



Melvin Johnson

July 4, 1931 - December 28, 2019

Beloved husband, father and grandfather Melvin H. Johnson died peacefully on Saturday December 28, 2019 at his home in Wenatchee, Washington after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Mel was born on July 4, 1931 in Portland, Oregon to Harry Johnson and Bertha (Weiss) Johnson. His first marriage was to Louise Anne (Hartman) Johnson, a ski industry executive. They initially resided in Vancouver, WA, later moving to Wenatchee, WA, then to Geelong, Australia, and ultimately returning to Wenatchee. Mel married Donna Marie (Lafreniere, Boswell) Johnson of Wenatchee in 1978, and they enjoyed traveling, entertaining and their combined family of five children and nine grandchildren.

Mel served in the Oregon National Guard (1950-1953) and in the Army during the Korean War (1953-1954), when he was stationed at White Sands Proving Ground. After graduating from Oregon State University in 1956, he began his career at Alcoa, where he worked for 38 years in Vancouver Washington, Australia, and Wenatchee. At Alcoa, Mel served as a process engineer and smelter startup specialist, helping launch new facilities in Quebec, Australia, Kentucky and Missouri. After retiring in 1994, he worked as a consultant in the aluminum industry, with projects in Siberia, New Zealand, Australia, and Brazil. He and Donna lived in Portland Australia for 2 years, making many lifelong friends.

Mel was an active athlete for most of his life, who especially enjoyed hiking in the Cascade Mountains, skiing and tennis. He was active in the community, serving as President of the Wenatchee Racquet and Athletic Club, the Rotary Club, the Central Washington Hospital Foundation and the YMCA, and on the board of Directors of the United Way. He also was an avid gardener known for his beautiful tomatoes and artfully trimmed evergreens, a lover of fine wines from Australia and Washington State, and an accomplished grill master.

Mel is survived by his beloved wife, Donna; their children, Stacy and Steve Pruss of Sammamish, Washington, Jay and Marcia Boswell of Sammamish, Washington, Shad Boswell of Taos, New Mexico, Greg and Susan Johnson of Avon, Colorado, Kit and Joe Pogliano of San Diego, California and nine grandchildren (Dane Utigard, Jake Utigard, Tessa Utigard, Cassie Utigard, Tyler Boswell, Kristina Boswell, Joseph Boswell, Nicolas Pogliano, and Sofia Pogliano). Mel was loved by many and known for his warmth, positivity, kindness and gentle humor. He will be greatly missed.

A special thank you to the loving caregivers and doctors who took great care of Mel and the family.

In lieu of flowers, the family would be grateful for memorial contributions to the Rotary Foundation (<https://www.rotary.org/en/donate>). Friends and family may visit Jones & Jones – Betts Funeral Home, Wenatchee, WA on Friday, January 3, from 2-6 PM. Please express your thoughts and memories on the online guestbook at jonesjonesbetts.com. A private celebration of life will be held at a time to be announced.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 3. 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (PT)

Jones & Jones ~ Betts Funeral Home
302 9thStreet
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 662-1561
dante@jonesjonesbetts.com

Tribute Wall

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“ Mel was my boss and mentor at Wenatchee Works for 10 years. Besides being great to work with, he was a fine human being. Mel was be best I have ever seen at human relations, work ethic, and overall knowledge of his profession. I will never forget the times that Mel worked with on my skiing turns and technique. He as also a good friend. Mel will be greatly missed!

*Mark Ohlswager
Bellingham, WA*

Mark Ohlswager - January 31, 2020 at 04:47 PM

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“ Mel Johnson was my very first supervisor that I had directly out of college at ALCOA's Wenatchee Works in 1989. Being a just out of college metallurgical engineer he was the most supportive, kind, helpful, knowledgeable supervisor anybody could ask for. In fact he was the best supervisor I have had in my 30 year career in manufacturing. Mel also was an excellent human being who "made a difference" in everything that he was involved with! He will be dearly missed and my thoughts and prayers are with his lovely wife Donna and the rest of the Johnson family.

Eric Slind - Longview, WA

Eric Slind - January 02, 2020 at 04:21 PM