



Terrence "Terry" L. Johnson

June 12, 1944 - December 26, 2024

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On the evening of December 26, 2024, with his wife, Karen, and daughter, Winona, holding his hands, Terrence "Terry" L. Johnson passed peacefully from this world into heaven. Terry was born on June 12, 1944 in Seattle to Raymond R. and Vivian M. Johnson. His brother, Lawrence "Larry" R. Johnson followed on Dec. 17, 1945. They grew up in Renton on property shared by their grandparents, Nels and Margaret Johnson in Skyway, WA. During childhood Terry and Larry Participated in many activities, including skiing, sailing, camping, weekends at Lake McDonald, go-karting and Junior League football, with Terry playing center. Their team also included Mike Evans, nephew of future governor Dan Evans. In 1957 the Renton Junior League football team won state championship and was invited to the governor's mansion for dinner. He held a life-long interest in cars and motorcycles. His childhood developed his skills for art and received outstanding grades throughout his school years. In high school, one of his paintings was chosen to be displayed in Frederick & Nelson's in downtown Seattle.

Upon graduating from Renton High School in 1962, Terry joined the Coast Guard. After basic training, his first assignment was to the Coast Guard Cutter Winona. His duty stations ranged from Garibaldi, OR, to Port Angeles, WA. In

1966 he was assigned to the ice breaker Staten Island for a trip to Antarctica. Took his skis with him and became one of the few people in the world to ski at the South Pole. He also sailed to Pt. Barrow, AK, thus having been to both the arctic and Antarctic. In Jan. 1970 he married Carol Heinbaugh and adopted her infant daughter, Christina. In Nov. 1970 Terry successfully completed training for motor lifeboat, Senior Boatswains Mates school, Cape Disappointment, WA, where the Columbia River meets the Pacific, one of the most dangerous waterways in the U.S. During his service, he used his artistic talents to paint helicopter landing sites on Navy and Coast Guard ships with their logos. On July 2, 1971, his son, Raymond, was born. Terry's last duty station was as lighthouse keeper on Patos Island in the Straits of Juan de Fuca. He was discharged from the Coast Guard in 1972 after 10 years of service with the rank of Boatswains Mate First Class. He and his family resided in Pt. Townsend where he served as a police officer for 6 months. They subsequently followed his parents to Wenatchee where he found employment with Grover Outdoor Advertising. In 1974 he opened his own sign shop on N. Miller St. and began his 50 year career as an artist and sign painter. In 1978 he moved the business to 527 N. Wenatchee Ave., the former location of Grover Outdoor Advertising. Terry had a wide range of artistic interests, from signs to billboards, murals, landscape painting, watercolors, stained glass and pottery. He was well known for his steady hand and amazing pinstriping ability. He learned to paint billboards at Grover Outdoor and he won the contract to paint and install billboards for 3M National, later Viacom, statewide. When computer printing eliminated the need for handpainting billboards, he continued to do installation well into his 60's. Examples of his signs can still be seen today around the valley. On May 21, 1977 Terry and Karen Barr were married in Wenatchee. Oct. 5, 1979, their son, Nels, was born and on Aug. 25, 1981, their daughter, Winona, joined the family. Together Terry and Karen worked to build his sign business, Terry Signs, he designing and creating signs and she taking care of the bookkeeping and paperwork. Terry was a workaholic who loved what he did

and never called it work, only fun. After 2000 when computer generated signs replaced handpainted, his interests turned to stained glass and pottery. In 2016 he moved his art studio to his home, continuing to do the occasional handpainted sign and pinstriping. He created and a variety of paintings and pottery, offering them for sale through Two Rivers Art Gallery. He entered art contests offered by Two Rivers and Wenatchee Valley Museum. In the late 1970's he served as a float judge at Apple Blossom. He was an active member and volunteer of Two Rivers Art Gallery. In June 2024 he was the featured artist on First Friday at Pybus Market, celebrating his 80th birthday and 50 years in the sign business. Terry was much loved by his family, friends and fellow artists. Art was his passion, which he passed on to his children and grandchildren. If you see a beautiful sunset, it's probably Terry painting the universe.

Many thanks to his family, friends and fellow artists who were with him during his final illness.

Terry was preceded in death by his parents; grandparents; grandson, Kyle Santos; niece, Leslie Johnson Hicks; uncle, Dale Johnson; aunt, LaVelle Johnson.

Terry leaves behind his grieving family: His wife of 47 years, Karen; brother, Larry (Diane) Johnson; daughter Christina Johnson Santos; son, Raymond (Carrie) Johnson of Olympia; son, Nels (Leah) Johnson of Enumclaw; daughter, Winona (Evan) Snell of Wenatchee; uncles Larry Johnson (Mary Ann) of Lynden, Don Johnson, Everett, Gerald, Phoenix; aunts Nancy Johnson, Maple Valley; grandchildren Ryan Johnson, Olympias, Nylah Johnson, Enumclaw, Nellyah Johnson, Tri-Cities, Maciah Johnson, Wenatchee, Finley and Betty Snell, Wenatchee; step-grandchildren Brady and Chelsea Puryear-Lynch, Enumclaw; one great-grandchild, Sofia Santos, Olympias; many cousins, including Randy Johnson, Everett.

Arrangements by Jones & Jones Betts Funeral Home. Memorial to be held in the spring.

Tribute Wall

ES

“ Terry, was a life long friend since the 8th grade of school. Although we went our separate ways, we always managed to find each other. He was a fantastic artist in every media, and enjoyed a good laugh. I will miss him when I visit in Wenatchee. RIP my friend. Until we meet again.

Ed shulda - April 24, 2025 at 03:48 PM

RM

“ Terry was my great lifelong friend since 1st grade. He was a great artist which was inspired by my dad's work when Terry watched him work as a young boy. Terry and I have endless memories of being together and having fun and adventures. We have a bond that can never be broken. Love and hugs to Karen and the whole family.
Robert Marquard

ROBERT N MARQUARD - February 03, 2025 at 01:49 PM

AB

“ Alisha Bartlett-Brown lit a candle in memory of Terrence Johnson



Alisha Bartlett-Brown - January 12, 2025 at 09:51 AM

WA

“ I was so sorry to hear Terry had passed away. He was such a pal. Terry was truly an encouragement to so many artists. He was so very generous with his expertise and artwork. I went to his shop to have some pinstripes painted on my van. After explaining what I was thinking of Terry gave me a white lead pencil and had me mark the lines where I wanted them. Once they were in the general position, he handed me a cup of paint & fancy brush and said, "Go for it." I said, "No way!" He said, "If you don't like it, just wipe it off." I took his word for it, and after some time I ended up with delightful pinstripes. I went back a few days later to have Terry paint some additional "professional" finishes. Pinstripes to this day, I still treasure. Such a kind fellow. Terry will be missed.

Wendy Allan - January 12, 2025 at 07:59 AM

“Terry was more than a friend to me; he was like a brother. We shared over 70 years of friendship, growing up together in the Skyway neighborhood. Those early years were filled with endless adventures—riding bicycles, hanging out with friends, cruising on motorcycles, skiing, playing chess, and doing everything you dream of in your teens. Terry was fearless, always up for anything, and loved pulling pranks in the neighborhood, bringing laughter and unforgettable memories to everyone around him. He was always by my side, making every moment unforgettable.

A true artist and a master pinstriper, Terry left his creative mark on most of my cars over the years. His skill and precision were unmatched, and his work brought life and personality to everything he touched. As the years went by, even as life pulled us in different directions, Terry remained a constant. No matter how much time had passed, whenever we reunited, it felt like no time had passed at all—just like being back in the old neighborhood.

In the later years of his life, we made it a point to connect regularly, often at his sign shop or pottery studio, where he was always working, creating, and sharing his artistic spirit. His 80th birthday was a beautiful celebration of a life well lived—a testament to the kind, talented, and dedicated man he was.

I feel incredibly honored to have called Terry my friend. I am grateful to have a few pieces of his artwork, including a whimsical pottery bowl adorned with a lizard that captures his playful side perfectly. These treasures will always remind me of the vibrant, creative soul he was.

Terry, you will be sorely missed. Rest in peace, my dear friend. The world is better for having had you in it, and I am better for having known you.

—Don Kruger

Don Kruger - January 03, 2025 at 09:19 PM