



## Rod Molzahn

October 25, 1943 - February 18, 2024

Rod Molzahn

October 25, 1943 – February 18, 2024

Wenatchee, WA

Rod Molzahn passed away on February 18, 2024, in Wenatchee, WA, where he had lived for over 50 years. He was 80 years old. Born on October 25, 1943, in Port Orchard, WA, Rod was the first child of Elmer and Lorraine Molzahn. He graduated from Ingraham High School in Seattle, WA, in 1961, and later, from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA. After attending graduate school in theater arts at Washington State University, Rod began his teaching career in the English department at the Wenatchee High School in its original building, and would continue to touch lives as an educator throughout his years.

Rod was a devoted father to his two sons: Cory and Taylor, and had a profound impact on them. Cory inherited his love of nature as a result of countless backpacking and fishing trips in the Cascades and the Olympic Peninsula and skiing at Mission Ridge. In Taylor, he instilled a passion for music, which he carries forward as a band leader in Bellingham, WA. Rod was a teacher and a mentor to both sons, and to Taylor in particular, whom he “van schooled” over thousands of miles in his 1987 Volkswagen Vanagon, traveling throughout the western United States and Canada, giving Shakespeare workshops at schools and directing youth theater productions. He was also a mentor and parent-like

figure to Hayden Dorner, and in whom he took the interest of a devoted parent.

For over 20 years, Rod led Wells House Players, a summer youth Shakespeare production in Wenatchee, which fostered a love of theater in children throughout the Valley. He also directed an annual youth Shakespeare production with the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts in Newport, OR, a community that he considered to be a second home. Beyond theater, Rod also developed and delivered curricula at a local elementary school about flora and fauna and hydroelectric dams of the area. Over the past two decades, Rod immersed himself in the history of North Central Washington, producing short vignettes that aired on local radio which he compiled in a CD called "Legends and Legacies."

He also had a regular local history column in the local monthly, "The Good Life." In 2021, he self-published a book, "What They Found," which documents the history of human civilization in the region.

During the same period, Rod continued to travel and share his life with his partner, Melanie Thornton. They had many adventures together, including traveling to Costa Rica, hiking the West Coast Trail, as well as many trips and hikes throughout the Pacific Northwest.

In his grandfather role as "Papa Rod," he took immense pride in the development of his granddaughter, Grace. Since before she was born, he curated a library for her, regularly sending her shipments of classic books. He loved photography, and captured Grace's life and spirit through pictures that will live on as a visual chronology of her first six years of life. He won an award for one of his photos of her that he submitted to the 2022 Foothills Photo Contest.

Rod is survived by his sons: Cory and Taylor; daughters-in-law: Liz Ackert and Elli Anderson; granddaughter, Grace; sister, Sherianne Molzahn; brother, Larry Molzahn; and mother, Lorraine.

In life, Rod did not much care for attention unless he was on stage or in front of a group of children, so in lieu of a service, please consider a donation to

one of his favorite organizations. Such as: The Wenatchee Valley Humane Society, The Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center, or the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts.