

OBITUARY

Elizabeth Wood Knapp, March 3, 1943 - June 20, 2017

Elizabeth Wood Knapp, a pioneer in online interactive computer software, angel investor and philanthropist, passed peacefully in her home in Edwards with her husband, Bud, by her side. She was 74.

In the 1980s, the Knapps fell in love with the Vail Valley through their many ski trips. They purchased a condominium in Vail and later settled on the land that is now Knapp Ranch. Betsy and Bud conceived and built the ranch as an informal country retreat, where “being connected” centers on enjoying the richness of nature and the camaraderie of friends in an extraordinarily quiet and unhurried setting.

The Knapps moved permanently from Bel Air, California, to their Vail Valley ranch in 2013, allowing Mrs. Knapp to intimately engage in preserving the natural beauty and health of the land. Mrs. Knapp had a deep passion for incorporating rigorous scientific research in all the decisions made around land use and land management on the ranch, saying, “What we do here reflects our values and personal preferences and our interest in linking science with the way we make decisions about the future.”

Mrs. Knapp was particularly devoted to growing clean, delicious food under Mother Nature’s

guidance at the 9,000-foot Knapp Ranch. Today, greens and produce from The Farm at Knapp Ranch can be found at select Vail Valley restaurants and markets.

In the late 1960s, after graduating from Wellesley College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics, Mrs. Knapp began her entrepreneurial career working at the Sloan School of Management at MIT, a position that became the launching pad to her leadership in the computer industry.

Soon after, she became a founding member and then president of Telmar Communications Corp., a New York City-based company that pioneered online interactive computer access to consumer behavior databases and decision support systems for the media and advertising industries. An accomplished system designer and programmer, Mrs. Knapp led the creation of Telmar’s operating system and interactive business software. Access to this service was through the networking system that is now the internet.

After marrying Bud Knapp and moving to Los Angeles in 1979, Mrs. Knapp was the senior vice president and director of Knapp Communications, the Los Angeles-based owner and publisher of Architectural Digest, Bon Appetit and other magazines and books by The Knapp Press, where she

was responsible for the company’s transition to interactive computer technology and the creation of electronic media products.

In 1986, she founded Wood Knapp & Co. to produce and distribute quality special-interest home video programming, and Wood Knapp Direct, a direct marketer with an annual circulation of 5 million catalogs. As a producer of original video programming, Mrs. Knapp and her company created award-winning shows with Angela Lansbury, Rita Moreno and others. Mrs. Knapp was also the founder and CEO of BigPicture Investors LLC, which provides investment capital, management expertise and consulting to startups and early-stage companies, focusing on core technologies in a variety of industries. In the mid-1990s, to follow her passion for new-business creation, Mrs. Knapp became actively involved in investing in new technology startups.

A product of the second wave of American feminism in the 20th century, Mrs. Knapp was at the forefront of an effort to promote women into the mainstream of American society and business in full and equal partnership with men. As an entrepreneur, Mrs. Knapp was particularly interested in investing in the leaders of

tomorrow, and her proactive and strategic philanthropic activity reflected that vision.

The Knapp Foundation, established in 1993 to make grants in education, medical research and the visual arts, continues to direct much of its focus on Wellesley College, where the endowed Betsy Wood Knapp Professorship in Innovation and Creativity and the UCLA Anderson School of Management Knapp Venture Competition for excellence in business planning and venture initiation continue to reflect that vision. Provost and Dean of Wellesley College Andrew Shennan recalls working with Betsy for 20 years: “Never have I encountered a more creative, daring or loyal trustee.”

Mrs. Knapp was a founding member and trustee of the Committee of 200, a by-invitation association of women entrepreneurs and corporate executives, of the Wellesley College Business Leadership Council and The Trusteeship. She was also a member of Women Corporate Directors and the International Women’s Forum. A trustee emerita of Wellesley College, she successfully co-chaired a \$400 million comprehensive campaign from 2000 to 2005.

In Los Angeles, Mrs. Knapp’s involvement with UCLA led to

her appointment as the first woman to chair the UCLA Foundation, a \$1 billion-plus fund that manages private donations for the benefit of the public university. At the time of her death, she served on the Board of the UCLA Technology Development Group, which oversees university intellectual property, licensing and industry-sponsored research. She also served on the Board of Advisors of UCLA Anderson Graduate School of Management.

In addition to her husband, Bud, Mrs. Knapp is survived by her brother James Wood, of West Newton, Massachusetts; her sister, Charlotte Wood Wheeler, of Tenafly, New Jersey; sons Brian, of Charlotte, North Carolina, Aaron and wife Maureen, of Torrance, California; and daughter Laura, of Sherman Oaks, California. She is also survived by five grandchildren: Madelyn, of Madison, Wisconsin; Matthias, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Caroline and Joshua, of Rancho Palos Verdes, California, and Everett, of Cold Spring, New York.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made in memory of Elizabeth Wood Knapp to The Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation at www.cholangiocarcinoma.org. Stories can be shared and tributes made at www.elizabethwoodknapp.co.

THE ALTITONES

► Wednesday, June 28th

The Altitones were created serendipitously by some of the Vail Valley’s transported talent, playing an array of soulrocking, body shaking, mind blowing tunes.

Creekside Park | 6-7:15 PM | Free GATES OPEN AT 5PM



BeaverCreek.com/concertsbythecreek



► The Altitones	June 28th	Soul/Rock	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park
Hazel Miller	July 6th	Blues/Jazz/Soul/Gospel	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park
Kuinka	July 12th	Americana	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park
Lao Tizer Trio	July 19th	Jazz/Rock/World	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park
FY5	July 26th	Bluegrass/Honky Tonk	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park
The Brothers Comatose	August 2nd	Stringband/Jamgrass	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park
Tiffany Christopher	August 9th	Indie Pop	6-7:15 PM	Creekside Park