



John Frederick Wooley

December 2, 1936 - June 12, 2026

Remembering a Life Well-Lived, John Frederick Wooley

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John came into the world on a rainy December night in Corvallis, Oregon—so stormy that his father struggled to find the hospital driveway. On June 12, 2026, at eighty-nine years old, he passed away unexpectedly and suddenly of cardiac arrest at his home in College Station, Texas, leaving behind a profound legacy of hard work, community service, and deep devotion to his family.

A True Oregonian Upbringing

His early years were shaped by the tight-knit warmth of family and the rugged beauty of the Pacific Northwest. While his father served in the Army, he lived with his mother, Elma, his grandmother, Tola, great-grand mother, Cappi, and his uncles, Jack and Ken. This is when he learned to love the farm. School involved riding a horse to a small, local schoolhouse. Later, when his father returned from service, the family moved up "Five Rivers," where they operated a small lumber mill. Home was a canvas tent pitched over wooden floorboards. In the eighth grade, the family relocated to Philomath, Oregon. It was there that he took a liking to a classmate named Joyce Marie Christenson. Though she famously didn't return the sentiment at first, his

persistence and charm would eventually win her over, sparking a lifetime of love and nearly seventy years of marriage.

Talent, Athletics, and Education

In high school he was incredibly popular, a multi-sport athlete, and a gifted musician. His talent in the band earned him an invitation to the prestigious Music in May concert and brought scholarship offers from major universities in Wisconsin and California. Ultimately, he chose to stay close to home, playing football for Oregon State University until a knee injury sidelined his athletic career. Admittedly, his first stint at college was cut short—largely because he found fishing with a lifelong friend far more compelling than studying. He left school to work in the woods for his father's lumber company. It was during this time that he and Joyce married. A favorite family story recalls him walking through the front door after a grueling day in the woods on the first day of their marriage stripping off his work clothes, and leaving them on the floor. Joyce swiftly put a stop to that, establishing a partnership of mutual respect that lasted a lifetime. Determined to provide for his growing family, he returned to school while working at Northside Lumber Company and the Beven's farm. His hard work paid off, culminating in both a Bachelor of Science and a Master's degree from Oregon State University.

A Career of Education and Global Service

He began his professional career as a dedicated educator, teaching middle school in Albany, Oregon, and later transitioning to a brand-new school in North Albany, where he and Joyce bought a home. His career took an exciting turn when he undertook a position at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the advice and recommendation from Dave Vincent. He thrived in the role, traveling extensively. When the EPA later requested a transfer to Washington D.C., he and Joyce chose to prioritize their sons, deciding the nation's capital wasn't where they wanted to raise their boys. He left the EPA and returned to higher education, teaching at Linn-Benton Community

College. His expertise eventually took him across the globe to Alexandria, Egypt, where he worked overseas to build a laboratory and train local staff for a new water treatment plant.

Dedicated to Community and Family

Beyond his career, he was deeply invested in his community. He served faithfully in the National Guard for years. He served on the Philomath School District Board of Directors, including a term as Chair, and lent his expertise to the Alsea Fishery Commission. His faith and fellowship were anchored at Good Samaritan Episcopal Church, where he was a pillar of the congregation. Over the years, he served as Senior Warden, Junior Warden, usher, and a member of the bell choir. He was heavily involved in the grounds and maintenance, and for decades, he was famously responsible for cooking the chickens at the annual church picnic. He was a man of many passions. He loved hunting, fishing, and playing music. Early in their marriage, Aunt Anna and Uncle Dorval generously gifted him and Joyce a trip to Europe, starting in Norway—where they met extended family—and ending in London. Though a camera mishap meant they didn't get a single photo from the trip, the memories remained vivid for a lifetime. Above all, he was a good son, a wonderful son-in-law, and a fiercely proud father. He never missed his sons' games or events. He was so dedicated that he would even stand on the sidelines to watch football practices—much to the humorous disapproval of his son. This commitment continued with his three grandsons, never missing a chance to spend quality time with each of them. In retirement, he loved nothing more than spending long hours at the farm, accompanied by his faithful dogs, playing in the river, running through the wood lot, clearing brush, cutting fallen trees, and planting new growth. Even after relocating to Texas late in life, his heart remained in the soil, always asking how the farm was doing.

Survivors and Precedents

He is survived by his beloved wife of many years, Joyce; his son, Mark, and daughter-in-law, Karen; and his three grandsons, Isaac, Gabriel (Kendall), and Iain. He was preceded in death by his parents, Orval and Elma, and by his beloved son, Michael, with whom he is now reunited.

A celebration of life and funeral service will be held on Friday, June 26, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan in Corvallis, Oregon (333 NW 35th St, Corvallis, OR 97330). In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you plant a tree, go fishing with a friend, or lend a helping hand to your local community church in his honor.

Cemetery Details

Mt. Union Cemetery

Philomath, OR

Upcoming Events

Funeral Service

JUN 26. 1:00 PM (PT)

Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan
333 NW 35th St.
Corvallis, OR 97330

Tribute Wall



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