



## Melvin LeRoy O'Keath

October 18, 1931 - May 9, 2015

MELVIN "MEL" L. O'KEATH October 18, 1931 ~ May 9, 2015 "Mel was very involved in his church and community." Melvin "Mel" L. O'Keath, 83, went peacefully to the Lord at home May 9th, 2015. He was born in Pueblo, CO Oct. 18, 1931 and moved west with his mom and brother at a young age. Mel served our country, in the Army. He settled in Vancouver, WA and met Violet Christenson and fell in love. They were married in 1952. Mel had been a dance instructor, hair dresser, and ended up choosing a career in banking. He worked for Vancouver Federal Savings and Loan for 28 years. Mel was very involved in his church and community: 22 years serving on the Miss Washington pageant board, 7 of those years as Executive Director. He started and directed the Little Miss Vancouver pageant. Mel judged numerous county and state pageants. He was director for the City of Vancouver's Sessiqua Centennial Pageant. Mel was an active PTA member when his children were young, including holding the President position. He was charter President for the Vancouver East Kiwanis Club. He was a member at St. Paul's Lutheran Church where he had served on council and as Sunday School teacher. Mel served on the board for March of Dimes. He was a life member of Vancouver Jaycees and was a JCI Senator. Mel was an American Legion member for over 30 years. He had earned several awards during his time giving to the community: Jaycee of the Year, Jaycee couple of the year with Violet, listed as one of the top 10 young men of America, and City of Vancouver Jr. Citizen of the Year, just to name a few. Mel had a kind, loving heart. He instantly

connected with people and they loved him. He was a kid magnet. He loved to entertain them and children loved to be around him, and it didn't matter if it was family or not. Mel is survived by his wife, Violet; three daughters: Renae Bennett, Lori Lindberg and Tammi Weiss; son, David; 11 grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his mother, Ruth Smith; brother, Gene; son, Mike; and grandson, Gary Bennett Jr. Service will be held at Evergreen Memorial Garden Fri., May 15th at 3:00 p.m. Please sign his guest book at: [www.columbian.com/obits](http://www.columbian.com/obits).

# Tribute Wall



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**Evergreen Memorial Gardens** - July 03, 2025 at 09:36 PM



“ *What a life Mel had! Well lived and well loved. He is for sure teaching the Angels to dance. I know that your hearts must be full of sorrow at this time, but you have received a great gift having him with you for so many years. Though Mel will be greatly missed, you will always have a special place in your heart for him, a place that only each of you, personally, can only share. God bless him and keep him close and may you and your family have peace. Big hugs to all of you, Marion*

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**Marion Mefford** - May 13, 2015 at 12:00 AM