



Peggy Lee Bender (Cluphf)

DEC 12, 1952 - NOV 3, 2025



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Peggy Lee Bender (Cluphf), beloved wife, mother, sister, grandmother, and cherished friend to many, passed away on November 3, 2025, in Chinle, Arizona. Peggy was born on December 12, 1952, in Seattle, Washington, and grew up on her family's dairy farm in Lake Stevens—a childhood that nurtured her lifelong connection to animals, agriculture, and community.

Peggy graduated from Lake Stevens High School and later earned an Associate of Science Degree from Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. She proudly served her country in the United States Navy, reflecting her commitment to service that continued throughout her entire life.

Her professional journey was as diverse as it was meaningful. Peggy worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada; served as Special Education Faculty for the Chinle School District in Arizona; and was a Rabies and Biological Research Technician with the USDA Wildlife Services. Each role reflected her compassion, intelligence, and dedication to helping others—both people and animals.

Peggy was deeply engaged in civic and professional organizations, including Future Farmers of America, the Arizona Animal Control Association, and the National Animal Care and Control Association, where she once served as an officer of the Arizona Association. She was an organ and tissue donor, a testament to her giving spirit even at life's end.

Peggy poured her heart into the communities she served, especially on the Navajo Nation, where she lived and worked for more than 27 years. She helped start a Special Arizona Cooperative Extension Service 4-H 'Hike and Bike' club for Diabetes Prevention, supported the Navajo Nation 4-H Youth Camps, and cherished the Diné land, students, and 4-H families who became such an important part of her life.

Peggy also carried a wonderful sense of humor and a deep curiosity about the world.



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She attended Opening Day at Disneyland on July 17, 1955, and was later recognized by Disneyland on her 60th birthday for being among its first day guests. She lived for a time on Prince Edward Island, the beloved setting of Anne of Green Gables, which delighted her imagination and sense of adventure.

Peggy is survived by her husband of 39 years, Dr. Scott Bender of Arizona; her children, James Thompson of Washington and Erica Pacheco of Florida; her siblings, Rod Cluphf of Oklahoma, Audrey Gunderson of Arizona, and Russel Cluphf of Washington; her aunt, Nina Dearing of Washington; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. She is preceded in death by her parents, Albert Hamilton Cluphf and Dorothy Clara Wallace (Biller). Peggy was also a proud descendant of the founders of the Cowen's Chocolate Company of Ontario, Canada, and of the Biller family of Nanton, Alberta.

Peggy will be remembered for her kindness, humor, service to others, and boundless love for her family and community. Her legacy lives on in the countless lives she touched.

Donations in Peggy's memory may be made to:

- [Coconino Humane Association](#)
- [Arizona Animal Control Association \(AZACA\) CHAW Scholarship](#)



Memories only last if you share them

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



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