



## William "Rod" Fielder

December 7, 1930 - September 2, 2016

December 1930 — September 2016

William Rodney “Rod” Fielder was born in Eureka, California, in December of 1930, son of Geraldine Haight Fielder and William Rufus Fielder. He was the second of four children: Yvonne, Rod, Joy and Lee. Their father, William Rufus, died young in a logging accident when the children were in their late teens and early 20s.

Rod attended San Jose State, married Yvonne Hjelm in 1951, and started a family of four children while finishing college in 1952 and becoming a teacher. He received his masters and doctorate degrees from Stanford University. First teaching in elementary school in San Jose, California, Rod subsequently taught at Stanford University, Michigan State, University of Arizona/Tucson and Claremont Graduate School. A professorship at Oregon State University/Corvallis brought the family to Oregon. When his first marriage ended he bought a small hazelnut orchard just outside Brownsville. Several years later he met Sara Andrews Miller, and they married in December of 1981. Professor William R Fielder PhD Education, retired from Oregon State University/Corvallis in 1988.

Dr Fielder collaborated with colleagues to create the Holt Databank — a social

science research system. He spearheaded, co-wrote, and edited two social studies textbooks: “Get Oregonized — 4th grade,” and “Global Oregon — high school.” He also created “Playful Learning” — a seminar for elementary social studies teachers. After retirement Rod chose the pen name Oregon Bill and published three rousing story books: “Oregon Bill,” “Grit and Gumption” and “Heart and Soul,” about life and community in a logging family, in a small historic town and on a small hazelnut farm. He took his Oregon Bill show on the road telling stories in classrooms, libraries, history museums, at family reunions, and on public radio.

Over the past 35 years on their 21 acre “Oregon Country Farm” Rod and Sara restored an 1856 historic home, built a Japanese inspired farm house and gardens and planted some 700 or so trees of one kind or another. Living to nearly 86 years, Rod gave 99 percent of the credit for his longevity to Sara who, after each of his heart health related adventures, inspired him to eat as many vegetables as possible, as often as possible, for as long as possible! And this he did! Always pondering and exploring ideas, and dedicated to the idea of life as play, Rod cherished life, his family, his friends — many of whom he was close to since childhood — and his community. He loved to teach, farm, sculpt stone, wood and metal, eat pie, make cider, fly fish, hunt birds with his dog, and sing around the campfire. He and Sara traveled throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Europe and Mexico visiting family and friends, seeking art, wisdom and joy. Together they created many traditions in and around their home, including Aikido in Portland and Corvallis, weekly in-home meditation groups, heart health study groups and book study groups such as “Living Fully Dying Well.” They also jumpstarted community get-togethers such as autumnal Otsukimi poetry reading parties, winter epiphany parties and summer Calapooia river parties. Not to mention the Brownsville croquet field and tournaments, or “Nuts for Jesus” — a fundraising program at the United Methodist Church in Sweet Home (which went international this

year!). Whether traveling, writing stories, drinking coffee at Randy's or hanging out at the Corner Café, Rod was always exploring the heart, mind and soul of himself and his friends, and he was always "Big Fun!"

Rod is preceded in death by his parents, siblings, daughter Kathryn Fielder and stepson Steve Miller.

He is survived by his wife, Sara Fielder; children Kristina Hollerman, William Rodrick "Rick" and Pieter Fielder; stepchildren Ann and Nancy Miller; grandchildren Erin Martin and William Ross "Ross" Fielder, Laura and Daniel Hollerman, Rachel, Cameryn and Andrew Fielder, Aurora Erlander, and Julia and Ryan Haas; and great-grandchildren Molly and Jimmy Hollerman, Landon and Logan Martin, Mia Fielder and one more Fielder on the way.

In lieu of flowers, donations are welcome at Sharing Hands, The Brownsville Library or the Nuts-for-Jesus program at United Methodist Church, Sweet Home.

A memorial will be at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 18, at Brownsville Rec Center, 234 Park Ave., Brownsville.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

SEP **18.** 2:30 PM (PT)

Brownsville Rec Center  
234 Park Avenue  
Brownsville, OR

# Tribute Wall

EW

“ I was fortunate to be a student in Professor Fielder's class at OSU. I have fond memories of his teaching style. He had a wonderful outlook and a gentle manner. We always had fun!

One of the activities that I remember is when he gave each of us a coin and asked, "If another civilization found this, what could they tell about us?" It lead to a great discussion.

The highlight of the term was when the entire class was invited to his home. It was such a treat!

With condolences for his family,  
Eneke Warnke  
Corvallis

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**Eneke Warnke** - September 09, 2016 at 01:03 AM

SK

“ I'm sure that I'm not the only one with a kaleidoscope of moments of Rod. I recall the first time visiting their beautiful home and graciously being greeted by Rod, his gentle way of explaining the removal of my shoes and his delight in showing me around his home.

His enthusiasm as he explained and lead us through the Moon Festival Celebration and dance.

Oregon Bil telling his stories in regalia.

His willingness to try new things, his sense of humor and friendliness.

He is missed.

Susan Knapp

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**Susan Knapp** - September 07, 2016 at 10:47 AM