



George Allen Swanson

April 6, 1944 - July 18, 2021

George Allen Swanson, 77, of Corvallis died July 18, 2021 after a battle with pulmonary fibrosis. He was preceded in death by his brother, Jim, his father James Leland, and his mother Blanche.

George is survived by his brother Dale Swanson and family, his daughter Kimberli LeMay (Malcolm), granddaughter Ashley Calder, and his two step children Malory and Collin Peterson.

George was born in Warrenton, Oregon and grew up in the Astoria/Warrenton area. He grew up learning to fish and clam and worked long, hard hours in the local mills during the summers. He was active in high school sports and was proud of his accomplishments as a high school football player. He attended Southern Oregon College and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree with plans to become a teacher. He later earned graduate degrees from both Oregon State University and that other university south of Corvallis.

George moved to Corvallis in 1967 where he taught primarily fifth grade in the Corvallis School District for over 30 years. He taught at Dixie, Hoover, Jefferson, and Wilson elementary schools. He was an innovative, caring, and creative teacher who enjoyed providing hands-on learning experiences for his students. Many of his former students love to share their stories about Mr. Swanson.

George loved working and meeting people. After he retired as a fifth grade teacher, he joined the faculty at the OSU College of Forestry to help with recruiting kids from rural areas to study forestry. The College of Forestry

recognized George's good work in 2005 with an outstanding service award. He worked at OSU for over 12 years.

George enjoyed playing softball and played on several local softball teams over the years. He loved the outdoors and was an avid fisherman, camper, biker, hiker and gardener. He also loved traveling in his camper to visit many parts of Oregon and the Pacific NW.

As his friends and family can attest, George loved fishing and crabbing in the Pacific Ocean and Columbia River. His home is full of pictures of fish that he caught over the years off of the Oregon coast or in the Alaskan waters.

George was a loyal and dedicated OSU alum and long-time fan with season tickets to football and basketball. He loved getting together with friends at tailgaters before the games and endured some rough football seasons as a lifelong beaver fan during the 1980s and 1990s.

A celebration of George Swanson will be held at the Vinwood Taproom in Philomath, OR on Saturday, September 25, 2021 from 3 to 6pm. In lieu of flowers to honor George, contributions may be made in his name to the Samaritan Evergreen Hospice through the Albany General Hospital Foundation.

Tribute Wall



“ *Probably the best teacher I ever had. He encouraged me more than any other and had a big influence on my young life.*

Charles Toy - January 28, 2024 at 08:12 AM

KJ

“ *I met Mr. Swanson for 5th grade math in 1990. Seared into my memory is the day he pulled me aside, one on one, and told me that I wasn't doing my best work and that I was capable if much more if I was willing to try. I remember him saying that it was comfortable to hang back, not ever pushing hard on the gas pedal....but that some day I might actually want to try to push hard on it and find it had rusted out from lack of use and practice. I credit him for helping me step into challenges, be willing to be self critical, and push for excellence. He showed tremendous personal conviction and commitment to helping students challenge themselves and find their own insights and excellence. I feel very fortunate to have been in his class.*

Kurt Johnson - October 03, 2021 at 11:39 AM

VB

What an amazing memory.

Valerie Boggs - May 31, 2024 at 06:53 PM

JS

“ *George was a good dad, a good man and a good friend. Always welcoming with a cold brew and great cooking, a fishing lie and a smile. He loved his kids and was so proud of them all. He was always willing to help out someone. We need more Georges.*

Jana Svoboda - September 25, 2021 at 06:07 PM

ET

“ Mr Swanson was my 4th and 5th grade teacher at Dixie Elementary from 1980-82. He was a gem of a teacher indeed. He didn't miss a single chance to make learning interesting...from having us build airplanes out of plastic bottles to performing plays to square dancing. He instilled in many the love of learning which is a lifelong gift. It was Mr. Swanson that was the first teacher to inspire me later in life to become a teacher. Now as an art teacher for the last 17 years, I pass along that love of learning that he gifted me as a young child. So much gratitude I have for him. My condolences go to his family and close friends.

Emily Thomas - September 14, 2021 at 08:46 PM

AR

“ I was very saddened to hear of Mr Swanson's passing. He was my 5th grade teacher 1974-75. It was the grade that I knew I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. I remember loving his read aloud sessions, popping popcorn without a cover so it went all over the floor covered with newspaper and our wood-working project where we used a jigsaw to cut out our designs and paint them. I chose Snoopy.
I ran into him again when I brought my classes to the OSU Wood Magic program in my first few years of teaching.
This last Friday, I honored him and wrote his name on my white board and told stories about him to my 5th graders in Albany.
My thoughts are with his family and friends.

Amy Rider - September 12, 2021 at 02:15 AM

SS

“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Mr. Swanson was my teacher at Jefferson Elementary. He was wonderful.

Susie Schwartz - September 10, 2021 at 12:45 PM

DS

“ George Allan Swanson was my brother and friend. George passed away from breathing issues. I always expected George to live another 15 or more years because he was so active. He had his boat out in the ocean in March.

We grew up on the north Oregon coast with our parents John Leland Swanson and Blanche Alice Swanson And our brother James who has also passed.

George is survived by his daughter Kim.

George attended Southern Oregon University for his BS and then attained 2 masters degrees.

George taught for his life in Corvallis and then went on to recruit for OSU School of Forestry.

Never close as kin, but always within reach.

George. Good luck in this next adventure!!!

Fish on brother!!!

Dale swanson - August 23, 2021 at 04:30 PM

MB

“ Mr. Swanson was my 5th grade teacher in 1989-90. I remember him best for teaching through the terrifying (I share the sentiment) "trading game" or "powder-horn game" as he called it more recently. He let us make our own society based on exploitation and raw power, about 30 minutes per day for a week, passing on some suggestions for the abuse of authority and letting kids squabble and squirm in each others' gaze while the chaos unfolded. When it ended (maybe on day 4, as protests and emotions started to boil over, we had all seen for ourselves a critically important lesson in morality. A great teacher will let the student come on their own to the truth. Mr. Swanson had a gift for bringing us to the edge of what we are able to see, and helping us take a look to consider how it changes everything. Thank you for your dedication to this creativity and iconoclasm, and your inspiration to keep looking. I wish I had a greater opportunity to hear from others about how you shape their lives; That year certainly shapes mine.

Mac Black

Mac Black - July 28, 2021 at 04:24 PM

MT

“ George Swanson was at times a terrifying teacher. On the very first day of fifth grade he demonstrated what not to do in his class by yelling in a student’s face, and jumping on a desk (my desk). As a ten year old, I’d never seen anything like it! It was awesome, and exciting! And it set the tone that the unexpected was always likely to happen in his classroom.

When I think back to my elementary school days and my six year old son asks to hear stories, almost all of them involve Mr. Swanson’s class. From bug collections, to making dolls, to wood working, to towers made of straws, to school plays, to Swansonland, Mr. Swanson made sure our school experience was never just the basics. Instead, he would challenge us to try things we might have never done, to explore areas and interests we might have overlooked, and to learn and grow in unique ways.

Fifth grade was not my strongest year academically. For some reason, I decided not to try very hard, at least at first. I say at first because Mr. Swanson saw my potential from a mile away, and refused to let me be passive. He was an encourager to kids, like me, who needed an extra push. If he saw a spark of passion, he was right there to tell you how awesome it was, and he did all he could to watch it grow.

My heart hurts to know that he’s gone. More so that his passing seems to have gone largely without the fanfare that he deserves. The truth is George Swanson was an excellent teacher. And a few short paragraphs can’t do enough justice to his legacy, nor to acknowledge the countless students who fondly remember the days in his classroom, and the influence he had on our lives. Teachers often get one fleeting year to make a difference for a child. And Mr. Swanson took full advantage of every minute. What a wonderful, weird, and exciting year it was to have the honor of being in his classroom. He will be missed.

Matt Templeton - July 25, 2021 at 03:15 AM

VB

Beautiful tribute

Valerie Boggs - July 25, 2021 at 01:47 PM

AR

I was saddened and shocked to see Mr. Swanson's passing. He was my fifth grade teacher in 1974 and I have many fond memories. It was the year I remember thinking I would want to become a teacher. My biggest memories are him reading aloud chapter books, setting up a popcorn maker in the corner of the room and letting popcorn, and I'm sure hot grease, pop out of it onto newspaper for us to snack on, and helping us make wooden cut outs of our favorite characters. I chose snoopy.

Today I paid tribute to him in my fifth grade class, wrote his name on the board and told stories from my fifth grade year.

I got the chance to see him again, as a fourth grade teacher, bringing my students to OSU forestry program for a couple years.

While on a teaching exchange in Australia in 2013, I ran into a woman in front of the Sydney Opera House and found out we were from Corvallis. We made a quick connection since she was related to George.

My thoughts are with his family.

Amy Rider - September 11, 2021 at 02:59 AM

VB

“ Friends for 36 years. We certainly had some adventures together. You had so many fantastic friends and were rooted in the Corvallis community- and there are hundreds of former students who will never forget how much fun you were as a teacher.



Valerie Boggs - July 23, 2021 at 04:44 PM

LI

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Linda - July 22, 2021 at 04:32 PM