School in Middletown, R.I. where Peter learned to love nature through his childhood campus wanderings. As WWII approached, Peter was sent to Westtown School in 1940, where he graduated as valedictorian in 1943. He began at Haverford College, but his studies were interrupted by draft to alternative service as a conscientious objector. He was sent to Douglas County, Ore. where the CO camp workers built roads and planted trees. The beauty, wild country, and work with his hands were terrifically attractive to Peter, echoing his childhood and setting the theme of his later life. Returning to the East, after additional alternative-service at an understaffed, outdated mental hospital in Virginia, he returned to Haverford, then to the University of Pennsylvania, obtaining a medical degree. During this time, Peter lived in the Brudercoop cooperative housing community, where he met his first wife, Zula Wallin, with whom he had two children, Dane and Roger. The couple was married under the care of Pendle Hill, where Zula had spent time. Peter became a psychoanalyst, continuing his studies for many years. In 1963 he was divorced and then married Leena Walve, with whom he had a daughter, Tarja. In 1959, Peter returned to Haverford, accepting the new position of school psychiatrist, which he kept till 1971. During this time he did research with mothers and children from nearby housing projects. By the late 1970s Peter found that the expected path had not brought success and happiness. After separation from his wife he took a trip to the West that changed his life. It was on Whidbey Island, Wash. that Peter made the shift toward spirituality and immersed himself in the joys of the natural world, both of which had been calling him since childhood. He married Gretchen d'Armand there in 1991. He was very active in the programs at Chinook (Whidbey Institute) and at Pendle Hill. He joined Talking Circle, Whidbey's first co-housing community. Peter became a war-tax resister and active in the White Train protests against nuclear weapons arriving to arm submarines at the Trident base in Bremerton, where he was arrested for his non-violent opposition. He was a founder of the Whidbey Island Worship Group where he was a binding presence, offering spiritual depth and community. He was a member of Port Townsend Monthly Meeting. Peter nurtured many local connections and organizations through his commitment to peace and environmental activism. Peter was a long-term member of Dances of Universal Peace and the Open Circle Singers. His generous, joyful nature drew people to him; Peter was a role model and mentor for many younger people and was greatly respected and loved. He inspired others through living simply. Responding to his lifelong affinity with nature, Peter began sea kayaking and facilitated many trips with friends to beautiful and remote locations in the Pacific Northwest's Salish Sea and along the British Columbia coastline. An avid bicyclist, Peter was well known by local residents who saw him pedaling south Whidbey's roads over the years. Peter is survived by his wife, Gretchen d'Armand; daughters Janna and Tarja and son Jarkko; their mother Leena Bennett; sons Dane and Roger; step-daughters Cynthia Sullivan and Jeannette d'Armand; sister, Anne Vernon; and beloved youngest generation; Andy Bennett, John Eric Grubestic, Jr, Peter Grubestic, Harlan Williams, and Shannon and Colin Sullivan.