



Lawrence E. “Larry” O’Donnell

August 14, 1937 – August 6, 2026

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Lawrence E. “Larry” O’Donnell was born in Everett, WA, to Glenn and Cathern O’Donnell, grew up in Everett, attended Jefferson Elementary School and South Junior High, and graduated from Everett High School in 1955 as a commencement speaker, and remained a lifelong Everett High Seagull from first bell to last; and

WHEREAS, after a year at Everett Junior College (now Everett Community College) he transferred to Western Washington College of Education in Bellingham (now Western Washington University), where he served as senior class president and met Joyce Annette Pietila; and in 1959 they graduated, married, and came home to Everett to teach; and

WHEREAS, Larry later earned a master’s degree in education from the University of Oregon and devoted more than thirty years to Everett Public Schools as teacher, counselor, dean, vice principal, principal, and Director of Facilities and Planning, retiring in 1989; and

WHEREAS, the Everett High annex of the early 1960s had hidden the 1910 Beaux-Arts design of the main building, and Larry pressed until that addition was removed in 1995 so the original façade, lawn, and grand steps could be seen again, after which the school was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997; and

WHEREAS, in 2024 Everett High School named its library the Lawrence E. O’Donnell Everett High Library, and more than three hundred friends, former students, and colleagues filled the library, sang the school song, and marked a life given to learning; and

WHEREAS, Larry was one of Everett’s most trusted chroniclers, writing or co-writing the histories of so many of our area institutions, along with lecturing, writing articles, and answering questions from memory when others reached for a book; and

WHEREAS, his published work includes *Everett School District: The First 100 Years*; *City of Everett Past and Present*; *A History of the YMCA of Snohomish County*; *Soaring Seagulls: A History of Everett High School Athletics*; and, with his brother Jack, *Port of Everett: The Evolution of a Vibrant Everett Waterfront*; and *Snohomish County: An Illustrated History*; in addition to histories of our Rotary Club of Everett and the area Boy Scout council; and

WHEREAS, he was an Eagle Scout who later served as Scoutmaster, and spent more than thirty years as a trustee of the Gertrude Jackson Memorial Fund, congratulating scholarship recipients in his upbeat manner and urging them to work hard, stay involved, and stay in touch; and

WHEREAS, he took Everett with him on the road—driving Historic Route 66 with brother Jack in 1999 and the Lincoln Highway in 2005—and at home he kindled in others the will to shape this City, including the campaign that named Emma Yule Park for Everett’s first teacher, while leading the reunions and scholarship endowment of his Everett High Class of 1955; and

WHEREAS, his zest showed in marathons, including the New York City Marathon, and later in the Big Shots bicycle club, with which he rode on Mondays and Thursdays in all weather; and after a health scare that placed him in hospice for a time, he returned to the club on an e-bike; and

WHEREAS, he delighted in poker nights, Everett High football alumni gatherings, pancake breakfasts at Normanna Hall, family camping in the North Cascades, and the whimsical miniature Christmas village he called Larryville, which annually sprang to life in the living room of his historic home in which he lived for decades on Grand Avenue, across the street from his brother Jack; and

WHEREAS, Larry served the Rotary Club of Everett as President in the 2001–2002 Rotary year and for decades as Historian, preserving the Club’s record from its 1916 organization; and

WHEREAS, he lived Rotary’s motto, Service Above Self, as donor of a Club scholarship that bears his name, as first chairperson of Everett’s Historical Commission, as a neighbor who fought to preserve the neighborhood maple trees and to restore Forgotten Creek Trail in the Port Gardner ravine, and as a devoted member of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church; and

WHEREAS, Larry was a devoted husband to Joyce, who died in 2021; father of Jodi, Michael, and Douglas; brother to Jack; a grandfather and great-grandfather; and a dear companion to Loretta Hurd. His dignity, humor, and kindness earned him the respect, admiration, and affection of this Club, this City, and beyond; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rotary Club of Everett shall deliver a copy of this Resolution to Larry’s family, so that they may know the high esteem in which we hold him and the fondness we bear for his memory; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the Rotary Club of Everett stand and observe a moment of silence in honor of our departed friend Lawrence E. “Larry” O’Donnell.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I affix my hand this 8th day of September, 2026.

Robert Bavasi
Chair – Resolutions Committee
Rotary Club of Everett