



Ronald B. Duncan Sr.

March 3, 1927 - August 11, 2020

Ronald Burton Duncan, 93, died at home in East Wenatchee on August 11, 2020.

He was born on March 3, 1927, in the L.D.S. Hospital in Idaho Falls, Idaho, the firstborn of Burton “Burt” James Duncan and Goldie “Cecilia” Minnie (née Sanders) Duncan. Burt and Cecilia moved their young family from Idaho Falls to Wenatchee when Ron was about six months old. For a time, they lived in a tent on the Orchard Avenue ranch owned by Burt’s parents, Frank and Romie Duncan. Ron’s siblings, Leonard and Laurretta, were born in 1929 and 1932, respectively.

Burt’s work in construction took him all over Washington, Idaho, and Montana, and while his parents travelled from job to job Ron stayed with relatives. He lived with his aunt and uncle Leonard and Burnetta Ricks in Coulee City while he was in the third grade. By the time he entered junior high, his family had returned to Wenatchee, where Ron attended H.B. Ellison Junior High School.

Ron continued to live with his Duncan grandparents in Wenatchee after his parents divorced in 1942. He attended Wenatchee High School, where he distinguished himself in football, basketball, and track, until he enlisted in the navy during the last months of the Second World War. It was January 1945; at the time, he was a few months shy of 18 (too young to enlist, suggesting that he may have fudged his age on his enlistment documents—the only lie he ever told in his long, morally-upstanding life!)

and had only completed one semester of his senior year of high school. School officials assured Ron that he had met all the requirements to graduate, in spite of leaving school early, and that his diploma would be mailed to his mother.

After boat training and radar school in San Diego, Ron was shipped off to Newport, Rhode Island, where he served as a member of the pre-commissioning crew on an aircraft carrier. The war ended in August 1945. After a brief spell in New York Harbor and Charleston Shipyard in Boston, where he trained officers on target practice off the coast, Ron was discharged in June 1946. His time in the navy behind him, Ron returned to Wenatchee, where he attended Wenatchee Junior College.

At a basketball tournament in Seattle in March 1947, Ron met 18 year old Peggy Marr, who had also grown up in the Wenatchee Valley. They began dating shortly thereafter and moved together to Bremerton, where they lived with Ron's mother and saved up money to pay for their eventual wedding. The couple returned to Wenatchee after Peggy's father died in May 1948, and were married on August 7, 1948, at Brethren Church. Their first child was born the next year, followed in neat two-year increments by two more children, and by twins in 1955.

Before starting a family, Ron and Peggy lived briefly in Seattle, where Ron attended the University of Washington on a football scholarship. His university career was cut short when he suffered an ankle injury and was no longer able to play. When the semester ended, he and Peggy returned to Wenatchee.

Ron's professional career was long and varied. Between 1947 and his retirement in 1982, he worked for the Bremerton Navy yard; the State Highway Department; Douglas County PUD; Boeing, in Seattle; Centennial Mill; and Stone and Webster. In October 1959, Ron went to work for the Chelan County PUD. In July 1966, he was severely burned when he came in contact with a power conductor bar while working at Rock Island Dam. The injury required multiple skin grafts and months of recovery before he

could return to work. He retired in May 1982. Ron also owned and managed the bowling alley Apple Lanes in East Wenatchee for several years in the 1960s, and managed an apartment building in Wenatchee in the 1970s.

Ron was one of the Wenatchee Valley's all-around greatest athletes. He began playing hardball at ten with friends from school, and later on a team sponsored by the Elks Club. Beginning in junior high he played guard, center, and runningback in football. In high school, he competed in high jump (6'1" was his best jump) and javelin. Ron helped establish the football program at Wenatchee Junior College in 1947. He began bowling in the 1950s, and later served as the secretary and president (multiple terms) of the Wenatchee Bowling Association. He was inducted into the Association Hall of Fame in 1978. Ron's softball career began in 1947, playing for Sam Lucas and the Independents. He played for several other teams over the next decade—one of which placed fourth in the state tournament, the highest placement for a Wenatchee team up to that time. In the early 1960s Ron was in and out of playing softball himself while he coached his sons in baseball. He founded two adult teams—the East Wenatchee Merchants and the Wenatchee Oly's—in 1969 and 1972 respectively. These teams dominated state softball for a number of years. In 1977, the Oly's were state AA champions, and came in second the following year. After retiring from playing softball in 1984, Ron acted as league president for four or five years and remained involved in state tournaments and exhibition games. He was later inducted into the local softball Hall of Fame. A member of Three Lakes Golf Course for nearly fifty years, Ron enjoyed playing golf with friends, and with his sons and grandsons. He continued to golf and bowl into his early 90s.

In 2013, Ron was nominated by a longtime friend for induction into the Wenatchee High School Hall of Fame, in recognition of his sporting career while he was a student at that school. His nomination was stalled when the

committee reviewing his nomination learned that school records indicated he had not graduated. His senior year had been cut short when he joined the navy, and despite assurances from school administrators at the time that he had all the credits required to graduate when he enlisted, he hadn't technically graduated. Ron was issued his overdue diploma in 2013, and, with his graduation made official 68 years after he left high school, he was inducted into the WHS Hall of Fame in 2014.

Of all the precepts Ron taught his children to value, he rated honesty the most highly. He was swift to come to the aid of his family, so long as they were honest with him about their circumstances. The depth of his generosity to those of his nearest and dearest in need was endless. There was little he would hesitate to do for his late wife, for his children, their children, and their children's children. His was a life lived with integrity, good humor, and, occasionally concealed beneath a stern and teasing facade, a great deal of love. Whatever he was called by his family—Dad, Old Man, Poppy, G-Ron—they all regarded him with respect, admiration, and endless affection. His family will be forever grateful for the gifts of love and loyalty he bequeathed to them, and promise to pass those gifts to future generations in honor of his memory. His friends, too, some of whom he knew for seventy years or more, have held him in the highest esteem. Ron was preceded in death by his parents; by his brother, Leonard; and by his wife of nearly 71 years, Peggy. He is survived by his sister, Laretta Leach; by his children Cheryl (Douglas) Mehl, Burt (Andi) Duncan, Todd (Ronda) Duncan, Lisa (Rick) Frisk, and Greg (Cheryl) Duncan; by his grandchildren Joel Duncan, T.J. (Stephanie) Duncan, Mehgan Jones, Nathan (Travis) Ottosen, Kiera (Silas) Bowler, Peter (Cynthia) Duncan, Sarah (Aren) Magnussen, Jayme Hoglund, Mallory Ottosen, Drew (Danielle) Duncan, Garrett Duncan, Lynsey Duncan, and Amy Duncan; and by 24 great-grandchildren.

In lieu of donations or flowers, if Ron has touched your life in any way please express your thoughts or memories of him in the Jones &

Jones-Betts online guestbook at www.jonesjonesbetts.com.

Tribute Wall

JU

“Dad was always a bit blustery at first, with a good heart under all the bluster. He was faithful, hard working and brilliant in many ways. He loved the computer, and his spread sheets with data collection, all self taught. No one was ever pulling the wool over his eyes. As he aged, he became so much more compassionate, and forgiving. You will be missed Dad Ron; you always gave it straight up, and I thank you for that. 💜

Julee - August 17, 2020 at 10:13 PM

BK

“Serving as the Athletic Director at Wenatchee High School for 12 years brought me many meaning experiences. One of my greatest moments as a professional was providing Ron his much deserved high school diploma and a year later inducting him into the Hall of Fame. He was generous with his spirit and kindness. I enjoyed visiting with him at his house and seeing several of his prized possessions. I am sorry for the loss of Ron but beyond thankful for the opportunity I had to meet him. Wenatchee High School is lucky to call him a graduate and Hall of Famer !

BJ Kuntz - August 17, 2020 at 10:05 PM

GD

BJ, after reading my Dad's obituary you were the first person that I thought of and all your efforts to get him into the Panther Hall of Fame. Great athletes do great things for other great athletes. You will always have a special place in my heart for doing that for my dad, it meant a lot to him and me.

Greg Duncan - August 18, 2020 at 07:22 PM

DO

“ Ron was the best father in law a guy could ask for. He taught me how to ride a motorcycle, gave me the confidence that I could catch for him if he wanted to loosen up his pitching arm in his back yard. He graciously showed patience with me in father/son golf tournaments, and knew when, and more importantly how, to give the pointers I needed. He was a man of his word at all times, and I have nothing but respect for him. R.I.P. Ron. You are seriously missed.

Dan Ottosen - August 17, 2020 at 04:06 PM

SM

Love this man... Spent many years with him at Apple lanes and have a beautiful and fun memories of he and Peggy and they're crazy kids! Love to you all at this time and it makes me happy to think he's back hand-in-hand with beautiful Peggy...

susan mullen - August 18, 2020 at 12:35 PM

JB

“ We're so sorry about your loss, Lisa. Although we never met your dad, he sounded like a very busy and exceptional man! In many ways! Our love and thoughts are with you dear friend. June and Carnan.

June Bergren - August 16, 2020 at 12:20 PM

CH

“ We LOVE you Dad you were so much to so many and had such an impact on this city and it's people. Miss you forever!!!

Cheryl - August 15, 2020 at 09:54 PM

CW

Your dad and my mom were the perfect role models for all of us. Their families made them very proud and we are so lucky to carry that love on to our own families. His obituary was so amazing and his life was filled with great accomplishments and good friends. He had a very productive and wonderful life. May he RIP with your mom! Love you all



cheri wigton - August 17, 2020 at 04:50 PM

DD

“ *Old Man, you may have moved on but you will always be an inspiration to me and my family. Our years bowling together in Wenatchee, around the northwest and beyond; our time together with your sons and mine on the softball travels and our time serving together in the Wenatchee bowling community are never far from my thoughts. Your example shines the brightest. I am so proud to have you as one of the blessings in my life. May God be with your family at this time of great reflection on the passing of a very special and wonderful person. From afar, down here in Bethlehem, GA I say rest in peace Old Man.*

Duane Downs family

Duane Downs - August 14, 2020 at 07:46 PM

GD

Thank you Duane for being such a great friend to my dad over the years. We are going to put an Oly jersey on his casket. You wouldn't happen to know who #14 was would you?

-Greg Duncan

Greg Duncan - August 17, 2020 at 02:07 PM

DD

Greg, not sure on wore #14. Sent a messenger note to your FB page. Thanks for kind words. Jones and Jones should have my E-mail if you and to send me a note. C

Duane Downs - August 17, 2020 at 09:03 PM

RB

I have great memories of bowling with Ron on the Local Loan scratch team! Also played against his fastpitch softball teams for many years. Ron was a great guy and a fierce competitor and a friend. It was an inspiration to see the Duncan family on the field together.

God Bless you all

Ron Brixey

Ron Brixey - August 21, 2020 at 12:06 PM