



Roy Johnsen

AUG 17, 1941 - JAN 2, 2021



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 6
Media	Page 7



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Roy Johnsen Obituary

Roy Johnsen passed away on Saturday, January 2, 2021 from Alzheimer's and complications from COVID-19. Thankfully, most of the family was able to say goodbye and give him one last hug and kiss in a time when this is not always possible.

Born August 17, 1941, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Roy was the son of Harry Carl and Maree (Bales) Johnsen. An only child, Roy spent his early years in Oklahoma City and then west Texas—where he was likely to be found on a grand adventure. The Johnsens would eventually call Bartlesville home, and Roy graduated there as part of the class of 1959.

As a youngster, Roy enjoyed playing baseball, fishing, and camping. He never outgrew his love of the outdoors, continuing to add to his repertoire, including training bird dogs, playing golf and tennis, and walking and jogging to name but a few. Mere participation was not sufficient for Roy; he gave his all to any activity he undertook. He read numerous key texts for improvement and vigilantly charted his studies and experiences in his many journals. His victories throughout the years at tennis tournaments were a result of routine training and practicing often. He designed his own home tennis-training regimen by adding weights to his racquet and using the harvest dining table he built as a makeshift weight bench. Roy was a regular at Philcrest Hills Tennis Club, where he enjoyed matches and practice with his friends, teaching the perfect backhand and tennis techniques to his kids, swimming with the family, or enjoying a Coors Light, a handful of cheese Goldfish, and the Roy Johnsen Cheeseburger at the grill.

In that same spirit, Roy believed in hard work and applying himself wholly to his career, qualities that allowed him to excel as an attorney. After graduating from Oklahoma State University, where he also was a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, he continued his studies at the University of Tulsa College of Law, earning his juris doctor degree in 1967. Following, he worked at the Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, served as the principal author of the new Tulsa Zoning Code, and cofounded Epperson, Goodpaster, and Johnsen law practice with his



Obituary

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colleagues and good friends in September of 1971. Roy taught most of his children and some of his grandchildren his very strong work ethic and love of the law over the summers, allowing them to work beside him in his law office. Many important lessons were learned by the Johnsen clan working under him.

Roy was a true Tulsan and relished promoting modernization and progress in the city he loved so very much. Early in his career, he played a pivotal role in the planning and formation of Woodland Hills Mall. Closing his career, he participated in the initial discussions and planning for the Gathering Place. Numerous achievements promoting Tulsa occurred between, far too many to name. Roy could not go anywhere in town without a friend or colleague greeting him with “counselor,” to which he would always reply to with “good to see you,” a huge smile, and a hearty handshake. He worked diligently until his retirement in February of 2017 and was honored with a Fifty Years of Service Recognition by the Oklahoma Bar Association in August of 2017. He will be remembered for his dedication to his profession; his extensive skills as a debater, orator, and teacher; and his commitment to the highest ethical standards and civic duty.

Whether for work or pleasure, Roy was constantly writing. His skillful command of the English language can be found in numerous legal briefs and title opinions, a book of poetry, bird hunting logs, fishing journals, exercise routines, and thoughtful poems, notes, and letters to his family and friends. Peers, friends, and family alike acknowledged his mastery of precise, concise prose.

When not writing, he could often be found outdoors—fishing, hunting, exercising, spending time with his family and friends, and enjoying life. The Lake Place at Grand Lake was his favorite place to be, unless it was a Monday, which he reserved for a standing game of liar’s poker with his buddies. He cherished adventure and keeping a positive attitude.

No matter where he was, he often repeated, “Life is good; life is good.” He certainly made life good for all those who knew and loved him. All of his family knew they had an open invitation to visit him and his beloved spouse and partner in adventure, Barbara, at the Lake Place or their home in Tulsa. When visiting, you would be greeted before you got out of the car with a smile, no matter if you arrived needing solace, a good laugh, or a good time. Roy loved dancing on the deck with Barbara and his girls, staying up late laughing and carrying on. He also was in his words, a great “home cook.” Among his specialties were an amazing cheeseburger, hand cut French fries, and grandmother’s chocolate pie.



Obituary

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Above all, Roy was a family man, a dedicated son, husband, father, and grandparent. He believed in all of his family members, supporting them throughout his life without criticism or judgment. His positive impact and legacy will be carried on by his loving family. His survivors include his wife and soulmate, Barbara Johnsen; his children: son, Dr. Gregory Johnsen and wife, Dr. Debra, and their children: Ryan (April), Laura Bayer (Jake), Alyssa, Alaina, and Aleah; daughter, Ann Johnsen and her children: Kathleen Nash (Tracy), Lee Ann, Jerri, and Hayden; daughter, Kristin Calvert and husband, John, and their children: Jack Phillips (Corey) and Matthew; daughter, Darby Johnsen and husband, Nate; daughter, Marcy Ayers and husband, Tim, and their children: Carly, Dorothea, Luke, Beatrice, and Adelaide; son, Lee Wallace and wife, Chelsea and their children: J.T., Zia, and Autumn and daughter, SSgt Jessica Wallace. He is also survived by his aunt, Denny Hladik (Don), along with numerous cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents. He will be deeply missed.

Roy's Celebration of Life will be postponed until a later date. Those details will be announced once plans are finalized. Roy will be laid to rest in Memorial Park Cemetery, Tulsa.

For those who wish to honor Roy's memory with a gift to a charity, the family suggests directing those gifts to the Alzheimer's Association (<https://www.alz.org/oklahoma>).

To send flowers
to the family or plant a tree
in memory of Roy Johnsen, please visit our floral store.

Read More



Tribute Wall

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Bixby Funeral Service shared a **Video**.



April 22 at 7:40 AM



Kay Stone Buford posted:

Roy and Barbara were neighbors for years but even more specifically Roy and Dan worked hand in glove on so many projects tog. They both admired the other. Now they are once again together!!! God be with this family during this time.

January 8 at 7:00 AM



Robert Gardner posted:

Sorry for your loss. I got to know Roy when I was a young attorney, he was considered one of the premier land use attorneys in the state. I also worked with Roy when I was a Tulsa City Councilor on a few zoning issues, some kind of thorny. Roy was a true gentleman, man of his word and one of the most positive individuals I have ever worked with, regardless of the circumstances. I have always felt fortunate he crossed my path, he was just a prince of a guy. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

January 6 at 10:08 AM



Media

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Bixby Funeral Service shared a **Video**.

April 22 at 7:40 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Roy by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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