Eleanor Goshgarian Muth

May 21, 1937 ~ August 22, 2015

\"Change is the price of survival.\" -- Winston Churchill

Elly Muth wrote a 2013 article quoting these words, and until her passing on August 22, 2015 she lived in accordance with their meaning. Partnering with the talented physicians who treated her, Elly adjusted to the changes wrought by each of nine episodes of cancer and survived nearly 40 years past her first diagnosis. Refusing to allow disease to define her existence, Elly maintained an unflagging, outward-focused commitment to changing the world for the better, through career, volunteer efforts, politics and family life.

Born on May 21, 1937 to Barbara Emilia and Korken Goshgarian, Elly was raised on a farm by her Armenian-American single father. Proud of her heritage, she was fiercely determined never to disappoint her father and considered her early life to be the foundation of her competitive nature. She became a high-achieving scholar, while her passion for competitive sports drew her to become a physical education teacher after graduating from Arizona State University.

Seeking a new challenge, Elly began her 28-year career with the J C Penney company, starting as the first female management trainee in the Intermountain District and ending as manager of sales, marketing and public relations for 16 stores and 300 employees. She oversaw the opening of new stores throughout the region and elevated the company's community profile by holding fashion shows and special events. Always a team player, she opened doors for other women, promoting and mentoring them to realize their full potential.

"Retirement" was merely an excuse to turn her formidable talents to new activities. She went to work for the ad agency of Scopes Garcia Carlisle, and later, Hidden Splendor Resources, a mining company headquartered in Salt Lake City. She developed a high profile with organizations such as the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce and made herself an expert on current events by reading four daily newspapers over her morning oatmeal. A self-described "political junkie," Elly worked as Public Relations Director for U.S. Congressman Merrill Cook and managed Steve Harmsen's winning bid for Salt Lake County Commission, later serving as his executive administrative assistant.

Elly's talent for picking winners brought her together with the most important person of all, husband and love of her life, Ernest Muth. Married in 1963, Elly and Ernie settled in Salt Lake City. The couple maintained an admirable balance of independence and shared interests, including love of their beautiful South Temple home and many pets. Their combined sense of optimism carried them through each of Elly's battles with cancer.

Together, the Muths shared an approach to friendship that can best be described as eclectic, extending to people from every social and cultural circle. While a devoted Republican, Elly counted prominent local Democrats and Independents among her closest friends. Although Elly was baptized as an adult into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the couple attended and supported several churches, including the Centenary United Methodist

Church led by the Reverend Dr. Yvonne Lee, who has become a treasured friend.

Elly had no children of her own, but she devoted much of her life to the well-being of children and young adults. For 18 years, she mentored Utah Junior Miss contestants, including Sharlene Wells Hawkes, who went on to win the 1985 Miss America pageant. She served on the boards of Utah Youth Village, the Utah Chapter of Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), Eye Care 4 Kids and Utah Scholastic Associates. At age 75, after being an active member for more than 20 years, she became president of the Assistance League of Salt Lake City, which provides clothing, books and dental care for thousands of local children each year.

Dozens of other organizations benefitted from Elly's knowledge and leadership as a volunteer, including the Utah Symphony Guild Gift Shop, American Cancer Society, American Association of University Women, Salvation Army, Utah's Best of State Program, Salt Lake Council of Women, Salt Lake Republican Women, and boards of the Utah Commerce Department and Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, to name a few. Never one to serve in name only, she freely offered suggestions for organizational improvement, matched with hard work, generous financial support and access to her vast network of friends and associates.

Numerous awards reflect the respect accorded to her by those she served, of which these are a few: Speaking of Women's Health 2008 "Utah Everyday Super Hero", Salt Lake Council of Women "Hall of Fame," AAUW "Business Woman of the Year," JDRF "Hope for the Future," American Cancer Society Utah Chapter "Sword of Hope" and the Junior Miss Scholarship Program "Outstanding State Chairman."

Elly is survived by her husband Ernest, sister Barbara (Joseph) Baczynski and niece Cyndee. Profound thanks go to LeGrand Belnap, M.D., longtime friend Margaret (Maggie) Strasser, and the staff of Brookdale (Emeritus) skilled nursing facility.

Services will be held on Saturday, August 29 at 11:00 a.m. at the L.D.S. Arlington Hills Ward chapel, 1300 Fairfax Road, Salt Lake City, Utah (across from Shriners' Hospital). Knowing that Elly will be mourned by many, Ernie asks that friends please express their condolences by performing anonymous deeds of kindness, in lieu of sending flowers. He leaves us with this epitaph, recalled from a grave marker in historic Trinity Church in New York City: "Why do we mourn departing friends, Or shake at death's alarms? 'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends, To call them to His arms..\"