**RODERICK COLER OBITUARY**

Roderick Seymour Coler  
December 9, 1924 - January 6, 2023  
Kennewick, Washington - The world lost a truly unique and remarkable man when Dr Roderick Seymour Coler left us after a brief illness on January 6th. Born in Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania on December 9th, 1924 to Carl and Irene Coler, Rod brought joy to his family and countless friends over nearly a century. To his devoted family it had seemed that our patriarch might live on forever; his sun-bright personality and cheerful enthusiasm for every aspect of life so undiminished by time. As a boy Rod happily roamed the forested hills of 1930's Pennsylvania, catching butterflies and calling to birds. His scouting mentors taught him an appreciation for the intricacies of nature and nurtured his boundless curiosity toward a lifelong passion for the naturalist's life. His insect collection was legendary and never stopped growing. When the war arrived, Rod served with the US Army Air Corps and was delighted to be stationed in Florida where the Everglades opened a whole new tropical ecosystem to explore. On friendly advice from a chance encounter during his college years at Cornell, Rod went on to pursue the study of medicine at New York Medical College. The lure of novel adventure in the West brought him to Portland for his Residency where he would meet his future wife, Thelma Cook. It was at the urging of Thelma to "go where you're needed" that they settled in 1958 Kennewick with Rod as the town's first Internal Medicine specialist. Rod's exceptional bedside manner was founded on a genuine respect for every person and a tireless capacity for kindness and friendship. After forty-eight years of a busy medical practice his four children and 9 grandchildren saw the good doctor finally retire in 2006 at the age of 82. He recruited many new doctors to the Tri- Cities and across all of those years it was his unconditional kindness to people from all walks of life that defined him. He would greet you as though you were his dearest friend, listen to your story with great interest, and then from a bottomless well of lived adventure he would spin stories of his own; richly embellished, and with just enough novelty to make them fresh to old friends. With such stories and anecdotes, he could mount any podium to deliver a hilarious impromptu toast. Rod would engage you in animated conversation by the fire late into the night and was always the last to bed. Rod attended Saint Paul's Episcopal church for 60 years. The Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society, Kennewick Rotary, East Benton County Historical Society, The Reach Museum, and Gem and Mineral Club all counted Rod as an ardent patron. Those of us who loved him dearly feel the world is greatly diminished by his passing. Yet we are also deeply grateful that our lives continue enriched for having shared the planet with this extraordinary human being.  
A service celebrating Rod's life will be held on Saturday, May 27th, at St Paul's Episcopal Church, 1609 W 10th St, Kennewick, from 2-4PM, with reception to follow.