



Lawson Van Kuren

January 9, 1942 - June 26, 2015

VAN KUREN, Lawson On June 26, 2015, Lawson Van Kuren lost his brave battle with cancer. Lawson Wallace Van Kuren Jr. was born to Katherine (Sitenga) and Lawson W. Van Kuren in Babcock, Wisconsin on January 9, 1942. He was the middle of five children, Kathleen (Stan) Bohlin, Janice (Richard) Bennett, Lois (John) Collins, and Fred (Marla) Van Kuren. After attending about 12 different grade schools, Lawson's family settled in and he spent five years in Chimacum, WA where he graduated as Valedictorian in 1960. Lawson attended Washington State University for a few years prior to joining the Air National Guard as a 2nd Lieutenant. In 1959, while attending the State B Basketball Tournament in Spokane, Lawson met the love of his life, Ruth Martin, from Lacrosse, WA. When Ruth graduated from the Deaconess School of Nursing in 1964 she joined Lawson at James Connally Air Force Base in Waco, Texas where they married. Soon after, they moved to Cheney where Lawson attended Eastern Washington University and earned his BA in Math Education in 1966 and a Med in 1970. Lawson began his teaching career in Cheney in 1966 at the Fisher building. He later taught at Cheney High School for a few years where he coached track and cross country as well as served as the backpacking club advisor. While there, Lawson became the legal guardian and mentor for Matthew Tsien so that Matthew could continue his education in the US. Matthew is currently the President of General Motors, China and Executive Vice President of GM. When the new Cheney Junior High opened Lawson became the Athletic

Director, track coach, and cross country coach for the next 19 years. He was the first teacher in the Cheney School District to teach a class with personal computers. Lawson was inducted into the Washington State Athletic Director's Hall of Fame as the first Junior/Middle School AD in 1997. Lawson and Ruth were the founders of the Cheney Track Club. Together, they ran the club for 35 years and upon retirement from the club they created the Ruth and Lawson Van Kuren Cheney Track Club Scholarship. Additionally, they held many positions in local and national governing bodies for track and field. They worked as head officials for the State Track Meet at EWU for about 20 years. This joint volunteerism earned them several local and national honors, including the Sports Writer's and Broadcaster's 25 Year Award for service to the Inland Northwest Sports. In 2015, the Cheney School District honored their service to the youth of the area by dedicating the Cheney Middle School Track as the Lawson and Ruth Van Kuren Track and Field. The dedication sign displays Lawson's motto of "do your best". After Lawson retired from teaching, he and Ruth enjoyed travelling together. They visited all 50 states, enjoyed 55 cruises that took them to all seven continents, and spent lots of time camping. Lawson is survived by his wife Ruth; daughters Carol (Rick) Campbell, Cathy (Gregorio) Munoz; grandsons Richard and David Campbell; great-grandson Chayton Campbell; sister Lois Collins; and brother Fred Van Kuren. A private family memorial will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Cheney Track Club Scholarship at Cheney Federal Credit Union, 520 1st Street, PO Box 160, Cheney, WA 99004. -

Tribute Wall

WC

“ *The Washington State Veterans Cemetery extends our deepest sympathies to the family of Lawson Van Kuren for your loss. We honor him for the service and sacrifice he has made he has made for our nation, he is a true hero.*

Washington State Veterans Cemetery - August 15, 2015 at 07:37 PM

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“ *You both touched my life in so many ways. I was a high jumper from Deer Park and came to your meets every summer in preparation for the Junior Olympic National Meets that I attended along with my friends from Team Spokane. You always welcomed us with hugs and many words of inspiration. You taught and challenged us to be the best athletes that we could be and to represent the Pacific Northwest with pride and dignity. Thank you for your many years that you gave to us kids. You will be missed greatly.*

Barb Frye (Rehms) - July 29, 2015 at 12:02 AM

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“ *I have had requests for my address P.O. Box 532 Cheney, WA 99004-0532
Thank you for all your kind words and hugs they mean a lot.*

Carol (Van Kuren) Campbell - July 09, 2015 at 06:29 PM

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“ *Lawson Van Kuren*

Kevin - July 08, 2015 at 08:10 PM