



Ronald "Ron" R. Sperline

May 29, 1928 - August 13, 2015

Ronald Remon Sperline – husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, friend, educator — passed away peacefully at home in Waterville, Washington, on August 13, 2015.

Ronney was born to Pauline Heer and Clarence A. Sperline in East Wenatchee, Washington, on May 29, 1928, the youngest of four brothers. His father died in a farm accident before Ronney's first birthday, and Ronney grew up in the East Wenatchee area with his mother and brothers surrounded by his father's large family; his father was the oldest of 13 children. In 1938 Ronney's mother married Harry Erkenbrack and the family moved to Selah, Washington.

An excellent athlete, Ronney played football, basketball, and baseball at Selah High School. In addition to athletics, he served as student body president his senior year. Ronney was a member of the Class of 1946.

Ronney attended Eastern Washington State College in Cheney, Washington, where he played on the college basketball team. Two years into his studies, Ronney trained to fly airplanes as a cadet in the U.S. Air Force Aviation Cadet Training Program at Randolph Air Force Base near San Antonio, Texas. After his military training, he returned to EWC to complete his education. He married his sweetheart Lola Ammerman and earned a degree in education.

Ron taught and coached in small school districts in Washington and Idaho before moving his family to the Washington coast to become principal of the Ocosta School District, elementary through high school. Ron and Lola eventually bought their first home in Westport very near the high school. Mr. Sperline served as principal in Westport for seventeen years leaving a legacy of learning and respect for the students and community through his example of living his life grounded in common sense and honesty combined with his ever-present sense of humor.

Once Ron earned his U.S. Coast Guard license to operate passenger vessels, summers found him skippering salmon fishing charter boats in Westport, running many boats and owning two. For as many salmon as Ron helped his passengers catch, it was well known that he loved to fish but disliked eating the fish--steak and potatoes for him.

After six years as principal of a larger high school in Montesano, Washington, Ron and Lola settled in Waterville, Washington, in 1978 where Ron served as superintendent of the Waterville School District. When he retired from education, Ron pursued a brief financial career selling bonds, but he soon decided to enjoy retirement full time. He was a busy man tending his garden where the raspberries flourished and became the prime ingredient in Lola's raspberry jam. Year to year, he varied his vegetables, each well-tended and delicious. Along with zucchini, he grew a "Best of Show" pumpkin that was entered in the fair by a neighbor without his knowledge. To the delight of his family and friends, Ron built wooden bird houses, planters, and benches. Retirement for Ron proved to be a fulfilling occupation.

Whether spoofing with his grandchildren or sending someone to buy striped paint, Ron loved a funny story and would joke with a straight face before the laughter broke out. He was a generous friend always willing to stop and chat,

help with a project, or merely lend his tools. He enjoyed watching old westerns, rodeo bull riding, and the Mariners on TV.

When asked what he felt was his most important achievement in his life, Ron responded, "helping hundreds of young people with their education and raising five wonderful children."

Ron is survived by the love of his life, Lola Ammerman Sperline; his children, Ronda Hull, Marlys (Sylvester) Jaime, Larry (Mari) Sperline, Jerry (Mindy) Sperline, and Celia (Gary) Gilger; two brothers, Les Sperline and Keith Erkenbrack; eleven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and Rob Duncan, cherished friend and caretaker.

He was predeceased by his father Clarence A. Sperline in 1929, his mother Pauline Erkenbrack in 1991, his step-father Harry Erkenbrack in 1968, his mother-in-law Ida Ammerman in 1978, his father-in-law Arthur Ammerman in 1984, two brothers, John in 2009 and Clarence (Bus) in 2014, and one grandson Adam Sperline in 2002.

Ron has requested that there be no service.

Please express your thoughts and memories on the online guest book at jonesjonesbetts.com.

Arrangements are by Waterville Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall

CH

“ Oh yes Ron. That was what we could call him during the summer at the docks but the first day of school he made it known it was "Mr. Sperline." Where do I start. When he moved to ocosta he wanted to go duck hunting with dad and I and my dad told him that on the tideflats you can not stand stationary as your feet will sink in. Well Ron must not have understood because after awhile he went to move and landed on his backside in the mud.

Then he had a VW pickup. It was like a van cutoff behind the driver with a bed on the back. When we were in the electronics class with MR. D they would send me with that blue pickup to Grayland to the hardware store to get the item. I was in seventh heaven.

Then there was the time I was hunting ducks before school in the creek and on my way home I saw some deer in Chet Roberts place heading for the barn. I got my rifle and asked Chet if I could go see. He said if I can have the heart go ahead. Well the deer were there but no buck. So when I got to school I had to explain to Mr Sperline why I was late. I got extra time.

Then I worked in the office for a bit and I remember folding letters for small envelopes. I had a mess folding that piece of paper every which way. Mr. S came and said have you not folded paper before for small envelopes? He showed me how.

Then this summer Helen Ayra Mumler told me how Ron had such an impact on her education. It was something I did not know about him.

Rest In Peace Ron. We will miss you.

Carl Hagen

carl Hagen - October 15, 2015 at 08:01 PM



“ *What wonderful memories of Mr. Sperline from Sept. 1955 (when the brand new Ocosta School opened in its new Westport location) until our class graduated in May 1959! He was everything a school principal should aspire to be. I remember him so clearly (even after 56 years) as interested, reasonable, good humored, a disciplinarian when needed, encouraging, understanding and a marvelous example for our student body. We missed him when we graduated! My thoughts & condolences to his family.*

Sharon Betts Smith (OHS '59 "Skronks")

Sharon Smith - September 03, 2015 at 12:34 PM

CC

“ *Although there are no words that can take away the loss you feel, I hope your cherished memories bring you peace.*

Carol (Rogers) Carnahan

Carol Rogers Carnahan - August 30, 2015 at 03:18 PM

“ After meeting Daniel Sperline a few years ago at our almost daily workouts at the Grays Harbor YMCA I have repeatedly been expressing to him what a great man he had for a grandfather!

I would like to pass my impressions of Mr. Sperline on to the Sperlines and their extended family.

I first met Mr. Sperline in September 1955 when I was entering as a freshman at Ocosta High School and Ron, at the young age of 27, was the new principal of the brand new Ocosta School located at the Westport Y, built after the fire of May 1954 completely destroyed the old school located on the hill in Ocosta.

Ron was the main contact between the students and the administration of OHS. One of Ron's primary duties was to provide the necessary discipline and guidance to the students. I believe I can speak for my classmates and perhaps the whole student body during my years at OHS, when I say that Ron performed these tasks always with fairness and wisdom and a sense of humor as noted in the obituary. Ron was a person of integrity, high moral character and a great example for the students of OHS to follow! I cannot think of a teacher or anyone in administration that had more respect from the students of OHS.

Pam Cornett Marks comments rang a bell with me! I too had a disciplinary experience at OHS. While a freshman I was sent to the office. A teacher had stated that when you didn't know how to spell a word to look it up in the dictionary. I asked in all seriousness "How could you look it up in the dictionary if you didn't know how to spell it?" I was read the riot act in "the office" (more by the Superintendent than Mr. Sperline). Needless to say it struck the sense of fear into me to such an extent that the administration didn't have to worry about me doing anything mischievous thereafter, until a few weeks before graduation I skipped school a couple of times to go commercial clam digging. I was called to the office! I thought "my god, if what I did as a freshman was so serious I will surely get

kicked out of school for this!" To my relief the experience in "the office" turned into a joking conversation!

I last saw Mr. Sperline in the year 2000 at the induction ceremony for the "All Century Ocosta High School Athletic Hall of Fame". He asked me if I recognized him? That beard he had didn't fool me a bit! Former OHS students can you imagine our beloved Mr. Sperline with a beard?

*Dave "Corky" Hathaway
ASB President - Class of 1959
Ocosta High School*

Corky Hathaway - August 27, 2015 at 07:45 PM

KL

“*Mr. spelling taught me to play cribbage, a game I continue to enjoy. We were fortunate to have a principal of his caliber at Ocosta. Peace be with you.*

Kathy Sigurdson Lepore

Kathy Lepore - August 24, 2015 at 11:17 PM

LT

“ Whenever I think of Mr. Sperline a smile comes to my face. I stayed out of trouble at Ocosta High School but the one and only time I skipped school he saw me. Our eyes connected and I thought there was no way he knew what I was up to yet the look told me he did. I never did it again. I was thrilled to see him again in Montesano, where I had moved to after marrying my high school sweetheart. He was well thought of here also. Though it was a much briefer stay and though I didn't see him daily as when I was actually in school, I enjoyed the fact that Monte had a great leader.
I am sorry for your loss, a big hole in your heart for sure.
Linda Eslick Taylor

Linda Taylor - August 24, 2015 at 02:18 PM

AA

“ I am so sorry to hear about your loss of companion & friend. It is never easy to lose a loved one.
My deepest sympathy and prayers go to you and your family.

Art Abrahamson

Art Abrahamson - August 23, 2015 at 02:05 PM

EE

“ I remember Ron as our principal while I was attending Ocosta High School. He was a great educator and leader. R.I.P. Ron.
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Ed Empey

Ed Empey - August 22, 2015 at 06:06 PM

PM

“ *What a MAN!!! I remember when Mr. Sperline and Mr. Olafsen called me into the office for mischief in P.E. Mr. Sperline, as he was holding that big, holey paddle, all the while you get see the smile in his eyes, gave me a talkin' to. Pam you are a leader and can lead this kids in the right way instead of leading them in mischief. I loved the man. He was an example of a man enjoying his work, being a positive role model to the kids and he positively made my life better by being there. Thank you to his family for sharing him. I will pray for you in this time of grief. Love, Pam Cornett Marks*

Pam Marks - August 22, 2015 at 10:22 AM

ET

“ *Dear Lola and Family,*

Ron certainly had a wonderful career in education and retirement.

I wish that I could have asked him about playing basketball at Eastern under Coach Red Reese who was a legendary athlete and coach.

We share your loss in our prayers.

Sincerely,

Earl and Barbara Tilly

Earl Tilly - August 18, 2015 at 04:09 PM