



Richard D. Smedley

SEP 6, 1932 - FEB 27, 2026



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Richard Don Smedley



September 6, 1932- February 27, 2026

Richard Don Smedley, lovingly known as Rick, passed away on February 27, 2026, at the age of 93. He was born on September 6, 1932, in Deer Lodge, Montana - a place that helped shape the grit, steadiness, and quiet strength that marked his entire life.

At 18, Rick answered the call to serve his country. He enlisted in the United States Navy on March 12, 1951, and served four years aboard the U.S.S. Yorktown. He was honorably discharged on March 14, 1955. His time in the Navy reflected qualities that would define him: loyalty, integrity, courage, and devotion to something greater than himself

After his military service, Rick attended Central Washington University. It was there that he met the love of his life, Judy Ruth Miller. They married on August 23, 1958, when Judy was just 19 years



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old. Their marriage spanned 67 years, 6 months, and 4 days -- a remarkable testimony to covenant, devotion, and enduring love.

Rick began his career in education as a teacher before moving into administration, eventually serving as an elementary school principal. He led with steadiness and fairness, believing children deserved both structure and encouragement. His influence shaped countless young lives, though he rarely spoke of his impact.

He retired at the age of 58 and embraced a season filled with golf games, fishing trips, cooking for family, and tending his garden. He found joy in simple rhythms and in being present with the people he loved.

Rick was known for his sense of humor, deep faith, unwavering integrity, grit, generosity, and loyalty. His steadiness created safety. His predictability was not dullness - it was strength. You knew where he stood. You knew he would show up.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Judy; his son, Brad Richard Smedley (Paula); and his daughter, Lori Elizabeth Sabo (Mark). He is also survived by his grandchildren: David Smedley (Johanna), Stacie van de Weghe (Joe), Scott Sabo, Jacob Smedley (Rebekah), and Peter Smedley (Stephanie); and his great-grandchildren: Aiden, Nathan, Rayan, Lydia, Evelyn, Eli, Oliver, Zoey, Caleb, Micah, Willem, and Andrew.

Rick's legacy lives on not only in the generations that follow him, but in the character he quietly modeled: faithfulness over flash, presence over performance, commitment over convenience.

A life well lived. A race well run. A faithful man now home.

In lieu of a memorial service, please leave your thoughts and memories on the tribute wall. Rick's family would love to hear them. Thank you.



Tribute Wall

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Lori Sabo shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Tears flow at 8 in the evening because you're not going to Facetime to see how my day was. And I won't see you and mom working on the puzzle, and I won't hear about your day, and I won't see the ceiling light because you set me down on the table while we caught up. Such a small and precious daily ritual that makes your absence feel so big. I miss you, daddy. I was so blessed to be your daughter.



March 19 at 8:02 PM



Jill Stoner posted:

Rick was a man of such incredible faith and the strongest convictions, and he wasn't afraid to share both. He was a wonderful example to me of love and commitment. I will treasure the conversations we had and remember him always. Safe in the arms of our Lord and Savior, rest in peace dear friend.

March 19 at 8:33 AM



Vernon Reis shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.



March 18 at 3:42 PM



Vernon Reis posted:

I met Rick at Central in 1957 where he introduced me to fishing the Yakima River. When we began working he got me hooked on Steelhead and Salmon. He was also almost a Scratch golfer, but most of all a very nice person with a great sense of humor. I'm a better person for knowing him. He was like a brother to me. Vern Reis

March 18 at 9:23 AM



Lynn Mohn posted:

You were a mentor and a man that I had such respect for. You gave me encouragement and pushed me to further my education. We worked together for the Clover Park School District. I will never forget you, Mr. Smedley!

March 12 at 2:07 AM



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Elizabeth Gourley shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Love and miss you! Such a great and fun Uncle you were!! ❤️

March 10 at 4:01 PM





Lori Sabo shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

March 19 at 8:02 PM





Media

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Memories only last if you share them

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



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