



Walter Lee Powers

September 17, 1925 - September 19, 2022

Walter Lee Powers, passed away peacefully in the comfort of his home alongside family on Sept. 19, two days after celebrating his 97th birthday. Walter is survived by his granddaughters Dulcy, Melony, and Anna; his grandsons Tab and Zach; five great-grandchildren; two great-great-granddaughters; and two daughters-in-law, Jeanne and Patty. He is preceded in death by his loving wife of 72 years, Myrtle Powers, and his three beloved sons Wally, Jim, and Tom Powers.

Walt was an outgoing man who was genuinely interested in learning about any person he encountered. He could captivate people with his many life stories and entertain a crowd with his strong, enchanting singing voice and infectious laugh. He enjoyed singing in the choir of the Cheney Congregational and Honolulu Union churches. Walt was a loving and supportive grandfather who was adored by his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He had a way of making people feel genuinely heard, appreciated, and loved. As a father he was the stern one, softening as he became a grandfather and great-grandfather. He provided many life experiences to his family over the years that will be a source of treasured memories for years to come. His life was well lived, positively impacting many along the way.

Walter Lee was born in his family home in Fort Worth, Texas on Sept. 17,

1925, to parents Howard and Nettie Powers. Most of his early years were spent during the Depression. This is where his tremendous work ethic was born at 9 years old, selling the Evening Post to earn money to buy his own clothes. Walter was drafted for military service during WWII where he served as a Navy corpsman attached to the Marines. This is where he eventually met the love of his life Myrtle, a woman Marine. Their courtship began as Walt was sent overseas, corresponding for nine months with love letters until they both were discharged from the military. They were married on Dec. 15, 1946, and attended college together at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Walter and Myrtle's love story has a chapter in Cindy Hval's book, *War Bonds: Love Stories of the Greatest Generation*, which was published in 2013.

Following Myrt's graduation from Baylor, the couple moved to Oregon where Walter continued his studies at Linfield College in McMinnville. It was there that he received his B.A. degree in 1949. Walter furthered his education at the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, receiving both his Masters and Doctorate degrees. It was during these years that Walt and Myrt began their family.

Walter's first son, Wally David, was born in McMinnville, Ore. on Nov. 24, 1948, and passed away of Multiple Sclerosis in Dec. 2003. Wally was a community college instructor before becoming disabled. Their second son, James Lee, was born in Greeley, Colorado on Dec. 14, 1951. He had a career as a civilian mechanical engineer in the Department of Defense for the US Navy. Jim died unexpectedly of a heart attack in Apr. 2009. Their third son, Thomas Dean, was born in Boulder, Colo. on March 24, 1954. He had a career in School Psychology and was the only son to marry and have children. Tom passed away from cancer on Nov. 29, 2021.

In 1954, Walter moved his family to Cheney, Wash. where he began his 40-year teaching career at Eastern Washington University. His time at EWU

provided the Powers family the opportunity to travel the world most notably, two years in South Korea and a year in central England. Throughout his career, Walt was recognized for his many contributions to the establishment and advancement of school counseling programs across the globe.

In retirement, Walter and Myrtle spent winters at their condo in Honolulu, summers at the cabin in Priest Lake Idaho, and the rest of the time in Cheney, close to family. Following the passing of his wife in 2017, Walter continued living in his Cheney home near the many people who knew and loved him. The family would like to extend our immense gratitude to his wonderful caregivers that allowed our Gramps to remain in his home until his passing, as was his most desired request.

It is impossible to sum up the life of a man like Walter Lee Powers. We will further honor and celebrate his 97 years with a Memorial Service to be held Sat., Nov. 5, at 1 PM at the Walt and Myrtle Powers Reading Room, located on the 2nd floor of Hargreaves Hall at EWU. Virtual option TBD. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to: The Walt Powers Scholarship Fund, Eastern Washington University.

Cemetery Details

Washington State Veteran's Cemetery

Medical Lake, WA

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV 5. 1:00 PM (PT)

Walt and Myrtle Powers Reading Room
2nd floor of Hargreaves Hall at EWU
Cheney, WA

Tribute Wall

VM

“ Last night, Sept. 7, 2024 I had an extensive dream about Dr. Walt. In the dream he called and we discussed a book he had written. It was a long conversation and we talked about writing and psychology and his voice was the same voice I had listened to as one of his students. It was a lovely dream. He was a primary mentor for my career. I didn't know he had passed. But I was happy to "hear from him" and be reminded of his support of my work and the depth of his commitment to the field. I remember when our cohort went together, with spouses and kids, to the lake and on his boat. I quote his advice to other a lot when I am supervising a new counselor. He was generous to me and encouraged me to do more than anyone else thought I could. And for that reason I was able to go farther than ever....obtaining 2 masters degrees and a PhD....I actually think of him often and fondly and now, after having such a lovely dream, know in some world of spirit, he is still working. Blessings to all who knew and loved him. Vali Hawkins Mitchell

Vali Hawkins Mitchell - September 07, 2024 at 12:29 PM