

MARVIN VERN SEELYE

MAY 10, 1937 – February 10, 2023

Family man; golfer; artisan; educator; the Michelangelo of the Whidbey Golf Club

Marvin V. Seelye, who died on February 10, 2023, at the age of 85, was a native Washingtonian/Northwesterner to his core. Born in Bellingham, WA to Clarence and Mable Seelye, he grew up roaming the Bellingham area by foot and on his bike. One fateful day, as he explored the Bellingham Golf and Country Club, he stumbled upon a discarded (thrown?) golf club, picked it up and took a swing – and that, as they say, was history. He learned the game of golf by watching players as he caddied, and he learned to swing his club by observing the technique of Sam Snead whenever he had the chance. Snead's smooth swing became a part of Marv's own admired technique. He loved the game from the start and eventually he would tell stories of a round of golf at Lake Tahoe with Arnold Palmer; two holes-in-one on the 17th hole and one hole-in-one on the 7th hole at the Whidbey Golf Club; and championships at the Northwest Pacific Lefthanders, Oregon Lefthanders, and Canadian Lefthanders golf tournaments. In addition, he was Club Champion one year at the course he loved the most: Whidbey Golf and Country Club, where he was a member for 57 years. His competitive love of golf took him to the World Lefthanded Golf Tournaments in New Zealand, Australia, Sweden, Germany, South Africa, Victoria BC, and Orlando, FL. But his favorite times were the golfing times with the Ball Droppers of the Whidbey Golf Club, followed by competitive games of cribbage.

He did other things in life, too. He graduated from Western Washington State College in Bellingham, WA when Old Main was the only building on campus; later he received his Master of Arts degree in Art in Education from Arizona State University. While at ASU he received a doctoral fellowship offer, but, deciding there was "just too much sunshine every single day in Arizona," he returned to Western Washington with his family where he taught junior high and high school art in the Oak Harbor School District. He was the long-time golf coach at Oak Harbor High School and, when he left that position to become an administrator, was one of the winningest coaches in Oak Harbor sport history. He was assistant principal at Oak Harbor Junior and Middle Schools and Staff Development Coordinator and Instructional Support Administrator at the district office.

He was a loving and supportive family man. He married Betsy Seelye in 1961 and had two sons, Eric and Mark. Eric provided him with two grandsons, Luke and Landon, with whom he shared his love of golf. In 1995, he married Linda Dobbs and gained a stepdaughter, Marsa Daniel. Art was always a part of his life and he was known for his stunning artwork; his stained glass windows, lamps, and boxes; his hand-crafted pens of wood and stone; his hand-wrought wooden bowls; and anything else that inspired his whimsy that he decided to try. After retirement from the Oak Harbor School District, he took a part-time job at the Whidbey Golf Club as a groundskeeper and landscaper where he applied his artistic talents and became known as the "Michelangelo of the Golf Course" for his beautification of the golf course with flower plantings and landscaping.

He is missed and survived by his wife of 27 years, Linda Dobbs; his son, Eric Seelye (Karen Birkett) of Honolulu; his grandsons, Luke of Bellevue, WA and Landon of Los Angeles, CA; and his stepdaughter,

Marsa Daniel, of Bellingham, WA. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Betsy Seelye; his son, Mark; and his sister, Georgia Turner.

For those wishing to honor Marv's life and remember him, consider supporting the Anacortes Community Forest Lands, which Marv walked, via the Skagit Land Trust: www.skagitlandtrust.org This organization will notify the family that a donation has been made in Marv's memory (names only or you may remain anonymous). A fitting tribute for the Michelangelo of the golf course – and of family, friends, art, and education.

A remembrance gathering will take place on Sunday, May 7, 2023, at 2:00PM at – where else – the Whidbey Golf Club, 2430 SW Fairway Lane, Oak Harbor, WA.