

James W. Gallagher, Ph.D., Biography



**James Weldon Gallagher -
Class of 1946 - b.
February 24, 1928 d.
January 7, 2014** From the
EHS Yearbook: Football,
“E” Club: Vice President,
Track, Student Council.

MONMOUTH, Oregon - Dr.
James W. Gallagher, 85, of
Monmouth, Oregon died in
Dallas on January 7, 2014.
He was the oldest of four
children and was born to
Weldon Michael Gallagher
and Dorothy Lindgren

Gallagher in Elgin, Illinois on February 24, 1928.

Jim entered the Army Air Corps immediately following mid-year graduation from Elgin High School in January, 1946. After completing Air Corps Weather School, he was stationed in Fairbanks, AK as a Weather Observer. Following his discharge, he enrolled in Drake University in Des Moines, IA and later transferred to Illinois State Normal University (now Illinois State U.) where he completed the BS in Ed in 1951 and MS in Ed in 1952. He earned his Ph.D. in geography at the University of Illinois in Urbana in 1959.

During the summer of 1950, he enrolled in an 8,000 mile geography field trip from Illinois State through Western United States and Canada. More than one life-changing event occurred that summer: he began to recognize the power of field instruction for geography students which led to his outstanding record of leading his own geography field trips for over twenty five summers as a university professor; he became acquainted with a fellow student, Pat Reed, whom he married June 8, 1952, in Bloomington, Illinois; and he first saw the Willamette Valley where he decided he wanted to live sometime in the future. What he didn't know at the time was that Pat had decided the same thing. They and their three children, Mary, Sue and Dan, made that move nineteen years later.

Jim taught at Belleville, Illinois High School and Community College 1952-54; as a graduate assistant at the University of Illinois 1954-58; at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 1958-1969; and at Oregon College of Education (now Western OR U.) Monmouth, OR 1969 until his retirement in 1990.

In 1970, Jim became the first editor of THE GEOGRAPHICAL BULLETIN, a publication of Gamma Theta Upsilon, an international honorary geography fraternity. He served in this role for nearly a decade and was inspired by the journal's goal to provide opportunities for graduate and undergraduate geography students to find an avenue for publication of their work.

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Although Jim was a creative, dedicated teacher, he was heard to say, on more than one occasion, that if he had known how much he enjoyed the challenges of working with contract negotiations, arbitrations, and other union-related activities, he might have seriously considered a career in that field. One of his colleagues who was instrumental in organizing Oregon College of Education's faculty union wrote, "Jim's solid good sense and gift for camaraderie made him a superb collective bargaining leader for the fledgling union." The truth is that he did almost everything really well.

Jim was an Eagle Scout, a longtime member of First Congregational, UCC in Salem, American Association of Geographers, National Council of Geographic Education, Gamma Theta Upsilon, and, most important in his retirement years, Salem Golf Club.

He played golf five days a week when he was able, and on the days he didn't golf, he enjoyed gin rummy with his golf friends. He was a great story teller who also enjoyed bridge, Scrabble, and almost any board game. Music has always been an important part of his life, and the joys he received from it continued throughout his bout with dementia.

Most of all, though, he enjoyed his family. He was a loving father for Mary, Sue and Dan and welcomed their spouses and children as wonderful additions to our family.

Jim is survived by his wife, Patricia, daughter Mary Vaughn (Bill) of Rainier, OR; daughter Susan Gallagher (David Hill) of Spokane, WA; son Dan Gallagher (Jares) of Kanab, UT; granddaughter Elizabeth Vaughn of Portland, OR; grandson William Tyler Vaughn of Portland, OR; granddaughter Jamie Vaughn Tierney (Matt) of King City, OR; great granddaughters Kalli and Lyla of King City; sister Margaret French (Joseph) of State College, PA; and brother John Gallagher (Shirley) of Mesa, AZ. He was preceded in death by his parents and brother Michael Gallagher.

Over his more than 20 years at Western Oregon University, Professor James Gallagher (PhD., University of Illinois, 1959) made an outstanding contribution to Local 2278 (WOU Federation of Teachers) and to the union cause, in general. The James W. Gallagher Scholarship recognizes Gallagher's tireless efforts to protect workers' rights and freedoms, including serving on contract bargaining teams, holding office in the state federation, handling local grievances, and helping to organize colleagues at other academic institutions. The James W. Gallagher Scholarship is awarded to students who recognize and honor the historical and contemporary importance of labor unions.