



Ralph Jay Roelen

April 12, 1936 - August 1, 2021

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Jay Roelen was born in Salem, Ohio, to Ralph and Louise Roelen, and passed away peacefully at home in Waldport, Oregon. He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Jerry Jean, an accomplished artist. He leaves behind adult children of previous marriage (Janet), sons Barry, Brett, and daughter Denise; stepson Charles Cawley and stepdaughter Buffy O'Brien; many grandchildren and great grandchildren. He is also survived by younger brother David of Torrance.

We all leave footprints of life. Jay Roelen left a larger footprint, a greater trace of stardust than most. Jay left the planet peacefully and at ease, satisfied after a full, energetic and enthusiastic life of 85 years. He lived life!

His youth years matured in Inglewood and Hawthorne, California, where he excelled in athletics. He organized the backyard "Roelen Olympics" for neighborhood kids with activities like football, baseball, golf, bicycle racing, pole vault, high jump, foot races and even an around the block steel-wheeled roller skate race. At Hawthorne High School Jay earned five varsity athletic "letters" - football, wrestling, basketball, track, and baseball - all in one school

year! He was a champion wrestler and quarterback on championship football teams. During those same years, while maintaining an excellent academic record, he was elected Student Body President and Senior Class President at Hawthorne High.

Jay was an All American quarterback at Pepperdine College (now University), setting many national passing records (incredibly, during this time the military deemed him "4F"!). He was honored by induction into Pepperdine's Hall of Fame (football), California Wrestling Hall of Fame, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame (wrestling officiating), and Helms Athletic Foundation Football Hall of Fame. Coach and Athlete Magazine named him football "Player of Year" in 1957. After college football Jay switched sports to play many gentle games of rugby. And during the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics he was the credential manager for the wrestling venue. He taught and coached at Morningside High, San Clemente High, and at Saddleback College.

He was not just an athlete and coach, but a learned student of American history, and avid reader with both bachelor and master's degrees. Jay put his name to two historic football scrapbook collections of documents, news articles, rosters, memorabilia for Pepperdine (1946-1961, 4 volumes) and for Saddleback College. He was a licensed private airplane pilot. He traveled and enjoyed camping and nature, especially in the American Southwest. His eclectic book collection numbered in the thousands. His favorite book (which he read every year) was "Catch 22", and he laughed with every page turned! His vast sports memorabilia collection contained well over a million football and baseball trading cards, many signed by friends featured on the cards.

Jay was an influential teacher and educator his entire life. An inspirational guide to many, he was a person who loved to help, mentor and encourage others. He was one of those rare people who never forgot a name. He had a

wide range of new and long-time friendships. Jay was an intelligent, serious person, but jokes and happy infective laughter always surrounded him, even when the subject of self-deprecating jokes. He was a fun person who enjoyed and lived a splendidly full life. Jay Roelen is gone, but he and his life accomplishments (modestly never mentioned) remain to be celebrated.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ralph Jay Roelen*

August 10, 2021 at 12:00 AM