



Paul K. Pugh

June 26, 1927 - January 31, 2016

Paul Keith Pugh

Paul was born June 26, 1927. He died Jan 31st at age 88 from complications of a broken hip and dialysis.

He was born to Genevieve and Lloyd Randolph in the old Deaconess Hospital in Wenatchee.

His early years were spent in Wenatchee and Cashmere with his maternal grandparents (Smallidge). His mother married Arthur Pugh when Paul was in first grade, giving Paul three brothers: Bill "Owen", Don, and Willis.

The family moved to West Seattle in 1940 where Paul graduated from West Seattle High School in 1945. Paul had such a love for his stepfather, Arthur, that he changed his name legally to Pugh when he was 16 years old.

He had great stories of exploring Seattle in his early years. When in school, he worked for the post office delivering mail. During the summer of 1945, prior to the draft, he worked on a tug boat.

After basic training at Camp Roberts, he went to Korea with the Army of Occupation. He worked at the base post office and Armed Forces Radio.

Those who knew Paul knew he had a great radio voice. Many will remember his dedication to announcing Wenatchee High School football and basketball games for 50 years.

Upon returning home from the service, he attended Whitman College on the GI Bill. He belonged to the fraternity, Phi Delta Theta, graduating in 1951.

While in college, one of his passions was raising dairy goats. He loved ice

cold goat milk and goat cheese.

His teaching career began in 1951 at our beloved H. B. Ellison Jr. High School as a Social Studies and Language Arts Teacher and as a Boys' Counselor. He continued his education during the summers in Ellensburg, commuting there with friends who were also teachers and earning his Master's Degree. His Master's Thesis was on the circus. Thus began his 30 years in the field of education. When Orchard Jr. High School opened, he transferred and continued as a Boys' Counselor and served as Vice-Principal prior to becoming Principal and serving from 1964 to 1982 when he retired.

In the early 50s, he started a tumbling team at H.B. Ellison Jr. High and later moved to the YMCA. Thus began the history of the Wenatchee Youth Circus. During his early years teaching, his three children were born: sons, David and Jonathon, and daughter, Margaret who all performed in the circus until graduation. His granddaughter, Sarah, was a third generation performer. He ran for the Wenatchee School Board in 1987 and won without doing any campaigning. He served two years.

In 1975 he married Karen Peart Day and inherited a second family: daughter, Darcy and son, Terry. Shortly after marrying Karen, he traveled to Australia to honor his circus friend, Mervyn Ashton as part of Australia's This Is Your Life. Thus began a lifelong love of travel. After retiring in 1982, he and Karen traveled the world. He had a great love of Africa as he traveled there 18 times always taking friends along. When Paul and Karen formed their travel business, Three Ring Tours, they travelled to Reno by bus twice a year for many years, as well as many tours around the world, forming many prized friendships.

Another passion was theatre –he was Harold Hill in the Music Man in 1972 and Haj in Kismet in 1978.

He has far too many awards to mention for all his years of service to children and the community. Examples include the Boy Scouts of America, Whitman College, and Grand Marshall in the Apple Blossom's Kids 'Parade. He was the first recipient of the Living Treasure Award in 2002. A bronze statue was

presented by the Circus Alumni and many friends of “Guppo” in front of the YMCA.

Many thanks to our dedicated friends that stayed in touch.

Paul was preceded in death by his parents; his first wife, Kay; his stepson, Terry; his granddaughter, Sarah; his aunts, Pearl (Don) Phipps, Laura (Ron) Barnhart, and Dorothy (John) Miller; and his uncle, Edmond (Trudy) Smallidge. He is survived by his wife, Karen; and his stepdaughter, Darcy, both of Wenatchee; his sons, David (Connie) Pugh of Novato CA and Jonathon (Cathy) Pugh of Kenmore WA; his daughter, Margaret (Rod) Heckelman of San Rafael CA; his grandchildren, Devin (Miwa) Pugh, Adam (Suzannah) Pugh, Kyla Heckelman, and RJ Heckelman; two great-granddaughters, Emmeline and Sybil; one surviving stepbrother, Bill “Owen” Pugh of Yakima; his half-brother, Tommy (Carolyn) Randolph of Lake Wenatchee; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Wenatchee Youth Circus, P. O. Box 1733, Wenatchee 98807 or Whitman College scholarship fund, 345 Voyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA 99362.

Two quotes Paul always said: first, from George Burns, “Everybody gets older, but you don’t have to get old, “ and second, in the circus, “you don’t say goodbye. You say until next time.”

A Memorial Service will be held at 11:00 A.M, Saturday, February 27, 2016 at First United Methodist Church, 941 Washington St, Wenatchee, WA 98801.

Paul’s family would like to thank his doctors, nurses and caregivers for their care and support. Please express your thoughts and memories on the online guest book at jonesjonesbetts.com. Arrangements are by Jones & Jones – Betts Funeral Home.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

FEB 27. 11:00 AM (PT)

First United Methodist
941 Washington
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 663-1607
<http://www.firstumchurch.org>

Tribute Wall



“ Jones & Jones - Betts Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Paul K. Pugh



Jones & Jones~Betts Funeral Home - February 05, 2016 at 12:25 PM

CA

our gift

candy - February 05, 2016 at 12:56 PM

CP

That is one of the most beautiful tribute videos I think I've ever seen. Paul has left an amazing legacy. Blessings and Prayers to all of the Pugh family and Wenatchee valley family. - Carolyn P

Carolyn P - February 05, 2016 at 05:36 PM

JZ

What a beautiful tribute. Thank you for sharing.

Julie Zielinski - February 05, 2016 at 09:59 PM

SM

This video is amazing; Paul Pugh did what few people do. He used every gift God gave him to the utmost for as long as he was able. I admire him for that.

susan mcanally-gelatt - February 05, 2016 at 11:03 PM

PN

What a great tribute video. My great grandparents were very involved in the Wenatchee Youth Circus. Gwen and Chet Endrizzi, and I was a clown at a very young age, one of my favorite memories growing up. Wonderful organization and great people. Always in our thoughts and prayers.

Priscilla Nugent - February 06, 2016 at 12:22 AM

JL

A wonderful story of a great person who influenced so many lives.

john lindsay - February 06, 2016 at 08:09 AM

CL

What love has been shown to all. Cathy

cathy reiman lind - February 06, 2016 at 09:30 AM

MH

A wonderful man. A blessing to our wonderful town.

Maria Holland - February 06, 2016 at 10:00 AM

KN

Beautiful, Thank you for sharing your father with all of us.

Kathy

Kathy Nystrom - February 06, 2016 at 11:11 AM

LS

great tribute to a great man

linda summers - February 06, 2016 at 11:31 AM



A wonderful Example to so many young people.

Russ Port - February 06, 2016 at 11:35 AM

MJ

Truly one of a kind! Paul spent his life serving others & impacting lives both young & old. Your legacy will continue & you'll receive your crown in Heaven. Much love & with deepest respect for the man behind Guppo the clown. ❤️

Muchelle Jones - February 06, 2016 at 03:26 PM

KF

Mr. Pugh had such a Rich and Fulfilling Life and He Touched Many, Many Hearts and Lives . He will be truly Missed.

KATHY FULLER - February 07, 2016 at 01:02 AM

MC

The so many lives he touched and so many more young lives he changed for the better. He was our adopted father for so much of our formative years while setting us on the right path with such positive leadership by example, training and occasionally a well deserved bark that led us to having much better and fuller lives. He will always be in my heart and never far from my many memories. One of the best man I have ever known!
Mark Chapman

Mark Chapman - February 08, 2016 at 01:05 AM

SL

What a beautiful and grand tribute to one of my favorite people of all time! I loved being in the circus, having some children in the circus, and watching them perform as I grew older. But I always knew Guppo was the star and foundation of the circus. Without him, it would have never been. He gave so much to us and to the community in which he lived and I'm sure he will be missed for many years to come! I love him!

Susi Larson - February 08, 2016 at 01:44 AM

LV

Admiration and fond memories of Paul and the love and appreciation of Karen. Thank you for the giving of your lives.

Larry Vance - February 08, 2016 at 11:31 AM



What a beautiful memory of Paul Pugh aka Guppo!

Deborah Hale - February 09, 2016 at 03:07 PM

CS

Beautiful tribute to a beautiful, kind and caring soul.

Cami Smith - February 21, 2016 at 03:19 PM

SH

He brought magic to my life....where it lives still. Thank you Guppo.

Steve Howerton - February 28, 2016 at 11:00 AM

DJ

Mr. Pugh was always one of the nicest people to me when I first embarked into public school from St. Joe's. I was scared and Mr. Pugh helped my transition from the uniformed/nun world to Orchard Junior High. Meeting those Sunnyslope kids helped. My dad died about a week later. I know they are both doing OK. Thanks Mr. Pugh. Dan Johnson

Dan Johnson - May 08, 2016 at 09:35 PM



“ *Guppo was so loved by everyone. He gave us so many neat memories. I loved his egg carton balancing act, the white paint that he'd always miss around his ears when the act was over. One of the pipes on the calliope was out of tune, and he never wanted to fix it, because he said that it added character. It took some work to play through at the time, but he was right, and it was beautiful. He has and always will be a beautiful person in my memories.* ”

Lori Chase - July 03, 2019 at 03:36 PM

RT

“ *Karen, my prayers are for you. I especially remember never hearing Paul speak negatively of anyone. What a gentle and caring man he was. Love and Hugs to you Karen.....Richard (Dick)* ”

Richard Tonseth - February 27, 2016 at 02:09 PM

DD

“ 1 file added to the album *New Album Name*



Darcy Day - February 17, 2016 at 05:29 PM

GM

“ *Gerri Lynne Mann lit a candle in memory of Paul K. Pugh*



Gerri Lynne Mann - February 11, 2016 at 11:41 AM

TT

“ *My years on the road with Guppo and Mama Gwen were unforgettable! Thanks Guppo again for all your hard work and providing such a great opportunity for youth in the Wenatchee Valley all these years. You will always be my favorite clown.*

Thayne Tuason - February 11, 2016 at 02:14 AM

DE

“ *He left the world a better place. He will be missed by many.*



Dave & Jan Eakin - February 10, 2016 at 09:05 PM



“ *Deborah Hale lit a candle in memory of Paul K. Pugh*



Deborah Hale - February 09, 2016 at 03:14 PM



Thank you, Guppo! I have had your picture hanging in my living room since we moved into our new apartment. It will stay there for a long time. Thank you, Guppo, for letting me be a clown in the circus!

Deborah Hale - February 09, 2016 at 03:15 PM



Thank you, Guppo! I have had your picture hanging in my living room since we moved into our new apartment. It will stay there for a long time. Thank you, Guppo, for letting me be a clown in the circus!

Deborah Hale - February 09, 2016 at 03:15 PM



“Guppo accepted me into the Circus when I was in the ninth grade. I had no talent. I was clumsy. Guppo and I decided I could be a clown and so I was! I had a red yarn wig with braids and a white hat with a flower. I wore a short red dress with red and white striped terrycloth leggings and great big clown's feet. I loved being a clown and putting on my makeup before each show.

When the Circus was preparing to fly down to the LA County Fair, I thought I would be left behind. I worried and worried, but I wouldn't ask Guppo because I didn't want to know for sure that I wasn't going. Evidently, I preferred worry to knowledge. One day Guppo came up to me and said, "I hear you are worried you won't be going with us to LA.?" I nodded and Guppo put his arm around my shoulder and pulled me close, "We couldn't leave you behind! You are the only big kid clown. All the other clowns are chaperones or little kids. You have to be there!" I had a wonderful time on that trip and every other trip I made with Guppo and the Wenatchee Youth Circus!

Guppo gave so many kids a great start on life and he gave us something incredible to do each summer. The only regret I have is that I didn't join much earlier than I did. I loved the circus so much!! I loved and love Guppo, too.

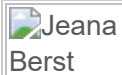
To Guppo's family, I have to say "Thank you for sharing him with all of us! It meant a lot to each one of us. I am a different person today than I would have been without knowing Guppo and all the other people in the Wenatchee Youth Circus. I can't imagine who I would be if I hadn't had those years as a clown with the Circus. Peace be with you all."

Deborah Hale - February 09, 2016 at 03:06 PM



“ Paul Pugh was very well respected even when I was in the 7th grade at H. B. Ellison Jr. High and our Math class could hear when someone in his class was impacted by his “board of education”, that is, when someone was paddled for misbehavior by his “board with holes” in it! He influenced so many lives positively through the years by using his gifts to the fullest. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Karen, who was a classmate with whom many good memories were shared in junior high and high school, as well as with all his family and many, many friends. Loraine

Loraine Rathman - February 08, 2016 at 11:50 AM



“ I remember watching him with. my son and mom at the youth circus. we have some wonderful memories. I sure loved his jokes even if you heard them before. thank you for the memories paul pugh

Jeana Berst - February 06, 2016 at 10:47 PM

LN

“ Paul was a hard working, courageous, and caring man! He fought for kids lives starting way back in time, when he started the circus as a way to keep kids busy, exercising, working together, practicing hard and taking pride in the entire performance! He gave so many kids experiences they never would have had if it hadn't been for all his hard work! Thank you Guppo! Blessings to your entire family! I must post this picture of myself and Margie. I had the wonderful privilege of living on the same street with Margie and we had many, many fun performances right in the back yard! He was truly an inspiration!



Laura Fuller Novak - February 06, 2016 at 08:48 PM

DP

“ Please know that in my heart of hearts, I am strong ...so very thankful for the outpouring of love. And yet the gaping hole in that same heart is flooding as well from a Circus song, the memories of all those who entered the amazing Center ring, not just physically but in the spirit of what it represents to all over the seasons of life. It's a circle I'm so proud of and grateful for...and to think I was lucky enough to have been born into it from an angel of a Mother and a Pied Piper in greasepaint with a vision and a heart big enough to fill a little valley town. I love you, Davo



David Frederick Pugh - February 06, 2016 at 07:23 PM

DP

“ Please know that in my heart of hearts, I am strong ...so very thankful for the outpouring of love. And yet the gaping hole in that same heart is flooding as well from a Circus song, the memories of all those who entered the amazing Center ring, not just physically but in the spirit of what it represents to all over the seasons of life. It's a circle I'm so proud of and grateful for...and to think I was lucky enough to have been born into it from an angel of a Mother and a Pied Piper in greasepaint with a vision and a heart big enough to fill a little valley town....I love you pop, David



David Frederick Pugh - February 06, 2016 at 06:52 PM

DF

“ It feels like I knew him all my life, from First Methodist Church and Orchard Junior High School and the circus lot. I was not in the circus but had many friends and a few family members who were through the years, I know how wonderful the experience was for all involved. After many years had passed and I grew up I saw him at a performance and he knew who I was! Mr. Pugh, Guppo, you were the absolute BEST example a kid could have of how to live well. You passed all that good stuff on through your genes to your fabulously loving children, who shared you well with the rest of us. I know you are missed here, but I keep thinking of your big top and the performances being shown in Heaven now, with your Sparkles as the greatest ever assistant and am comforted personally.

God broke the mold after you came along.. Thank you so much for being a larger part of my life than you ever knew.

Denise Brown Fritz - February 06, 2016 at 09:40 AM

MH

“ I don't know how the stars were aligned when I came into this world but I believe they were in high entertainment mode! Being the daughter of a clown, teacher, principal, actor, radio news and school sports announcer, world traveler and just plain cool dad has been a most powerful dream seeking path in my own life. Daddy, I am so proud to be your little girl and to share such a splendid lifetime of family and fun with you. I know you always loved us and also all the circus family over the generations. Keep those rainbows coming our way and help us all to have blue skies and grassy lots. love , Margie



Margie Heckelman - February 05, 2016 at 11:22 AM

CR

so well put, Margie....take care

Cindy' Raether - February 05, 2016 at 03:54 PM

CF

Margie, you are in my thoughts

cindy vickery flowers - February 05, 2016 at 04:14 PM



My condolences to the Pugh Family. May the Lords peace be with you during your time of mourning. He will not be forgotten.

Russ Port - February 06, 2016 at 12:18 PM

LS

“ Our whole family was involved in the Wenatchee Youth Circus for many years. Thanks to Paul, our children learned how to be self-reliant, independent, strong, and could swing a 16 pound sledgehammer! Thanks Paul for a lifetime experience that touched so many kids. Rest in Peace. Linda Stephens



Linda Stephens - February 04, 2016 at 08:00 PM

PA

“ To Karen and all of Paul's family.

Shirley and I enjoyed many circus conventions together with Karen and Paul and we will miss him. Our best day ever was when we visited the Wenatchee Youth Circus and actually saw what was being accomplished by his kids. The trip was something we will never forget. Our enjoyment was enhanced by his personal friendship for many years of service to the AMERICAN Circus life. He was a District Director of the Circus Fans Association of America and actively showed leadership in our organization.

All will be comforted and reminded of the memories of his thousands of circus friends and also the many thousands of kids whose life he touched and the lessons taught to them at the same time as they were performing in the youth circus.

*Pete and Shirley
Sarasota, Florida*

Pete & Shirley Adams - February 04, 2016 at 01:18 PM

GR

“ *My deepest condolences to Dave, Jon, Margie. All of us circus kids loved Paul; he taught us more than just circusing; he taught us about life, getting along with anyone and everyone; to do a good job;*



George Roper - February 03, 2016 at 11:32 AM

VS

“ *Gappo was the best...an icon. The most caring and devoted man to children I ever knew. The best three summers ever were spent in Wenatchee Youth Circus from 1969-1971. Big shoes to fill. Prayers and blessings to all the family...Paul will be greatly missed.*
Vicki Merchant

vicki smith - February 02, 2016 at 09:19 PM

KM

“ *Paul was a wonderful, kind and caring man with a big heart. He will never be forgotten. My sympathy to his family. Kathleen Miller, Wenatchee*

Kathleen Miller - February 02, 2016 at 01:17 PM