



John Maurice Kalahar

June 28, 1944 - August 4, 2015

John Maurice "Coach K" Kalahar
1944 - 2015

John Maurice "Coach K" Kalahar was born on June 28, 1944 and passed away August 4, 2015 comfortable and surrounded by his close family. Our beloved John was born to Dorothy (Weeks) Kalahar and Edward Desmond "Kelly" Kalahar. He grew up in Wenatchee attending grade school, junior high, and high school. In 1962, John graduated from Wenatchee High School, where he was a 3-year letterman in baseball and skiing. In 1994, Wenatchee High School honored John and his brother Dean together with "Distinguished Alumni" recognition.

In 1969, John married his lifetime partner, Peggy (Petri) Kalahar and they shared a mutual passion for fitness walking, reading, grandkids and travel. Their many trips included excursions to the Hawaiian Islands, various winter destinations for ski trips, yearly trips to family property on Whidbey Island as well as three oceanic cruises to Alaska, Panama Canal, and the southern Caribbean respectively. John was an avid reader and particularly enjoyed US History, the Old West, and the Civil War.

John and Peggy were married 46 wonderful years. Together they greatly enjoyed their son Kory and his wife Haylee, whose anniversary they shared,

and their three grandchildren: Emma (18), Mackenzie (16) and Carson (12). In 2014, John was diagnosed with mesothelioma and battled back from major surgery and aggressive chemotherapy before succumbing to the disease in the end. John's faith, along with the love and support of Peggy, Kory, Haylee and the grandkids were the rock and foundation of his fight.

On many occasions, John had stated that his greatest joys in life were his wife, son, daughter-in-law, grandchildren, his extended family and friends, and his relationship with Jesus Christ. Many people truly believed that John never met a stranger and was an amazing "people" person.

John has spent over 40 years as a leader, organizer, educator and player throughout North Central Washington. His leadership and influence, his passion for the game of softball, has touched Wenatchee Valley College, the greater Wenatchee Valley, statewide softball leagues and tournaments and the NWAC before health concerns moved him to the sidelines in 2004. John's life was one of service to others and he will be missed and remember by many whose lives were touched or changed because of him. He was an adored son, brother, cousin, friend, husband, father, and grandfather. John went to work at Alcoa for seven years right out of high school as a heavy equipment operator, taking classes at WVC on the side. During this time 1964 - 1970, he served in the Washington State National Guard as a Staff Sergeant. In 1970, John committed to education full-time. He completed an Associates of Arts transfer degree from WVC in 1972 and Bachelor Degrees in Outdoor Recreation/Physical Education and Sociology at Central Washington University in 1973. John completed a Master's Degree in Sociology from CWU in 1975. Using his Sociology Degree, John worked as a juvenile probation officer for two years until hired full-time as a professor at WVC. John continued a lifelong commitment to creating recreational and fitness opportunities for juveniles and at-risk youth.

In 1977, John was hired full-time at Wenatchee Valley College as a professor of Outdoor Recreation and Physical Education. He taught ski area management, while assisting Professor Bill Penhallegon in ski instruction and competition. At that time, WVC skiers were competing in Certified Citizen & Nastar competitions. John taught at WVC for 32 years in Ski Area Management, Outdoor Recreation (Cross Country Skiing, Canoeing, Backpacking and Hiking), Health, Physical Education and Sociology. John directed the WVC intramural program from 2002 through 2007 and served as president of the Wenatchee Valley College Athletic Booster Club from 2007 to 2011.

While John's passion for skiing never wavered, his love of baseball converted to fastpitch softball in 1963. At that time, the Wenatchee Valley Men's Fastpitch league stretched from Wenatchee to the Canadian border. John was active as a player, league vice president and umpire in chief until the league's demise in 1989. John was named to numerous All-Tournament teams and in 1973 was named local TV Channel 13 league MVP and All-Star first baseman when he led the league in batting average (.447), hits and RBI's. He came in second in home runs to Eastmont Hall of Fame coach, Dan White.

In 1983, John began the Wenatchee Valley College Women's Fastpitch program, first as a club sport, then as a fully sanctioned league member of the NWAACC in 1984. From 1984 to when he stepped down as head coach in 1989, WVC fast pitch reached the NWAACC tournament every year, finishing a high as second place on two occasions. While NWAACC fastpitch consisted of only two divisions at that time, WVC won their division in three of John's six seasons. John was named NWAACC Coach of the Year 4 times during his 6 year run. John was instrumental in helping build the 1st ever fastpitch field on the WVC campus in what is now left field in Paul Thomas Stadium. John also worked with then athletic director Sandy Cooprider to layout the current WVC - Wenatchee North Rotary Fastpitch Field.

In 1988 John was a leader in the organization and founding of the North Central Washington Softball Hall of Fame housed upstairs at the Walla Walla Park four-plex. In 2001, the NCW Softball Hall of Fame expanded to include Women's fastpitch and Senior Slowpitch softball. John served as President of the NCW Hall of Fame since its inception. He was also one of the first fastpitch softball inductees into the NCW Softball Hall of Fame and has since been inducted a second time for his success with "O'Doul's Irish Aces" of the Senior Softball league.

In 1995, John started playing Senior Slowpitch softball. From 1995 through 2004, John's team, "O'Doul's Irish Aces" won 389 games while losing in 87. O'Doul's of Wenatchee were 10 time league champions, taking 2nd in State tournament play on 2 occasions. In 1999 John was named as All-State first baseman at the Senior Slowpitch tournament.

Over the years, John was nominated for the NCW Sports Award Female Coach of the Year on several occasions winning the award in 1987. John was inducted into the Wenatchee Valley College Athletic Hall of Fame in 2007. In June of 2015, John was graciously awarded the President's Award from the NCW Sports Awards.

John was a member of the Free Methodist Church, Wenatchee Valley College Association for Higher Education, Professional Ski Instructors of America, Leavenworth Winter Sports Club, Golden Ages Senior Softball, and the Elks Club #1186 where he enjoyed competing in handball tournaments throughout the state.

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greater Wenatchee Valley, statewide softball leagues and tournaments and the NWAC before health concerns moved him to the sidelines in 2004. John's life was one of service to others and he will be missed and remember by many whose lives were touched or changed because of him. He was an adored son, brother, cousin, friend, husband, father, and grandfather.

Tribute Wall

TM

“ *Mr.Kalahar was an amazing teacher, mentor, and friend. He inspired and helped more people then I am sure he knew. My thoughts and prayers are with hos family through this difficult time.*

Tawsha Morgan - August 28, 2015 at 07:09 PM

JP

“ *I had the pleasure of teaching and coaching with John. I learned a great deal about people and softball! I always found him to be energetic and fair, a great combination to have. I have thought of him often over the years sense we worked together and the times and lessons we learned together. I will miss him. Kind thoughts to Peggy and the family.*

Jack Patton - August 26, 2015 at 07:40 PM

EW

“ *I had the pleasure of speaking to John numerous times on different occasions while I worked for The Wenatchee World sports. I will always remember him for his genuine and caring personality, as well as a quick smile. You could see God shining through John. To his family and loved ones, I offer my sincere condolences and prayers of comfort. Be blessed.*

Evan Wood - August 23, 2015 at 01:24 PM

VO

“ *John was such a wonderful man. I had the pleasure of working with him at WVC for many years. John had that wonderful smile that lit up a room. John will be missed. Prayers to the family.*

Vonda - August 20, 2015 at 03:53 PM

SP

“ John was a wonderful brother-in-law, who was fun, upbeat, and always had interesting bits of wisdom to share. We loved that John was a God loving man who was not afraid to share his faith. He was also very proud of his family and all that they accomplished... beaming whenever he spoke of them. Stuart holds fond memories of the several Vintiques car shows that John attended with Stuart in Yakima. John's fun loving spirit, his caring nature, and contagious smile will be missed by all. Blessings, prayers, and much love go out to Peggy, Kory, Haylee, Emma, Mackenzie, Carson, his brother Dean and his family. Stuart & Patty

Stuart & Patty Petri - August 12, 2015 at 12:25 PM

SP

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Stuart & Patty Petri - August 11, 2015 at 12:44 PM

SU

“ John was the kindest, most thoughtful man I've known. He always had an encouraging word for everyone and I never heard him say a bad thing about anybody. May the memories of John bring joy to your heart.

Suzan - August 10, 2015 at 12:08 PM

RS

“ *John was a great mentor to me. A strong man that helped me in many ways. I will miss his leadership. Grace and Peace to Peggy.* ”

Randy Smith - August 07, 2015 at 07:11 PM