



W. Karl Walker

July 9, 1947 - February 26, 2016

W. Karl Walker, 68, passed away after a life well lived on Friday, February 26, 2016. Karl was the third of four children born to Ward and Rosemary Walker on July 9, 1947 in NE Portland, Oregon.

Karl grew up in a close-knit neighborhood of friends and family in the Alameda school district, spending most of his days with a baseball bat or a basketball in hand. Music was also a constant presence and love in his life, from piano lessons at age 6, to playing drums at Rose Festival parades as a teenager, drumming for the church choir, and still drumming with his blues band through his final years.

Karl always enjoyed learning, too. He graduated from Portland's Grant High School in 1965 where he excelled in academics and both basketball and baseball. He continued his education at Willamette University on an athletic scholarship from 1965-1967, then attended Oregon State University from 1967-1969 where he developed a passion for architecture, and graduated with a degree in Urban Design from Portland State University in 1970.

That same year, Karl met and fell in love with his future wife, Janet Perry, while at Camp Magruder on the Oregon coast. They were married just a year later in Portland, Oregon on August 20, 1971. Karl and Jan moved to Corvallis, Oregon in 1978. There, they raised a family of three children while playing an active role in the lives of countless others. With a soft spoken and laid back approach, Karl was always there to support his kids and any of their friends, whether it was serving as coach, fan, mentor or even father figure when needed. An active community member, Karl will be greatly missed by friends met through his involvement with Corvallis athletics, Corvallis First United Methodist Church, and CH2M Hill to name a few.

Karl was preceded in death by his mother and father, and by his brother Kent. He is survived by his wife Jan, daughter Ellie, sons J.J. (Emma) and Jonathan (CeCe), sister Suzie Armentrout, brother Wayne, and grandchildren Diego, Maia, and June. They and many others will remember and deeply miss a friend, brother, husband, father and grandfather who left us a blueprint for life ... thanks King.

A memorial service will be held at the Corvallis First United Methodist Church on Sunday, April 3rd at 1:30pm. In lieu of flowers, please send any memorial contributions to

American Legion Baseball, 1928 Spicer Wayside SE; Albany, Oregon 97322. Checks should be made out to American Legion Baseball; Stadium Fund I Karl Walker. This fund will go towards the updating of the seating at Taylor Field.

Comments



“ There are so many areas in which Karl and I overlapped: sports, music, carpentry, CH2MHill, Church, ...in listening to the tributes at his service, I felt privileged to have been a person close enough to Karl to be able to hear his complaints! He would share what drove him crazy besides insurance companies, the lack of money, and the millions of little things demanding his attention. While he worried, he always persevered with a smile and with outer calm. The last time i visited him, he told me how worried he was about paying for the house, the bills, and making ends meet, so he forced himself to work, dying though he was. I remember sitting on the roof of the Polk street house as we pounded shingles in the summer heat. I remember him coming over to help me build my deck, happy and excited to be out of the office and wearing his tool belt. I remember him saying that what he liked to do most was "puttering" around the polk street house, patching, repairing, improving. I remember taking a trip with him and Jan thru eastern Oregon, not only with the folk choir but on to the tiny mining towns. I remember him going with me to the SF bay area and visiting my family, playing tennis in the night lights, hating the Subaru we drove, but admitting that it was a good car. When I got married, he helped me shuffle the catered Chinese food to Wesley Hall and help however he could. And then in his last days, we played pickleball together enjoying a game for oldsters with young memories, pounding the ball into the net, but not caring, be happy we could still move. We talked about cars, about marriages, about relationships, about music, about carpentry, about architecture, and I miss him but he's still in my heart.

Chris Lee

Christopher Lee - April 06, 2016 at 08:42 AM



“ I was so sad to learn of Karl's passing. We were roommates at Willamette when we were sophomores. We were both jocks, pledges at the same fraternity, and shared similar concerns as young men at that stage of our lives.

Unfortunately, for whatever reason, we lost contact after leaving Willamette, but I have many fond memories of Karl and his family.

Karl would take me home to Portland from time to time. After meeting his parents, its no wonder how Karl became the person he was. Mr. and Mrs. Walker were unbelievable people. Such great personalities. I will always remember the fresh bread coming out of the oven. The refrigerator always seemed full as if they were expecting an army.

Karl and I loved to eat. I had a hot plate in our room and we would often have ramen noodles as a late night snack. Usually, the other brothers would smell the ramen cooking and we would soon be in the middle of a ramen party. Sometimes we would visit the local pizza parlor for a little snack. Karl introduced me to Canadian bacon and pineapple. Imagine, he had to teach a kid from Hawaii about eating a pizza with these toppings.

We used to have fun blowing paper darts from our windows. Anything that moved within our range was fair game. I don't think the yard maintenance crew ever figured out where those darts came from or what they were.

My wedding was in Honolulu over the Christmas holidays in 1970. For weeks Karl could not confirm that he would be able to attend the wedding. Then on Christmas eve my parents drove into the driveway and there was Karl sitting on our front steps. This was the best Christmas/Wedding present we received. My mom still remembers Karl waiting on those steps.

I will always remember Karl for the terrific person he was. Goodbye Roomie.

Willis Lau - April 01, 2016 at 06:19 PM



“ I met Karl and Jan at one of my most favorite places, Camp Magruder #42. It was a great place for music and community. I have fond memories and my thoughts are with the family at this time. Judy Beeson

Judy Beeson - March 16, 2016 at 08:13 PM



“ I remember Karl best for his skill as a percussionist with the Folk Choir as I was growing up. He made it look so easy! He was soft-spoken and kind, and he lit up when talking about Ellie and JJ. He will be missed.

Alicia Straub - March 12, 2016 at 05:30 PM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Bob Jackson - March 09, 2016 at 11:29 PM



“ We were so sad to hear of Karl's passing. Karl particularly meant a lot to me over the years. I wanted you, JJ, Jon and Emily to know how dear a friend Karl has always been -- especially as we were growing up. Karl was an integral part of my life and although we ended up living on opposite ends of the country, he remains a positive influence and inspiration to me even now.

Karl and I were best friends in grade school (at Alameda) and during high school at Grant. Our houses were only two or three blocks apart. As Ward mentored and coached our various athletic teams (Little League baseball, flag football, YMCA basketball, and on into High School), Karl and I became even closer.

Ward picked up all the kids on the various teams in his station wagon, sometimes it seemed, driving like a crazy man, to and from the games. His driving was professional, but today it probably would likely attract a lot more attention driving with four or five kids arrayed on the open tailgate as Ward bounced his way up or down 32nd hill! Other Dad's sometimes did the same in those days, but none of them brought the whole team home after the game, stopping at the ice cream shop afterwards for the treat of your choice, win or lose. Banana splits were a favorite of many.

Karl and I walked home from Alameda together most afternoons, up 29th street to Mason, and usually stopping there on the corner to talk for a few minutes about who-knows-what before splitting to go to our respective houses. Generally, neither of us were big talkers, but the talks were often serious and they shaped both of our views about the world and how it worked. This was a ritual for several years between the 5th and 8th grades, and also in the early years of Grant, before we were old enough to start driving.

Karl was the athlete extraordinaire by all standards. His dexterity, dual handedness, hand-to-eye coordination, and above all -- court sense and big picture game knowledge -- were unmatched at every level of sports he played. And coupling that with his laid back, always happy-go-lucky and personable attitude made him a natural leader on any team he played. Karl got results without many words, but instead through extraordinary skill and action.

Beyond sports, we shared interests in things technical, as well as music. Karl and I loved to make little models of airplanes and cars -- competing to see who could build the most intricate or coolest design. After starting in Grade School, we also played together in the Grant high orchestra for four years, and even afterwards occasionally at OSU. Karl had natural rhythm, and the 'hands' and coordination to play the most complicated and syncopated sequences on the snare or other percussive instrument. Most guys were in the band -- Karl and I preferred the orchestra with its extra level of nuance.

Karl will continue to be an inspiration and influence on my life -- we will all miss him dearly. I feel fortunate to have known and been friends with Karl, You always felt his respect and support, whether or not you were together.

All best wishes to you Jan, and to JJ, Jon and Emily!
Bob and Ann Jackson

Pictured in the photo -- The Alameda 'Bums' Basketball Team (1960)

Coach Ward Walker

Kneeling in front: Jeff Manchester, Denny Staines, Greg Heller

Standing in back: Mike Stipe, Karl Walker, Steve Young, Bob Jackson, Jim Taggard,
Dick Wilkinson, Stu Martin

Bob Jackson - March 09, 2016 at 11:27 PM



“ One of my most favorite years playing city league softball was the year Karl played with our team. He didnt always want to play, but he showed and made sure we had enough players.

I still think he had fun great year!

I will miss him alot

My heart goes out to the whole family!

Condolences

J. Mickenham

john mickenham - March 01, 2016 at 06:26 PM