



Franz Karl Schneider

March 17, 1928 - April 14, 2021

Franz Karl Schneider died April 14, 2021, at his home in Mennonite Village, Albany, Oregon. He was 93.

He was born in Wiesbaden, Germany, on March 17, 1928, the middle of five brothers. His family was Catholic and staunchly opposed to the Nazi regime. As a boy he joined his brothers in the Boy Scouts, which in Wiesbaden was a branch of the Catholic Youth League. In 1944, before he was 16, he was drafted into the army and served in an anti-aircraft battery until going AWOL in 1945.

After the war Franz continued his education, studying English and German Literature at Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, and organized a program of youth activities for the Catholic parishes of Wiesbaden. In 1948 he went to Washington State College in Pullman, as an exchange student in the Democracy Scholar program, where he met Ann McRea, from Aberdeen, Washington. They were married in Germany, August 19, 1951. When Ann returned to the United States to do her student teaching, Franz remained in Germany as a consultant to the Allied Commissioner, but then followed Ann in 1952, and both graduated from Washington State College.

He then went on to get an M.A. and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of Washington and began his career as a widely respected Professor of Comparative Literature at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. He taught from 1957 to 1993. He served as chair of the English Department, director of the Honors Program, and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Gonzaga School of Law in 1985. Over the years he also received the Alumni Great Teacher Award and the Gonzaga Distinguished Service Award. He taught a wide range of courses in writing and literature but most loved teaching the great epics and the modernist poets. He was a leader in the Association of University Professors at Gonzaga and in the Danforth Association, and taught summer seminars for high school teachers sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

He was a well-regarded poet, translator, and literary critic and published many poems and

articles. With Charles Gullans he translated *Last Letters from Stalingrad*, published in 1962, and a book of his poetry was published in 1982, *The Roof of Stone*.

Franz earned his U.S. Citizenship in 1957 and was active throughout his life in the Democratic Party, the ACLU, the NAACP, and other organizations.

He enjoyed climbing mountains and fishing. He traveled in Europe and throughout the Northwest. In the early years of their retirement, he and Ann moved to Aberdeen, Washington, and managed the family tree farm.

In 2011 Franz and Ann moved to Mennonite Village. During his years in Albany, he contributed frequent letters to the editor, gave several talks, and wrote often to a wide circle of correspondents in the United States and in Germany.

He was a remarkable man, a gifted teacher, a person of deep faith, and a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He was proud of his six children and devoted to them throughout his life. He had many friends, including many of his former colleagues and students, and was a great influence on many people.

He was preceded in death by his parents and four brothers: Toni, Rudolf, Theo, and Josef, and is survived by his wife of 70 years, N. Ann (McRea) Schneider, and their children: Barbara Anderson (Chris); Roberta Sobotka (Jon); Joe Schneider (Debbie); Tom Schneider (Kellie Jacobs); Ruth Russo (Jim); and Katie Schneider (Monte Bassow). He is survived also by fourteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

A Vigil will be held, for immediate family only, at 7 p.m. Friday, April 23, at DeMoss-Durdan Funeral Home, 815 NW Buchanan Ave., Corvallis; family and friends are invited to a Funeral Mass at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 24, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 501 NW 25th St., Corvallis. Pandemic protocols for St. Mary's Church will be followed. There will be no reception. Contributions in Franz's memory may be made to the educational non-profit Indigenous Peoples Institute (Seattle University), supported by Franz and Ann for many years. Franz's family wishes to thank Samaritan Evergreen Hospice and Visiting Angels for their service.

Please share your thoughts and memories for the family at www.demosssurdan.com.

Events

APR **Vigil** 07:00PM

23

DeMoss-Durdan Funeral Home and Crematory
815 NW Buchanan Avenue, Corvallis, OR, US, 97330

APR **Family and Friends** 11:00AM

24

St. Mary'S Catholic Church

Comments



“ My condolences to Ann, Roberta, and all of Franz’s family. I was a freshman at Gonzaga in 1967 and a member of the Honors Program, which Franz was directing. He made the Honors office a warm and welcoming place of intellectual discussion and we all stopped by there as often as we could. Franz joined perfectly a respectful, kind, and supportive approach with an intellectually and philosophically challenging approach. He demonstrated his respect for you as a student by expecting you to do your best. When I returned to Gonzaga as a faculty member in 1975, Franz welcomed me as a colleague, maintaining the same blend of support and challenge, always shining a spotlight on unexamined assumptions.
Rest in peace, dear friend.
Linda Carroll

Linda Carroll - May 20 at 03:03 AM



“ My condolences to the family,

I am one of the many grateful students of Dr. Schneider. I will always remember that he told us, (I am paraphrasing) that those who believe that they would never be seduced by the Nazis or their ilk would be the first to be entrapped. Such a wise and wonderful man. I want you to know that his teaching and compassion resonates over 50 years later.

Sincerely,

Carla Nuxoll, Gonzaga, Class of '72

Carla M Nuxoll - May 10 at 09:10 PM



“ Among the most kind and professional educators I ever met. A genuine lover of learning and knowledge who also could tell the best stories of his life. Best wishes to his family.
Craig Holliday
Class of 95

craig holliday - April 24 at 06:21 PM



“ Dear Ann,

We are so sorry to hear of Franz' passing. Though we didn't know him well, Laurel and I have always thought very highly of you and all the work you did for Logan neighborhood.

You both were wonderful neighbors and have been missed.

We are still living in the house at Mission and Dakota and are doing well, even with some problems of old age.

May God comfort you and your family in this loss.

Sincerely,

Kathy Riley & Laurel Havens

Ms K Riley - April 23 at 03:21 PM



“ Franz and his family were our wonderful neighbors for most of my youth growing up in the Gonzaga neighborhood. I recall many inspiring chats with Dr. Schneider in front of their home or across the street. One memory is the Presidential campaign of 1968. We enjoyed discussing the primary. He had a McCarthy bumper sticker on his VW van, while my corvaire had a Robert Kennedy version. Needless to say the discussions were very collegial.

Our thoughts are with the entire family at this time.

Respectfully,

Jim Kirkland

Jim Kirkland - April 23 at 11:32 AM



“ As an English 101 student in 1975 at Gonzaga Univ, Dr. Schneider made me angry. Among other things, he told the class one day that “if a person did not read the newspaper everyday, he was ignorant!” I was aghast but his words for some reason stayed with me when I left school to join my husband in the military and serve in Germany. We returned to GU in 1985 to an assignment on the faculty in the ROTC Department which afforded me the opportunity to finish my degree. I was determined to face this professor who dared to call me ‘ignorant’ and signed up for his Poetry class. To my surprise, my anger quickly dissolved and turned to awe as this brilliant man shared his love of word, rhythm and rhyme backed with an openness about his life as a child soldier and later as a family man. And because his students, if challenged in an English bar to recite a poem, were not to shame him by only knowing, “Mary Had A Little Lamb”, I hold in my heart and mind to this day works by Keats and G.M. Hopkins. And I read the paper EVERYDAY :)! Of all my coursework, my journey with Dr. Schneider in poetry that one semester inspired my life and changed it forever. To the family of Dr. Franz Schneider, my husband and I share our prayers and deepest condolences. May he Rest In Peace.
Michèle Zrodlo Velasco and COL(R) Mathias Velasco - Spokane

Michèle Velasco - April 23 at 10:40 AM



“ I'm Lois Brown of Raymond WA & first heard of Franz through articles in the Aberdeen World. We had a wonderful priest from Ghana who served our parish and the council members wrote a nasty letter to the archbishop while Fr. was on vacation. He was devastated! I contacted Franz (whom I'd never met) seeking guidance. Low and behold he showed up for a week-day morning Mass ... talked to Fr. Gillette and convinced him to stay. I wrote to the archbishop in Fr's defense and kept in touch with Franz until he and Ann moved to Oregon. May angels swirl around all of his loved ones.

Lois Brown - April 22 at 02:48 PM



“ I had Dr. Schneider as a prof and adviser in the Honors Program and also as a mentor and later a friend. Besides his amazing mind and his thirst for knowledge and truth, he was always a person of great joy and hope, and I so admired him and will miss him dearly.

Kathy Finley, Spokane

Kathy Finley - April 21 at 01:42 PM



“ My name is Elizabeth Hudon (Beth) and I was a classmate of Tom and student under Ann and her creative writing 6th grade class at St Al's in Spokane. In grade school Tom and I would toss a football around after class and during the St Al's boys football practice. I was doing a report on WWII and I (a 6th grader) said "I hate Germans" Tom said, "I'm German" I retorted "I mean Nazis". Tom explained that he had uncles who were forced to fight for the Nazis. I NEVER forgot Tom's vulnerability and honesty. Jesus calls us to His Mercy... His father's obit reminded me of Benedict the XVI and his experience of the WWII era. Franz's obit made me weep tears of joy for a life lived with integrity...the fruits of which are evident in his children, who were honest friends. I still cherish Ann's creative writing class for 6th graders at St Al's...she was so caring and supportive of this child of divorce, she, in such a short time made an impact on my life...I still have the faded mimeographs of the poems and stories from that class. I told my sister Rhonda Mannino that Franz had died and she informed me that her brother in law Hans Weber, was an expatriate of Germany, and that Franz and Hans commiserated with each other during the process of becoming Americans!!! Small world!!! What a wonderful, though challenged, life this man lived through the mercy of God! Truly inspirational! I will remember Franz and his beloved family in my prayers, especially The Rosary! With much love and respect,
Beth Hudon

Elizabeth M. Hudon - April 20 at 10:01 PM



“ Dear Ann and family members:
I am so sad to learn of the passing of my dear friend and colleague Franz. We started at the same summer pre-school time at GU in 1957 beginning year after year of shared interests and appreciations. He corrected my publications efforts and I supported his liquor supply at Christmas. How blessed Carol and were to know Franz Schneider. I'll never forget him. Bill Barber

Bill Barber - April 18 at 09:50 PM



“ I was fortunate to occasionally sit in the row ahead of Franz at Mass at St. Mary's. He had a beautiful voice and I so enjoyed his gift! I learned more about him reading his obituary. What a talented, devoted husband and educator. We treasure our memories, while his Father welcomes him home. My condolences to his wife, Ann, his daughter Barbara and son in law, Chris

Nicole Elliott - April 18 at 09:38 PM



“ Probably voted for Biden

Cathy - April 23 at 03:17 PM



“ Wonderful person who never failed to say, "Good morning." Even standing in an echo-y staircase, Franz could be profound. "It's important that we're not just univocal or equivocal but multi-vocal." He loved and wrote fine poetry, and he helped us all breathe it.

Michael Kiefel, friend and colleague

Michael Kiefel - April 26 at 03:58 PM



“ Poet, scholar, teacher - Franz Schneider taught more than Comparative Lit. He made Homer live and walk abroad in his classroom. Dr. Schneider's text was Paedeia, human excellence, and he showed his students the road to a lifetime of learning and growth. He lived what he taught. During his time there he was the grace and ornament of Gonzaga University. Requiescat in pace.

Tim Gallagher, '71

Tim Gallagher - April 30 at 01:35 PM