



## Norman W Childress

August 19, 1958 - September 15, 2020

### Norman Wayne Childress

On the morning of September 15, 2020, Norman Wayne Childress peacefully left this world in search of the ultimate poker game.

Norm was born on August 19, 1958, to Thurman Junior Hawkins and Joy Eliese Mondor Hawkins in Yakima, WA. His parents divorced when Norm was quite young, and then Ralph Childress entered their lives, the “Dad” that Norm adored. He attended Outlook Elementary School and Sunnyside Junior High School. After his Dad passed away, the family moved to Naches, and Norm became involved in football, wrestling, and baseball at Naches High School, where he graduated with the class of 1976. During high school, he worked for the U.S. Forest Service. He attended Yakima Valley College, and his first job was with the U.S. Soil Conservation District in Yakima. In October 1978, he began a 37 year career with Benton County Road Department (now known as the Public Works Department). The county professional engineer at that time, Mr. Dale Bean, recognized Norm’s potential and promoted him to the Traffic Engineer position. A subsequent county engineer, Mr. Dennis Skeate, also took a chance on Norm’s abilities, and they both became certified accident reconstruction experts for the county, which entailed training at Northwestern University in Chicago, IL and classes through the University of Washington. Norm loved to share road trip adventures he and Dennis experienced as they traveled to and from the trainings. During all his years at Benton County, he told people he would someday be a county commissioner.

Norm was appointed by Grandview Mayor Carl Stevens to the Grandview Planning Commission in the early 1990’s. Norm was then elected to the Grandview City Council in 1993, and served as a councilman until 2005 at which time he was elected as Mayor of Grandview, a position he proudly held until 2018. Norm took great pride in projects throughout Grandview which were completed during his tenure on council—WalMart Distribution Center, Grandview Community Center, Grandview Library, Grandview Downtown Revitalization to name just a few.

Norm retired in January, 2015 to tinker in his workshop and play poker, his absolute favorite past-time, but retired life did not provide enough stimulation so Norm campaigned for and was elected as Yakima County Commissioner for District 3 in 2018, a position he held until his death.

While living in Prosser, he joined a men's baseball team sponsored by Valley Memorial Hospital in Sunnyside, and met his wife, Sandy. They were married November 2, 1979, and enjoyed over 40 years together. Daughter, Cara Lee Childress joined the family in 1981, and son, Joshua Wayne Childress was born in 1983. As Cara and Josh grew up, Norm was very involved in all their activities, coaching teams, transporting teammates to and from games, serving as statistician and their #1 fan. The "light of Norm's life" arrived 11-08-12, and Sebastian has always said Grampa is his favorite!

Norm himself kept busy with church league softball and racquetball. He and his racquetball partner, Steve Becken, were known as the "Bruise Brothers" because opponents routinely left the court with a bruise or welt. Norm then discovered Texas Hold 'Em poker, and casino staff and patrons always recognized his signature Hawaiian shirts with matching hats which he painted to match. Annually each June Norm would head to Las Vegas to play in the World Series of Poker and reconnect with friends around the poker table. His welcome at most major casinos was similar to Norm on CHEERS, and of course he loved every minute of it!

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, there will be no formal service. A memorial service will be scheduled when allowed. The family respectfully requests NO FLOWERS. Memorials may be made to: Heartlinks Hospice and Palliative Care, the Yakima Valley Fair and Rodeo Foundation, the Yakima Humane Society, or a charity of your choice.

# Comments

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“ I'm so sorry for your loss. All our love and prayers to Sandy, Cara, Josh and Sebastian.  
Jeff & Yvette



**The Fitzjarrald family** - October 11, 2020 at 12:50 AM

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“ Darrell And Debbie Stenberg lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Darrell and Debbie Stenberg** - September 22, 2020 at 10:25 PM

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“ I was so sorry to hear of the passing of Norm. First let me say to his family that they are in my prayers and I am sure there are many, many who were impacted by Norm during his time here with us.

Norm was an extraordinary person. Because of his time with the Engineer's office I was always impressed with his work and with the chance to see him in action when we were in training to become accident reconstructionists back in Cfhicago, spread out over several months, off and on.

He is going to be missed!

Dennis Skeate, not a former boss, but a fellow worker!

**Dennis Skeate** - September 22, 2020 at 02:57 PM

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“ Norm Childress was a graduate of Yakima Valley College and a strong supporter of our Grandview Campus. He was instrumental in the completion of many projects including: the new entrance from Wine Country Road; the expanded parking lot; the construction of the College/City joint Library; and the acquisition of the current Student Activity Center. Even after his retirement as mayor, he would always ask me about the college and the Grandview Campus when we would attend YCDA meetings. He will be greatly missed by everyone at Yakima Valley College.

Our hearts go out to Norm's family and friends.

Linda Kaminski, YVC president

Linda Kaminski - September 21, 2020 at 01:01 PM

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“ I truly enjoyed each interaction I had with Norm. As an attorney for Yakima County, I attended several meetings with Commissioner Childress. He was so smart and kind. He was a problem solver and a great County Commissioner. I thank him for his many years of government service. He always spoke about his wife, children, and grandson with pride and love.

Wishing you all peace during this difficult time.

---Stefanie Weigand

Stefanie Weigand - September 19, 2020 at 05:52 PM

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“ Norm will be greatly missed. We appreciated everything he did for Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Management Services. Diane M. Koch, EMT, Yakima Co Dept of Emergency Medical Services

Diane Koch - September 18, 2020 at 02:14 PM

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“ I (Bob Story) got to know the power slugger when our men's softball team picked Norm up as our "ringer" for a couple of tournaments back in the early 1980s ... a competitive athlete who proved to be a great teammate. Over the years our careers crossed paths on numerous occasions, and our friendship continued to grow. Norm's energy was contagious, his knowledge deep and his loyalty unfaltering ... a true gentleman in every sense of the word. Later in our lives both Norm and I found ourselves at many a poker table. A polished player who rarely came out on the short end of a stack of chips, Norm freely shared his insights into the game if I (or any other player for that matter) asked for advice or help. At the poker table or away from it, Norm was a man of the highest character. From what I always observed, Norm believed in earning people's respect by showing them respect, in turn. From our many personal encounters and conversations over the years, I learned there was no bigger treasure in Norm's life than his family. He spoke lovingly of his wife, proudly of his son, doted on his daughter and bragged (endlessly) about his grandson. Those who knew Norm are going to miss him tremendously. I can attest to this. Rest in peace, my friend!

**Bob Story** - September 18, 2020 at 11:33 AM

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“ Laura Spooner Bales lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Laura Spooner Bales** - September 17, 2020 at 11:35 PM



“ I graduated from Naches in 1976 with Norm. He was a kind person. RIP. Prayers and thoughts are with his family at such a difficult and sad time.

**Laura Spooner Bales** - September 17, 2020 at 11:37 PM



“ Sandy we are so sorry for your loss. Our li e and prayers are with you and the family

**alice and wilbur ramey** - September 19, 2020 at 03:43 PM

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“ Steve And Carolyn Schlax lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Steve and carolyn schlax** - September 17, 2020 at 04:19 PM



“ we lived in Grandview 40 years..norm did so much for Grandview..i worked with sandy many years. My heart goes out to all..

**Steve and carolyn schlax** - September 17, 2020 at 04:20 PM

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“ Gary Waterman lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Gary Waterman** - September 17, 2020 at 01:57 PM



“ So sorry to here this , I new who Norman was as a boy i was about 8 year older then he was, but new his father Ralpf Childress what a nice and genuine man . I remember when i went fishing with Ralph and his boys to salvin dam we had a great time !

**Gary Waterman** - September 17, 2020 at 02:28 PM

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“ Yakima Valley lost a good man when we lost Norm. I didn't know him well, I only met him a few times but I could tell he was a kind and caring man. Gone too soon. To Norm's friends and family, so sorry for your loss.



**Cindy O'Halloran** - September 17, 2020 at 01:01 PM



“ The Valley lost a great person with the passing of Norm. You will be missed. My favorite posting is Norm enjoying his Grandson Sebastian.

**Trudy** - September 18, 2020 at 03:13 PM



“ Norm and I were hired the same day on October 15, 1978. We spent many hours working together on various projects over the years at Benton County Engineers Office at the courthouse in Prosser. He had integrity, honesty, was patriotic, and especially was a good Christian man. He loved and cherished his family. Our prayers are with all of his family: Sandy, Cara, and Josh, and Sebastian.

**Sue Schuetze** - September 19, 2020 at 12:24 PM

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“ Dale Burgeson lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Dale Burgeson** - September 17, 2020 at 11:30 AM

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“ Lori Still lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Lori Still** - September 16, 2020 at 07:19 PM

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“ John & Kay Myers lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**John & Kay Myers** - September 16, 2020 at 01:10 AM

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“ Hector/Ramona Mejia lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



**Hector/Ramona Mejia** - September 15, 2020 at 08:26 PM

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“ May he R.I.P. in our heavenly Lord's arms. Great loss to our community. Elma Perez



Elma Perez - September 15, 2020 at 08:16 PM

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“ I loved Norm's smile and love of his family. I remember seeing your family at the fairgrounds. I know he loved Sebastian so much! We are here if you need anything. Love, Shirley and Kelly Martin.

Kelly Martin-Carter - September 15, 2020 at 07:14 PM

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“ Mike And Janet Aguirre lit a candle in memory of Norman W Childress



Mike and Janet Aguirre - September 15, 2020 at 06:30 PM