



John Wilbur "Jay" Jefferson

MAR 22, 1936 - MAR 24, 2024



Scan to Visit

Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
-----------------------	--------



John Wilbur "Jay" Jefferson

MAR 22, 1936 - MAR 24, 2024

Long time and well-known Grand Junction, Colorado resident John Wilbur "Jay" Jefferson passed away quietly in his sleep early on the morning of March 24, 2024, at the Covington Care Center in Orem, UT. He was 88 and 2 days.

Jay was born on March 22, 1936, in Monte Vista, Rio Grande County, Colorado. He was the 3rd of 3 children born to Wilbur Fern Jefferson and Verna Mae Riggs. He grew up on the family farm and ranch in the Waverly District, north of Center, Colorado. He was a hard worker and loved athletics. He played multiple sports at Center High School and in 1954 was awarded a football scholarship to Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. As a member of the football team, he was a 4-year starter for the Adam State Grizzlies, named All Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) twice, and was selected as Adams State's Most Outstanding Athlete for 1957-1958.

While at Adams, Jay met Mary Kathleen Mott and they were married on Jan 26, 1957, in a small family ceremony at the Mott home in Alamosa.

Jay graduated from Adams in 1958 with a degree in education and became a biology teacher and multisport coach, first at Ordway High School then at Delta High School. During this same time, he completed his master's degree in education at Northern Colorado University in Greeley, Colorado. In 1966, he accepted a position as Housing Director at Mesa State College. Later, he went on to become the Student Union Director and finished his career as Athletic Director. During his 12-year tenure as Athletic Director, Mesa State won 35 RMAC Championships.

In addition to being the Athletic Director at Mesa State College, Jay served as the President of the RMAC Athletic Director's Council (1985), President for NAIA Region VII Athletics (1986) and was named the NAIA Administrator of the Year (1988-1999). He was inducted into the Mesa State Hall of Honor in 2002 and the RMAC Hall of Fame in 2003. Jay retired in 1992 and started a small lawn prep business, spending many hours working on his tractor.



Obituary

John Wilbur "Jay" Jefferson

MAR 22, 1936 - MAR 24, 2024

While in Delta, Jay and Kathleen were blessed with a son Kendall Jay and daughter Jill Loreece. In 1966, the family moved to Grand Junction. In 1974 they built their dream home on H Road and resided there for over 50 years, where Jay could often be seen working in the yard or field and tending to his horses.

Jay was also an avid outdoorsman, taking as many opportunities as possible to hunt, fish, or ride horses in the mountains. His favorite places to be: on long trail rides in the mountains with friends, fishing for pike & walleye at Spalding Lake in Canada, and hunting with friends & family during elk season. Jay was also never one to say no to an invitation to go snowmobiling on the Uncompahgre or fishing on the Mesa or in the Black Canyon.

Despite the challenges of health during his final years, Jay's sense of humor was always on display. His infectious love of life and cowboy toughness will be missed.

Jay was preceded in death by his parents, his brother L. Wayne Jefferson, his sister Mary Evalee Jefferson, his wife Mary Kathleen Mott and his grandson Monty Ray McKinnerney. He is survived by his son Kendall Jay Jefferson (Jennifer Davidson), daughter Jill Loreece McKinnerney (Deryl Ray), 6 grandchildren, and 6 great grandchildren.

Currently, there are no planned memorial services.



Memories only last if you share them

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



Scan to Visit