



## Richard George Van Well

September 28, 1929 - March 5, 2021

Richard George Van Well, 91, a lifelong resident of Wenatchee, WA, peacefully passed away on March 5, 2021. He was a loving husband, father, brother, uncle, and friend. He was born in Wenatchee, on September 28, 1928, to Peter and Caroline Van Well. On December 29, 1962, Dick married the love of his life, Sylvia Skoglun. He and Sylvia purchased a home, where he lived until his passing. They had three children: Chris, Heidi, and Ric. Dick loved dogs and over the years had many faithful companions: Minet, Happy, Tabitha, Jule, Sasha, Piper, Lucky, Nika, Cid, Max, and Rommel, his current friend. Dick was a devoted member of the Catholic Church and faithfully attended mass weekly.

As a lifelong resident of the Wenatchee Valley, Dick lived in many different homes when he was young, his favorite being on Baker Flats. He grew up with six siblings: four brothers and two sisters. Family members often told stories of him and his sister, Lorraine, and their antics that kept their mother on her toes. He also enjoyed hanging out with his cousin, Phyllis (Barnhart) Gill. Dick also relished spending time with some very special friends: Berta and Don Leonardy, and Liz and Tom Waggener and their families. Berta and Liz introduced Dick to his beloved wife, Sylvia. He also spent many days at the wheat farms of some very dear friends, the Fogeds: Clara, Peder, Jens (Lou Ann), and Karen (John) Taylor. At a young age, he started working for C&O Nursery doing propagation work. Even though his father would start Van

Well Nursery, the Van Wells remained friends with the Snyder family. Dick graduated from Wenatchee High School and went on to attend Central Washington University, earning a master's degree in Education. After graduating from college, he served in the U.S. Army as a tank commander in the 25th Infantry division in the Korean War. After leaving the service, he began his career in teaching.

Dick started his teaching career in Quincy, WA. He then moved to H.B. Ellison Junior High School in Wenatchee, where he taught history. He became a counselor at Eastmont High School in East Wenatchee, WA. During this time, he earned his Principal certificate. Prior to working as a principal, he was called upon to leave his educational career, for the family business. As he still maintained a passion for teaching and helping young students, he decided to run for the Wenatchee School Board, serving students and the community for many years. He was always a teacher, even if it was not in the classroom. He coached many sports, including: girls' softball, Little League baseball, and assisted the coaches in youth hockey. He was also a past member of Kiwanis and the American Legion

Upon joining the family business, Dick worked side by side with his brothers: Jack, Joe, Pete, and Tom, to build a successful business, that has spanned over 80 years. While working at the family business, he fostered relationships and friendships with countless growers and agents in many different states. He was a father figure to many people who worked with him. Dick tried semi-retirement, but could not fully leave the family business. Even when he could no longer make it out to meetings because of COVID-19, Dick still actively listened in on conference calls and often voiced his opinions about the business at home to Chris and Ric, when he thought things should be done differently. He enjoyed walking through the fields and the cold storage units checking on things and conversing with those that he worked with.

For many decades, Dick could be seen traveling from his home to the orchards to walk his many dogs, in what the family termed the "old green van," a 1971 Chevy Suburban. These walks were one of his greatest pleasures in life, sometimes walking with five dogs at a time, when they were dog sitting. Up until his death, he continued walking every day with his faithful friend, Rommel.

Dick was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Sylvia; parents, Peter and Caroline Van Well; brothers: John "Jack" (Mary) Van Well and Joseph Van Well; sisters: Kathleen Van Well and Lorraine (Jack) Adams; two nieces: Mary Linda (Van Well) Lee and Carol Ann (Adams) Mason; and many beloved dogs. He is survived by his children: Christina "Chris" Van Well; Heidi Van Well-Rossiter and her husband, Mark; Richard "Ric" Van Well and his wife, Lisa; and Jeff Smith, a very special person within the Van Well family, whom he considered a son, and his wife, Darla. Dick is also survived by three grandchildren who brought him great joy and pride: Joshua Van Well, Andrew Van Well, and Hope Rossiter; two brothers: Peter Van Well and his wife, Ardis, and Thomas Van Well and his wife, Connie; many nieces and nephews: Lisa Van Well of Uppsala, Sweden, Suzanne Van Well, Kathy (Mick) McClafferty, Joe Adams, Dawn Adams, Vicki (Danny) McGregor, Jacki Ritch, Peter (Carmen) Van Well, Andrea (Stephen) Whitaker, Eric Skoglun, and Jon Skoglun. Lastly, he leaves behind his buddy, Rommel.

A Rosary will be recited at Holy Apostles Catholic Church, 1315 8th St. NE, East Wenatchee, WA, on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, at 10:00 a.m., and immediately followed by the celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 a.m. For those who cannot attend in person, the Mass will stream on Facebook (in Facebook, search Holy Apostles, East Wenatchee). Following Mass, Dick will be transported in the "old green van" for interment at Evergreen Memorial Park, 1301 10th St. NE, East Wenatchee, WA. Visitation

will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., on Monday, March 15, 2021, at Chapel of the Valley, 378 Eastmont Avenue, East Wenatchee, WA.

The family would like to give special thanks to Father Argemiro Orozco and Father Seamus Kerr of Holy Apostles Catholic Church, for all their spiritual blessings and support they provided to Dick and his family over many decades and to his nurse, Clara, for the special care she gave him near the end of his life.

For people wishing to make memorial donations, please make them in his name to: Holy Apostles Catholic Church, 1315 8th St. NE, East Wenatchee, WA, 98802, or the Wenatchee Valley Humane Society, 1474 S. Wenatchee Ave., Wenatchee, WA, 98801. Arrangements are by Chapel of the Valley, East Wenatchee, WA.

# Tribute Wall

RI

“ I'm so sorry to hear of his passing. He really was one of the nicest, gentlest, men I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. My heart goes out to those he has left behind, but his memories will be with us forever.

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**Rick** - March 23, 2021 at 12:58 AM

LA

“ My sincere condolences to Chris, Heidi and Ric, plus all those who mourn their father. Mr. Van Well gave me my first job, cutting grafting sticks in the orchards. We had a great crew and traveled around to various orchards to get the varieties needed. It was August in Central Washington and HOT and I'll never forget wearing long sleeves and long pants to fend off the aphids (oh Malaga)! Honestly we had a great time, visiting, riding around, eating the fruit in orchards that in some cases weren't picked (just used for growing a few trees of particular varieties). I remember those days fondly, the Van Well "kids" and of course, Mr. Van Well - a great boss, a great man.

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**Lisa Focht Ard** - March 19, 2021 at 11:33 AM

DJ

“ I enjoyed seeing Dick, Chris and Rommel in our drive thru at checkers when all of you would come through. My condolences to the family and to his dear Rommel. His memory will live on because of his love of helping and teaching!  
Darlene Jones ( former owner of Checkers Drive Thru)

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**Darlene Jones** - March 19, 2021 at 09:32 AM