



Lewis "Holland" St. John

October 14, 1929 - June 3, 2021

Lewis "Holland" St. John died on June 3, 2021, at Prestige Assisted Living in Richland, WA. He was born on October 14, 1929, in Okanogan, Washington to Lewis Holland and Edna Grace (Jones) St. John. His mother's parents arrived in Washington Territory in 1888 and established a homestead eight miles north of Okanogan.

Holland grew up in Okanogan and graduated from Okanogan High School in 1947. He was an active member of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, Scouting, and school activities. He was one of the first Okanogan Scouts to earn the Eagle Scout Award.

After graduating from Whitworth College, he spent two years in the Marine Corps during the Korean Conflict. He began his teaching career in the Richland Public Schools in 1953 and taught Language Arts classes for the next 32 years. He also served as a drama director, tennis coach, and publications advisor at Chief Joseph Junior High School.

Having never married, Holland found time for volunteer service to his community - including Scouting, directing Richland Light Opera Company productions, Meals on Wheels, Man to Man Prostate Cancer Support Group, and the city's Parks and Recreation Commission where he served for 27 years, 12 as the chairman.

His passion throughout his life was tennis and was an avid player since his high school days. He played for Whitworth College, coached teams for the Richland schools, directed tennis clinics for the city, and supervised programs for seniors for many years after retirement. The Richland city council voted to name the new 1.5-million-dollar tennis facility built in Howard Amon Park in his honor in 2013.

Holland's interest in genealogy led him, working with his brother Robert, to research the St. John and Jones branches of his family. This led to the publishing of two chronicles in 1997 which proved to be a most rewarding project for the two brothers.

He has traveled extensively throughout the US and many parts of the world. He especially enjoyed guided tours of Europe, Australia, China, the Holy Land, and Egypt. Annual trips during the fall to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, and in the winter to Hawaii were always looked forward to.

He was an active member of Richland's Central United Methodist Church where he served the Off Hours Ministry, usher, greeter, and attended the Bible Treasures study group for many years.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brothers Winfield Scott St. John and Robert Eugene St. John. He is survived by his brother's (Robert) wife, Jean, along with their three children: Christine, Constance, and Steven. They had adopted Holland as a member of their family, and he cherished the bond he had with them. He will also be missed by his long-time friends, his tennis buddies, and members of his Bible study group.

As requested, no memorial services will be held. Burial will take place at the Okanogan Valley Memorial Cemetery. Memorial gifts may be designated for

the Blue Mountain Council Boy Scouts, 8478 Gage Blvd, Kennewick, WA 99336. Donations can be made at the link below.

Tribute Wall

NS

“ Before his career as a teacher, Holland was my Explorer Scout leader in 1953 and 1954. With his leadership it was a very active Pack doing higher-altitude camping trips, river canoeing, a cruise around the San Juan Islands, public service projects and other good times. Under his leadership most of us were qualified for search and rescue assistance and many of us earned our Silver Awards (for older Scouts the Eagle equivalent). A good leader, good times and good friends! Nick Speed, Col HS in Richland, Class of 1956.

Nick Speed - June 15, 2021 at 07:11 PM

PP

“ My name is Pete Peterson. Mr. Holland was influential in my young life as a speech teacher and tennis coach. He was always kind and supportive. In the late 60's it was an interesting time to be young. I can only hope he knows how I liked him as a teacher, coach and friend. He is one teacher that I believe cared for his students. I loved his passion for tennis and Thunderbird cars.

Pete Peterson - June 13, 2021 at 02:10 PM

AG

“ Mr. St. John was probably the most influential teacher a group of us ever had. We learned tennis from him and played each day through our high school summers, including tournaments. His encouragement was incredible. It was always a treat to catch him at Spudnut Shop many years later. He was definitely a special man.
Anne Mitzlaff Gerken

Anne Gerken - June 08, 2021 at 08:54 PM

JM

“ Mr. St. John was my speech teacher and cast me for several roles in the Light Opera (*Annie Get Your Gun*) and for school plays (*Cheaper by the Dozen* and *The Mouse that Roared*). After I moved to N.Y. in 1965 at age 15 he called to see how I was doing...I didn't want to leave Richland!! He was a huge part of my junior high great experience and my development of confidence through learning to make speeches and acting. I remember him with affection. Janie Mobley Miller

jane miller - June 08, 2021 at 07:07 PM

LB

“ I was a student of Mr. St. John back in 1979. Although I didn't know it at the time, he was one of the best teachers I ever had. He had us reading the classics (he brought them to life) and studying and writing poetry. He was also my tennis coach and was very encouraging. Thank you Mr. St. John.

Lisa Britton - June 08, 2021 at 07:32 AM

KC

“ Mr. Holland was an outstanding educator. I learned so much in his Speech and Debate class at Chef Joseph Jr..High in Richland. After graduating from CWSU, I went on to teach high school for 43 years. Mr. St. John taught us how to speak to a large audience and gave me skills that I used throughout my career. I will never forget him.

Kathy O'Neil Childs - June 07, 2021 at 03:55 AM

HS

“ I always hoped to see him again. He really changed my life. I know he respected me and you don't often get that from a teacher. RIP

Holly Smith - June 06, 2021 at 07:08 PM

PM

“ *Mr. St. John was my Speech teacher at Chief Jo Jr. High back in th 60's. He was great! He was also a friend. I worked at the Spudnut Shop and he came in every afternoon. He was so great to have conversations with as I would run into him around town. Mr. St. John (he told me I didn't have to call him Mr., but I respected him so much.) He will be so missed! R.I.P. Mr. St. John.*

Patti (Snider) Miller - June 06, 2021 at 06:17 PM

GI

“ *He helped me launch my theatre career by casting me in a lead role when in 7th grade. We did many shows together. I always respected his integrity and dedication. He will be missed.*

Ginny - June 06, 2021 at 03:03 PM

KS

“ My name is Kelvin Soldat and I have a lot of wonderful memories of Mr. St. John. Near the end of 6th grade we were told that in enrolling for classes in Junior High (Chief Joseph) we could choose electives and many kids said Speech was a great class, so I signed up for it. It was of course taught by Mr. St. John. It was one of the best classes I took during my entire education including high school and college. Mr. St. John was just outstanding as a teacher and I still use some of things he taught in that class. I liked it so well I also took Advanced Speech from him. At the same time (1965) I started learning how to play tennis and Mr. St. John convinced me to turn out for the tennis team that he coached. He was a great coach and we kids spent many days at the tennis courts at Howard Amon Park with him. He would take us afterwards to A&W and buy us all hamburgers and root beer.

We had a great team. I and my good friend Kathy Clement were the number 1 players for the the boys and girls tennis teams and Chief Jo won the conference title while we were there. Coach St. John was so pleased. (he was quite competitive). He presented Kathy and I each a trophy that acknowledged our undefeated careers for his teams. A trophy I still proudly have. Even as I moved onto High School, Coach St. John still took us to Junior Tennis tournaments and we still played at Howard Amon almost everyday during the summers.

Of course after I went to college I did not see much of him. Much later in life I would run into him at the Spudnut Shop where he always had his USA Today newspaper (which he graciously gave to my dad for the crossword puzzle and who also was a regular there). I also saw Mr. St. John at CUP church often in his final years. He always wore a smile and liked talking about those good old tennis days.

Sometimes you do not realize what impact a person had on your life until many years go by. Holland St. John was one of those people in my life and I am so so thankful that I signed up for speech class so many years ago. Thank You Coach.

kelvin Soldat - June 06, 2021 at 01:54 PM