



## David O'Connor

May 2, 2026

David O'Connor passed away May 2nd, 2026, after a courageous five-year battle with cancer. He was born in Rome, New York, at Griffiss Air Force Base. His Mother, Jocelyn, fondly remembers David carrying around a hefty box camera at the age of three, an occupation that would eventually turn into a career. He graduated from Pasco High School and attended Central Washington University. A Boy Scout and backpacker through high school, David's passion for the outdoors reached its zenith while he attended CWU, where he climbed with pioneering mountaineers like Fred Stanley and Fred Dunham.

Though he completed a triple major at CWU in biology, zoology, and botany, David found his way into a career in the automotive industry. Stock car racing took David across the US as a member of a GM pit crew. It was there that he made a name for himself as a photographer, shooting pictures of drivers like Dale Earnhardt and Mario Andretti.

David was a man of uncountable interests and hidden talents. A skilled martial artist, outdoorsman, woodworker, mechanic, archer, illustrator, photographer, chef, historian, friend, mentor, and husband. David's passion for martial arts began in 1973. His encyclopedic knowledge of technique and history spanned many disciplines. He held rank in Shudokan Karate, Goshin Jutsu, and Yamanni Chinen-Ryu Kobujutsu. He taught karate and kobudo with

attentiveness to his students and a healthy dose of humor.

David was a deeply loving husband to his wife, Kari Erickson. He always put her first, no matter what. Their partnership was a testament to love and dedication. Together, they founded the Wenatchee School of Karate, which has empowered countless students over its 32 years in business.

David was preceded in death by his father, Don O'Connor; and brother-in-law, Wiley Collins. He is survived by wife, Kari Erickson; mother, Jocelyn O'Connor; sister, Karen Collins; father-in-law, Richard Best; brothers-in-law, Randall Conger-Best and Rusty Best; sisters-in-law, Jacquie and Kyndra Erickson; nephews, Jody and Jeremy Collins; and nieces: Kaitlyn Johnston and Emily Erickson.

A Memorial potluck will be held on Sunday, May 31, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. at Walla Walla Park in Wenatchee. Family, friends, and students are welcome.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAY 31. 12:00 PM (PT)

Walla Walla Park  
1351 Walla Walla Ave  
Wenatchee, WA 98801