



Michael Robert Easterling

JUN 11, 1950 - OCT 28, 2025



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Michael Robert Easterling

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Michael (Mike) Robert Easterling (75) of Rainier, OR died on October 28, 2025. He was born June 11, 1950 in Washington DC to Robert (a decorated WWII US Army Colonel) and Ilda (a decorated French Resistance fighter.) Upon his baptism, Mike's Italian Godmother named him "Michael Roberto Romano Claude Easterling."

Mike spent his first five years in Munich and Frankfurt Germany, where his father was assigned to help rebuild Germany. After his family's return to the United States, Mike grew up on Army bases in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina and Utah. Eventually he settled in Ellensburg, WA where he graduated from High School and Central Washington University. Mike married Leslie Thomson in 1976. They later divorced.

From a very early age, Mike had a great enthusiasm for automobiles, solving puzzling dilemmas and fixing things. As a toddler he disassembled his mother's toaster and great grandfather's mining lantern. He had a knack for reverse engineering problems and became known for his creative solutions. For example, when a friend asked him to repair a Porsche 911 after it was rear ended, Mike calmly cut the door off of an abandoned refrigerator and turned it into an engine lid. Mike spoke French, English and bits of Walloon from birth. He had a great ability to sum up complicated scenarios and moments in the simplest way. He was well known for his fast wit and wisecracks that often left people laughing.

Mike was a natural teacher who loved sharing his mechanical and construction knowledge with others. This was especially useful during his 40+ years working as a machinist in a remote Alaska village. Resources were often limited and he what he called "Bush Think", making do with what was available.

While working in Alaska, Mike met his future wife Linda who worked on the Beach Gang. One day he got up the courage to ask her to go for a walk down the beach.



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However, instead of asking her directly he asked several of her coworkers to relay the message...which never got to her for reasons that still aren't clear. Eventually his persistence paid off and they dated long distance for 10 years, reuniting in Ekuk each summer.

Mike and Linda Matz married in 1999. His family was rather puzzled by his decision to marry a Lutheran pastor. As one of them said, "We were concerned he would turn into some sort of religious fanatic and become someone we didn't recognize."

Fortunately, Mike always remained Mike. After marrying, Mike moved to Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN. He quickly learned about the region's 4 seasons (Blizzard, Flood, Tornado and Mosquito.) Despite being a linguist, Mike never mastered the local accent and lingo beyond "Uff da" and "Yeah, you betcha." Mike was relieved to move to Oregon in 2001, where he could finally thaw out and stop swatting mosquitoes. Mike continued to follow his passion for automobiles and restored dozens of classic cars. He enjoyed finding a good bargain, including an old drivable Volvo wagon he bought for \$50 and two salmon. At one point he owned five MGs, that he nicknamed "Might Go."

Mike and Linda completely gutted four homes down to the studs. Together, they did all of the plumbing, wiring, flooring, windows and finish work without a single argument. Mike drew the line at sheet rock, which likely kept the projects conflict free. Mike will be remembered for his integrity, humor, generosity and wisdom. He is survived by his wife Linda; sister Caroline; brother Richard (wife Dianna); and nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, Mike requested that donations in his memory be made to the Alzheimer's Association.




Events

Michael Robert Easterling

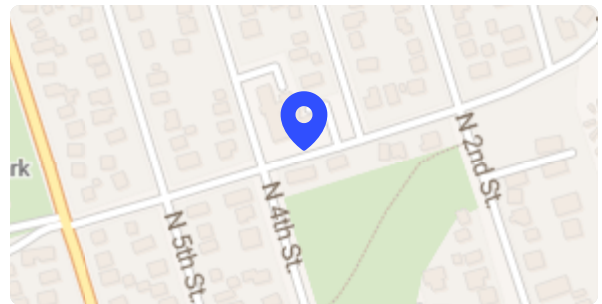
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Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, November 15, 2025


 12:00 PM PT


 **First Lutheran Church**
360 Wyeth Street, St. Helens OR

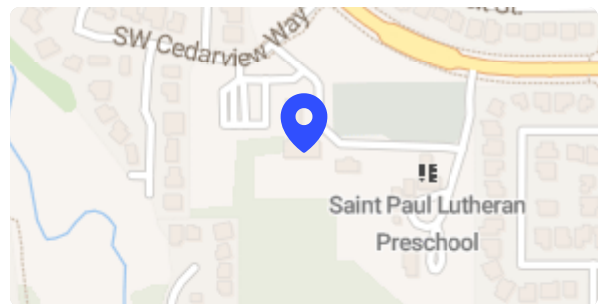


Inurnment

 **Saturday**, November 15, 2025

 **St. Paul Lutheran Cemetery**
17500 SW Cedarview Way, Sherwood OR 97140

 Inurnment will be held following the church service





Tribute Wall

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Geri Logan lit a candle in honor of Michael.

Geri Logan lit a candle in memory of Michael Easterling

November 8 at 10:12 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Michael by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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