



Darek Jenkins

February 4, 1949 - January 11, 2026

Richard Darek Jenkins of Milwaukie, Oregon passed away on Jan 11, 2026.

Eulogy of Richard Darek Jenkins

Presented by Adolfo Pesquera, nephew of Darek

I am Adolfo Jenkins Pesquera. I am the eldest grandchild of Evelyn Jenkins who is the mother of Darek Jenkins.

My uncle was born in Whittier, California February 4, 1949 to John Phillip Jenkins and Evelyn Lemon Jenkins. Evelyn intended to name him Darek, however, while still expecting her fourth child, her father-in-law, Richard Jenkins, passed away.

In his memory, the couple opted instead to bestow upon him the legal name Richard, but Darek was the preferred moniker amongst family and close friends. His older sisters -- Jacqueline and Phyllis, however, addressed him as Darey. My mother, Phyllis, the only living sibling at present, still refers to him as "Darey" ; she's the only person allowed to do so,

Darek had a brother, Dennis, who was four and a half years his elder. While still young boys, the brothers, as brothers will do, often fought.

For a moment in time, I was the beneficiary of their spats. I say this because in the summer of 1961, while I was a few months short of my seventh birthday, Darek's mother felt the need to send Darek away for the summer, primarily to put some space and time between the two boys.

It so happened that my father was planning to visit family in Mexico City, so, at my mother's behest, he agreed to have Darek accompany him on the road trip from Corpus Christi, Texas, where we lived at the time, to Mexico.

This was to be my first trip to Mexico City, but Darek was 12 and the age difference put me at a disadvantage for reasons I'll explain. We arrived at my uncle Luis' home and Luis had a son by the same name who was Darek's age. They quickly saw each other as peers and got along well, while I was considered by them a third wheel, a runt they had to look after from time to time. Were it not for my aunt Rebecca, whose hospitality was so endearing, I probably would've had a miserable time.

I was left with two strong impressions of Darek during that trip. On one occasion, we visited a market He was attracted to a leather goods shop, where he picked up a bull whip, snapped it and proclaimed, "I could use this on my brother!" There was a tone in his voice that surprised me. My dad declined to buy it for him

The second occasion was an errand my aunt Rebecca sent her son on and we accompanied him. Luis was to go purchase milk. I thought I was familiar with what went into buying milk. After all, the milk man delivered four glass quarts to our door once a week for a single dollar bill, a price my mother considered outrageously expensive.

I tagged along, trying to keep up with their long legs and found myself on a long walk that involved crossing a creek and going to a barn where inside

were rows of cows. Luis purchased a bucket of raw milk and we headed back. But when we got to the creek, a trickle of water was flowing and Darek and Luis were several yards ahead of me.

By the time I got to midstream, the water was rising fast and I was losing my footing. I screamed for help. They turned to look and encouraged me to keep walking, but I couldn't so they had to come back and save me. Given their age, I can forgive them for not having the foresight to keep me in front of them where they could have best kept an eye on me.

Anyway, all's well that ends well, and I'm over it. I think.

Darek the boy loved going to Disneyland and to the beach.

He became a strong swimmer and was a lifeguard at summer camp. Aside from his athleticism, or perhaps in part because of it, Darek had a personality that endeared him to classmates and teachers alike.

While perusing his high school yearbooks, I was astonished at how popular he was. The loving comments from girls and the friendly sarcastic remarks from boys were so many and so enthusiastic that I began to wonder -- was there more than one Darek? How could one boy have this much going on?

Gerald Han, one of his teachers, wrote: "Richard, you're very lucky to have passed this course considering how much WORK (work is in parenthesis) you put forth. I'm confident that you'll be a real swinging "senior" next year."

His Advanced Photography teacher, Arthur Franco, wrote: "I am certain that next year you will earn that 0 you have been looking for. Have a nice summer."

--- The handwriting appears to be of a zero but it could also be the letter O, I'm not sure which. I prefer to think that it was code for an Olympus camera, but ...

I'm not sure.

Gary Casella, his baseball coach, wrote: "Rick, best of luck to a great individual."

Elly Reide, a student, wrote: "Dear Darek, you really are the "KING" of my heart, because you are always so cheerful and have a wonderful sense of humor. Thank you for being always so nice. You are a real asset to CYF (that's the acronym for Christian Youth Fellowship). Sadie Hawkins was a real blast just because you were there. Please don't ever drive as fast as your brother!"

I'll close this chapter with my favorite: Linda wrote: "To the love of my life. May all your problems just be spilling Coke on me."

While Darek's interest in photography blossomed during his high school years, he stayed with it and became a proficient amateur photographer. His activities in photography also kept him in touch with like-minded young men. I recall in later years him introducing me to friends, among them were one or two who worked on television production crews.

Gail, Darek's wife would often ask him, "Where'd you learn to be so sweet?" And he always replied, "From my mother."

Friends would often ask, "Where'd you learn to cook so good?" And he would say, "From my father."

This was no exaggeration, Darek's parents often hosted large parties in the big adobe house Phillip designed and built. Phillip cooked up wonderful barbecued meat for the guests. Darek followed in his father's footsteps. Unfortunately, this did not apply to dancing, which was another essential element of those gatherings: Darek did not inherit the dancing gene.

Darek attended community college for a while, but the Vietnam conflict loomed large. Rather than waiting to be drafted, he opted to enlist in the U.S. Navy. Upon completing basic training, Darek was deployed to Vietnam for a one-year stint.

While Darek was no infantry grunt, lest we forget, this was an asymmetrical war where violence could break out anywhere at any time. Darek once told me he spent some time on duty at a supply depot in Saigon. On one occasion while Darek was on guard duty on a high tower, an intoxicated comrade got goofy and shot his gun. The bullet went zooming past Darek, narrowly missing his head. Interestingly, during the two years Darek served with the Navy, he was never actually assigned to a ship.

Shortly after his military service discharge, Darek met and fell in love with a gal named Marie Walker. They were married in 1973. In 1978 Darek and Marie were blessed with a daughter, Rebecca. But not long after, times were tough financially. The couple decided to move to Oregon where Darek found employment and they were able to buy a house in southeast Portland. Their son, Theodore, was born the following year. Sadly, the marital relationship crumbled, and Darek found himself alone in 1988.

At that time, Darek was employed with Precision Castparts Corporation in the layout department of the Large Structures Business Operations. There he learned to measure jet airplane parts to within thousandths of an inch.

Later, as robotic machines became ubiquitous, Darek was one of the few who could still accurately measure by hand, when required. Darek was promoted to the metrology analyst department where he wrote computer programs for robotic measuring machines. Metrology means the study of measuring. In total, Darek worked for Precision Castparts over 35 years.

In spite of having a career with a profitable company, it was still challenging making ends meet. So Darek Joined the U.S. Air Force Reserves.

Darek was able to use his precision measurement skills in the reserves; he was a load planner, measuring pounds or tons to distribute cargo weight evenly, which is necessary to keep loads balanced so that the planes may safely take off and stay in the air. He took this job very seriously and received commendations for his dedication to excellence.

His Air Force Reserves duty helped make ends meet at home and provided benefits. He also was able to travel to faraway places, including Japan, the United Kingdom, Spain and Guam. He even found himself in South Carolina, and what could be more exotic than that to a West Coast boy?

Now, how did Darek meet Gail. The two began having conversations while waiting for their daughters who were practicing marching in a parking lot of Lloyd Center, with the Girl Scouts' international flags marching unit. They were married in May of 1991, and became a blended family, each bringing two children.

As a family, they enjoyed camping on the Oregon Coast and in Central Oregon. They sometimes travelled to Darek's childhood home in Whittier to visit the Jenkins relatives.

One hot January day, they attended the Rose Parade in Pasadena. Gail recalls how odd it felt for these Oregonians, wearing shorts in the middle of winter?

As a member of All Saints Episcopal Church, Darek served in many ways. He volunteered and trained others to serve as lay readers and eucharistic ministers who visited the homebound.

As junior warden, he was the one to receive phone calls at 5 a.m. informing him that the security alarm had been activated. He'd grab his tool bag and head over to the church to board up a broken window as a temporary measure until he could get to the hardware store for the necessary supplies to repair it.

In autumn, Darek took many pickup loads of leaves and sticks to McFarlane's to be recycled. Darek did many repairs in and around the church which required woodworking or measuring skills.

Once there was a new rector, who wanted to decorate her office walls with pictures. Darek carefully measured and placed them beautifully and firmly so that they would never fall off the wall. The rector was very pleased and appreciative.

Darek loved spending time in his 27-by-35-foot shop where he created beautiful and useful items of wood and metal for his home or for other people. There was no wood project that Darek couldn't tackle.

But his favorite pastime was cooking. Besides his family being recipients of his culinary delights many international students also received the gift of hospitality which included wonderful meals at the Jenkins' homestead.

During my career as a journalist. I spend some time as an obituary writer. Before writing an obituary I would interview people. What I tried to find out was, what did the deceased love? What love was present in their life? Did they find their passion? Were they able to express it gloriously? That is my measure of a person.

With Darek, there was no shortage of love stories. of parents, of siblings, of

family and friends. Love of life. Love for God. His was a life of knowing love. Of giving it and having it, and by that standard, making everyone around him, a better person for having met him.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life with Reception

FEB 2. 11:00 AM (PT)

All Saints Episcopal Church
4033 SE Woodstock BLVD
Portland, OR 97202

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Tribute Wall

PA

“ 3 files added to the album Memories



pacificbreezz - February 14 at 05:56 PM

CA

“ *It's impossible to summerize 70 years of friendship especially when it was your first real friend at 7 years old, how could I have known that it would last all this time.*

That is the magic of life when bonds are made through honesty, truth, and kindness, traits that describe the essence of Darek the boy he was and the man, husband, father, and friend he became.

Is "A Good Man" enough to read on his stone, a more fitting tribute could not be made_

Chris Acoutin

Chris Acoutin - February 02 at 10:41 AM

“ We met Darek through Breezz and her involvement with FOCUS. They provided homestays to international students studying at Portland State University who wanted to live with an American family. Breezz eventually became the homestay coordinator for FOCUS. We first met Darek when some FOCUS staff, volunteers and their families rented a beach house at Seaside for a working retreat.

Darek tended towards the quiet side. Beach getaways were time to unwind from his work at Precision Castparts. Stormy days were no problem: more time to read a Louis L'Amour novel.

For our FOCUS working retreat, Breezz put together a short time of worship for Sunday morning. Everyone had a way to participate. Darek had some readings. I can still hear him reading. I didn't know it then, but the way he gave voice to the words really told me a lot about him. Deliberate but gentle, quiet but clear. Other words that come to mind when we think about Darek: knowledgeable, patient, respectful, thoughtful. A good conversation partner.

At that retreat, we also learned that Darek is quite the chef. Thankfully, it definitely was not the only time to enjoy his cooking! At one of our FOCUS Easter banquets, he cooked up some of the best lamb I have ever had.

We had many times with Darek and Breezz, enjoying a getaway at the coast. They would often bring their two granddaughters, Ruby and Emily, who were close in age to our two daughters. Breezz would be our retreat coordinator. Darek was always up for a scenic hike or walk on the beach, but he would savor every moment during which he could read with a glass of wine. Stormy days were no problem for him.

Darek and Breezz met many new students at the airport who were coming to study at PSU. Sometimes they were part of a large group pickup, with as many as twenty students. With the help of a few

male students, Darek loaded and secured the luggage in their extended cab pickup while Breezz welcomed the students and kept things moving.

Numerous times during the school year, Darek and Breezz hosted parties at their home, inviting students they had picked up at the airport or met at FOCUS events. Welcome parties, Christmas parties, even graduation parties. Darek prepared a tasty meal while Breezz kept the students involved in fun activities. In June 2021, they hosted a graduation ceremony for their international friends when COVID caused PSU to cancel theirs for the second year.

Breezz found a real gem when she met Darek. We are grateful that Darek was a part of our ministry and a part of our life. We will miss him.

Greg and Kathy Steward

Greg Steward - February 01 at 06:54 PM



“ *I will remember Darek for his servant's heart. He was generous with letting others borrow his pickup truck to help with furniture giveaways, he always made sure things were loaded properly and strapped. He and Breezz hosted the BBQ just before Fall Quarter, and he would grill for us even though he faced physical challenges.*

Joel Loh - January 18 at 11:05 PM