



## James "Jim" Koempel

April 11, 1945 - July 23, 2021

Jim Koempel passed away July 26th at his home in Dryden WA. after a prolonged battle with Parkinson's disease. Jim was a longtime orchardist in the Wenatchee River Valley. Jim grew up on a family farm in Tieton Washington, graduating Highland High School in 1963. Then graduated from Washington State University in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural education. His first job was a vocational agriculture and wood shop teacher at Cashmere High School. He and his wife Sue bought their first ten acres of orchard in 1969 on Pine Flats in Dryden.

Jim continued teaching until the mid-1980's, developing strong long-term relationships with students from Cashmere, Peshastin - Dryden and ultimately the Cascade School District in Leavenworth. Jim was a driven man willing to take on many other side incomes to help support his farming habit. He worked as a night Watchman at the Cashmere Mill and as a farm insurance adjuster for many years where he became familiar with all the diverse crops in Washington State. He and Sue worked hard so that eventually he could farm full time with his family, a goal he attained and enjoyed. He and Sue enjoyed the challenges of farming and leaned on faith and hope as ingredients to success as is testament by their chosen business names, Potentiality, Inc., and Possibility Orchards.

As Jim asked his son Josh back to their growing orchard business, he found

more time to give back to the Tree Fruit industry. He served on the board of directors of the Peshastin Irrigation District, the Washington Growers Clearinghouse Association and the Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission. Jim spent time traveling abroad helping to bring technologies and growing techniques back to the Washington State tree fruit industry, as well as countless trips to Olympia and Washington DC to inform legislators and government agencies about agricultural issues.

Jim was not one to sit still, his many experiences in the world of business and life were valuable to any organization he was affiliated with. He led with a humble confidence and faced conflict with humor and patience. Jim will be dearly missed by his family and his many friends. In his words... he did all of these activities so he would have something to talk about at the coffee shop with the guys.

James is survived by wife Sue Koempel, son Joshua, daughter Kiffin and seven grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Jeff.

Any donations in his memory can be made to the River Academy. James enjoyed investing in students in a small school setting like the River Academy. He enjoyed attending grandparent's day at the school, and appreciated the Christian Worldview that prepares students for all types of post-high school work including agriculture. Donations will support students through scholarships.

Link: [bit.ly/RememberingJimK](https://bit.ly/RememberingJimK)

# Tribute Wall

LD

“ *I remember Camping with our Boy Scout troop up at Valhalla in a rain storm. We stayed up most of the night lifting the tarp over the boys to keep them dry. Many good memories with this man.*

---

**Lynn Dahlstedt** - July 29, 2021 at 11:45 AM