



## Paul A Klasen Jr

February 27, 1927 - April 6, 2014

Paul A. Klasen Jr. 87, passed away Sunday evening April 6th, 2014. Paul succumbed to complications of Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. Paul was the second son of pioneer Grant County residents Paul and Ethel Klasen of Soap Lake. Born in Wenatchee on February 27, 1927 he, his brother Frank and sister Mary Ann grew up in Soap Lake, Washington. To his last days, he took great pride in being a member of the Soap Lake Grade School symphony led by Gregor Agranoff, a graduate of the Moscow (Russia) Conservatory of Music.

He graduated from Gonzaga Prep in 1944 and finished one year of college at Gonzaga University prior to being drafted in 1945.

At Fort Ord he trained for the invasion of Japan but instead was sent to Adak in Alaska's Aleutian Islands where he quickly rose to the rank of staff sergeant in the Army Signal Corps. In the past 10 years he has enjoyed reunions and email messages from his fellow veterans' of the Alaska campaign.

He attended Gonzaga Law School on the GI bill, graduating in January of 1951. He returned to Grant County to practice law. He was appointed by Bob Campbell, Grant County prosecutor, to the position of deputy prosecutor with a salary of \$225 a month. At that time the prosecutor's duties included acting as County Coroner.

He married Ellen Jane Kroetch, his college sweetheart on April 19, 1952 in Spokane. The 8mm movies Paul took of college age life in the 1940s and family gatherings are a great source of cherished family humor. Paul and Jane raised three children Kate, Jim, and Karen in Ephrata.

In 1954 Paul was elected Grant County Prosecutor and he was reelected 8 more times, serving over 35 years in that capacity. He handled numerous cases of national interest. On behalf of Grant County he argued before the United States Supreme Court and convicted one of the largest construction companies in the world of bribery. For many years he served as a director of the National District Attorney Association.

In the late 1950s, with a small county budget and a personal salary of \$500 per month, he called for a Grand Jury (rare in Washington State history) and argued against an army of Ivy League Wall Street lawyers representing a high profile company. In 1960 a Grand Jury indictment resulted in a six count bribery conviction and a \$50,000 fine paid to Grant County. Paul was proud that the fine covered the expenses of the grand jury and the lengthy case.

He retired after 39 years of public service. Public service was a family tradition as his father Paul Sr. served as the Treasurer for the City of Soap Lake for 50 years. In his public life Paul always strived to put the county first. Paul's experiences as prosecutor are documented in a April 30, 1990 article in the Grant County Journal.

He served as president of the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and president of the Washington Association of County Officials.

In his post retirement he served the ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve). It is employer support that allows the United States to field a

professional military without a military draft. Paul was awarded the seven seal certificate for his work with the ESGR.

He was dedicated to his family. He always attended his children's and grandchildren's activities. He was awarded Camp Fire's highest award for his volunteer work with the local Camp Fire groups and Camp Zanika Lache. He passed a fire marshal exam in Olympia so his son could practice model rocketry.

Paul loved the outdoors and took his family camping and backpacking in the mountains near Leavenworth Washington. He and Jane traveled through Europe, Alaska, and Australia. His parents hand built a cabin along the Wenatchee River in the 1940s and he loved going there with his family.

In retirement Paul enjoyed golf at Lakeview where he recorded two holes in one. When he narrowly missed a third ace in 2012 at the age of 85 he stated it would be a good time to retire from the game.

Paul was an active member of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church and instrumental in the establishment of St. Rose of Lima School. His children, grandchildren and now his great grandchildren attend school there.

He is survived by his wife (of 62 years) Jane, children Kate Klasen Smith, Karen (Mike) Moore, and Jim Klasen; his sister Mary Ann (Mark) Derr, along with five grandchildren Greg (Lisa) Smith, Heidi (Brandon) Burns, Matt (Stephanie) Moore, Nick (Kelly) Moore, and Susie (Seth) Anderson. Six great grandchildren, Gavin & Carter Burns, Samantha, Allison and Emily Moore, and Madelyn Smith along with dozens of nephews and nieces.

Humorous details of Paul's early life in the 1930s are found in documentary

films of Soap Lake by Kathy Keifer.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Paul A. Klasen Sr. and Ethel Redman Klasen and his brother Frank.

In lieu of flowers donations may be sent to Saint Rose of Lima School at 560 Nat Washington Way, Ephrata WA 98823 or to the non profit charity, Friends of Zanika. PO Box 623 Ephrata Washington 98823.

Holy Rosary will be recited at 7pm Thursday April 10th at St. Rose of Lima Church 232 D St. SW, Ephrata. Funeral Mass of Christian Burial also at St. Rose of Lima, 11:00am Friday April 11th, 2014 with internment immediately following at the Ephrata Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Ephrata Catholic Cemetery

333 E St. SW  
Ephrata, WA 98823

# Previous Events

## Rosary

APR 10. 7:00 PM (PT)

St. Rose of Lima  
323 D St. SW  
Ephrata, WA 98823

## Mass of Christian Burial

APR 11. 11:00 AM (PT)

St. Rose of Lima  
323 D St. SW  
Ephrata, WA 98823

# Tribute Wall



“ *Nicoles Funeral Home and Valley View Memorial Park created a Tribute Video in memory of Paul A Klasen Jr*



---

**Nicoles Funeral Home and Valley View Memorial Park** - April 11, 2014 at 02:40 AM

WR

*Paul was a friend to all. He was the type of person you would want as a friend, neighbor, and confidant. I will miss him and the wisdom he imparted to me. RIP Paul.*  
*William & Susan Riley*

---

**William Riley** - April 11, 2014 at 02:14 PM

KO

“ *Dear Jane and family:*

*I have such good memories of visiting you in the north country. I am saddened by his passing yet, I remember visiting up there when I was 18 and on a girl scout adventure trip. It was fun and so great to connect with my Washington state family.*

*Kathy O'Connor*

---

**Kathy O'Connor** - April 13, 2014 at 09:01 PM

MP

“ *Marian Menzia Pedersen lit a candle in memory of Paul A Klasen Jr*



---

**Marian Menzia Pedersen** - April 12, 2014 at 10:18 PM

JF

“ *Paul loves people! He radiated joy, whenever he had a chance to talk to people. My family and I saw him at church every week with his lovely wife.....that speaks well of his relationship with the Lord. He was always encouraging our kids by complimenting their reading of the scriptures or singing of the hymns....and giving a little advice, too. He told them stories about his alter serving days, when our church building was brand new. One time he actually gave our girls a spin in his red convertible! We weren't in his circle of friends, particularly, but he still touched our hearts. We smile whenever we think of and pray for Paul Klasen!*

---

**John & Terri Spiess & Family** - April 09, 2014 at 08:03 AM