

## **Obituary: R. E. “Dick” West**

1944 – 2022

R. E. “Dick” West passed away in February 2022 in his home with his loving wife at his bedside. Dick was born to Roland and Lois West in Torrington, CT.

In 1958 Dick and his family moved to Portland, OR, where he graduated from Washington High School in 1962. He went on to get an Associate’s Degree in Fire Science from Clackamas Community College, and attended both Portland State University and City College later in his adult life, studying both Fire Administration and Financial Planning.

Dick joined Milwaukie Rural Fire District #56 in Portland, Oregon in April 1963 as a volunteer firefighter, marking the start of a 48-year career in the fire service. (Milwaukie Rural FD #56 later merged and became Clackamas FD #1.) In early 1967, he was hired on full-time, and progressed through the various ranks becoming an Asst. Chief in 1978. During his early career, he also worked as a Dispatcher at the local Fire Dispatch Center. He moved on to Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue in Silverdale, WA in February 1981, becoming their Fire Chief, retiring in June 2001. He was instrumental in bringing certified, professional fire service training to Olympic College and to Kitsap County.

He went on to receive many professional accolades including Life Memberships in the Oregon Fire Instructor’s Assn; the Washington and Western Fire Chief’s Assn; serving a term as President in each of those organizations; and served on the Board of Directors for the International Assn. of Fire Chiefs for 4 years in the late 1990s. During his term as Fire Chief, Dick was an active member of the Silverdale Chamber of Commerce, serving a term as their Vice-President, and was on their Board of Directors for several years. He was elected Fire Commissioner in 2011, and served for 10 years.

During his time away from the job, Dick became a Charter Member of the Silverdale Harley Owners Group, and is a Life Member of the National HOG, and he and his wife Bonita could be seen many weekends around town on their Harley Davidson motorcycle. He loved sports of all kinds and spent many days at All-Star Casino playing cards with friends and acquaintances.

Dick leaves his loving wife Bonita of 40 years; his siblings Tim (Diane), Suzanna (Paul), John (Bear), David (dec.) and Jeffrey (dec.); his children Douglas (Jill), Brian (Cari), Julie and Christopher; his 9 grandchildren Brian, Robbie, Casey, Hunter, Hannah, Madison (dec.), Ryan, Tyler and Lincoln; and his 8 great grandchildren Lily Mae, Jack, Cameron, Andrew, Kayla, Archer, Kenzie and Canaan.

A memorial service will be held at the Crossroads Neighborhood Church on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the CK Medic One Foundation, 5300 NW Newberry Hill Rd, a nonprofit organization born at his urging while Fire Chief, and one that he had served as Chairperson for several years.