

Villagers burst firecrackers and hold placards featuring U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris to celebrate her inauguration in Thulasendrapuram, the hometown of Harris' maternal grandfather, located south of Chennai, India, on Wednesday.

Aijaz Rahi/AP



Harris

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Her rise is historic in any context, another moment when a stubborn boundary falls away, expanding the idea of what's possible in American politics. But it's particularly meaningful because Harris is taking office at a moment when Americans are grappling over institutional racism and confronting a pandemic that has disproportionately devastated Black and brown communities.

Those close to Harris say she'll bring an important — and often missing — perspective to the debates on how to overcome the many hurdles facing the new administration.

"In many folks' lifetimes, we experienced a segregated United States," said Lateefah Simon, a civil rights advocate and longtime Harris friend and mentee. "You will now have a Black woman who will walk into the White House not as a guest but as a second in command of the free world."

A celebration halfway around the world

Harris — the child of immigrants, a stepmother of two and the wife of a Jewish man — "carries an intersectional story of so many Americans who are never seen and heard."

In India, residents of a tiny village surrounded by rice paddies flocked to a Hindu temple, setting off firecrackers and praying as they watched Harris take her oath of office. Groups of women in bright saris and men wearing white dhoti pants watched the inauguration live as reporters broadcast the villager's celebrations to millions of Indians. The villagers chanted "Long live Kamala Harris" while holding portraits of her and blasted off fireworks the moment she took the oath.

Her maternal grandfather was born in the village of Thulasendrapuram. Harris' late mother was also born in India, before moving to the U.S. to study at the University of California. She married a Jamaican man, and they named their daughter Kamala, a Sanskrit word for "lotus flower."

On Wednesday, her family joined her on stage as she took the oath and later during her procession to her new office building near the White House. She was led by her alma mater Howard University's marching band and walked while holding the hand of her grandniece and alongside her husband, stepchildren, sister, brother-in-law and nieces.

Harris, 56, moves into the vice presidency just four years after she first came to Washington as a senator from California, where she'd served as attorney general and as San Francisco's district attorney. She had expected to work with a White House run by Hillary Clinton, but President Donald Trump's victory quickly scrambled the nation's capital and set the stage for the rise of a new class of Democratic stars.

The inauguration activities included nods to her history-making rise and her personal story.

Harris used two Bibles to take the oath, one that belonged to Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the late civil rights icon whom Harris often cites as inspiration, and Regina Shelton, who helped raise Harris during her childhood in the San Francisco Bay Area.

After the ceremony, she and Emhoff escorted former Vice President Mike Pence and his wife, Karen Pence, out of the Capitol, a gesture that would normally be performed by the incoming and outgoing presidents, but Trump did not attend the inauguration. Harris, Pence and their spouses spoke for several minutes before the Pences departed.

Biden, in his inaugural address, reflected on the 1913 march for women's suffrage the day before President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration, during which some marchers were heckled and attacked.

"Today, we mark the swearing in of the first woman in American history elected to national office, Vice President Kamala Harris. Don't tell me things can't change," Biden said.

As vice president, Harris will expand the definition of who gets to hold power in American politics, said Martha S. Jones, a professor of history at

Johns Hopkins University and the author of "Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All."

People who want to understand Harris and connect with her will have to learn what it means to graduate from a historically Black college and university rather than an Ivy League school. They will have to understand Harris' traditions, like the Hindu celebration of Diwali, Jones said.

"Folks are going to have to adapt to her rather than her adapting to them," Jones said.

John E. Masterson

July 25, 1933 - Dec. 24, 2020

John Edgar Masterson of Bend, OR passed away after a short illness on December 24, 2020. John was born in Portland, OR on July 25, 1933 to Rubye (Hilyard) and Guy V. Masterson. He grew up in Southeast Portland until his family moved to Eugene in 1947. After graduating from University High School in Eugene, John earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Biology from the University of Oregon. A two-year stint in the U.S. Army followed his collegiate education. During his Army service in Denver, CO, John met Anne Willits through a mutual friend. They shared a love of the outdoors, skiing, and science, and were married on August 27, 1960. John convinced Anne to leave her nursing job in Colorado and move back to Oregon with him where he began his college teaching career. After their two boys were born in Eugene, John took on teaching opportunities in Vancouver, WA, Ames, IA and Anchorage, AK, earning a Ph.D. in genetics from Iowa State University along the way. In 1975, the always independent-minded Professor Masterson made a significant change in his and his family's lives by buying a farm in Yamhill County, OR. This big leap was a dream of his since childhood when he spent weekends on his aunt and uncle's farm outside of Portland in the 1940s. While getting the farm into economically sustainable shape, John commuted to the Portland area to work for the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry while Anne worked as a nurse at a clinic in McMinnville, OR. He then turned to farming full-time, which he dearly loved. He produced wheat, alfalfa, and later acquired 70 ewes, adding lambing season to the 365 day a year farming life. After the kids graduated from college and a decade of farm life, Anne and John moved to Sunriver, OR while still managing some land on the other side of the mountains. They enjoyed skiing, tennis, golf, entertaining friends, and hosting Sunriver Music Festival musicians. In 1998, they moved the short drive north to Bend, OR and spent winters in Tucson, AZ where they could continue to enjoy golf, tennis and views of the Santa Catalina Mountains from their home.

John had an intellectual curiosity that spanned a range of topics beyond genetics. On any given day you could see him reading about economics, literature classics, history, or environmental science. He could also be the prototypical absent-minded professor, which produced a lifetime of humor — some intended, some not so. John always charted his own very idiosyncratic course in life and valued critical thinking above all else. He could be a tough critic, but always toughest on himself.

John is survived by his two sons, Guy McGregor and Kevin Ward (Toni), his grandson Jackson Ward, and several nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister Gyla Murdock and his wife of 55 years, Anne. Contributions in John's honor can be made to the Union of Concerned Scientists (www.ucsusa.org) or the Sunriver Music Festival (www.sunrivermusic.org).



Gerald Bruce (Jerry) Seed

January 4, 1933 - January 15, 2021

Gerald Bruce Seed, known to everyone as "Jerry", beloved father, grandfather, uncle and friend, passed away this past week in Bend due to complications from a recent stroke.

Jerry was born in a sharecropper farm house in rural Hayes County, Nebraska, the 4th of 5 boys to Walter and Miranda Seed. Growing up during the great depression in the dust bowl area of Southwestern Nebraska meant a lot of hard work, something that Jerry would never shy away from for the rest of his life. Regarding his childhood Jerry would often remark, "We were too broke to know it and too dumb to care." Farm life helped Jerry develop a quick wit and love of jokes from an early age.



At age 10, the family relocated to Missouri, then soon made a journey to St. Paul, Oregon, back to Missouri, and then finally settled in Silverton, Oregon where Jerry graduated from high school at age 16. It was at this age that Jerry owned his first business, buying the lease on the local Flying A service station. He would later hold jobs driving log trucks, building part of Oregon Highway 22 near Sublimity, and then being drafted into the U.S. Army.

Jerry served as a mess sergeant in the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington during the Korean Conflict. It was here that he honed his skill of cooking for large numbers of people in any situation, something he would do when he went out fishing, hunting and for many family reunions later in life.

After his service, Jerry returned to Silverton to help care for his ailing father. He was working in a Salem department store selling shoes when he met his wife of over 55 years, Marilyn. The two were married in 1956 and relocated to Springfield where Jerry worked for Alexander's Department Store. Jerry would later rise to manage stores for Alexander's in Newport and Florence, Oregon.

In 1963, Jerry was recruited by the Northern Commercial Company and moved to Fairbanks, Alaska as a buyer for women's and children's clothing. It was there that Jerry and Marilyn welcomed their first child, James Walter, who tragically only lived for two days.

Jerry was soon relocated to Anchorage where he continued as the head buyer for Northern Commercial (NC), buying everything for the women's department except shoes. It was on March 27, 1964, just after Jerry had restocked the cosmetic counter that the 9.0 Great Alaska Earthquake occurred. One of the few management level employees left with the store, Jerry made sure everyone was safe and then, answering a desperate call for any light source for the local hospital, walked 8 blocks by himself through rubble and in the dark to deliver all of the flashlights and lanterns he could carry. The next day he rallied the employees to transfer needed goods to a nearby vacant building and reopened the NC Department Store for business. This effort would change the minds of NC management, who had decided to close the Anchorage department store, and would later rebuild. The building is now the Anchorage Nordstrom.

Jerry left NC in 1966 and became Vice President of Nerland's Furniture. It was this 10-year period with the largest furniture and decorating company in the state that Jerry learned the furniture and mattress trade.

While in Anchorage, Jerry and Marilyn adopted three children, son Brian in 1966 and twin daughters Jodi and Jolene in 1968.

Wanting to own his own business and return to Oregon, Jerry and Marilyn purchased Ostrander's Country Furniture in Bend and relocated their family from Anchorage in 1976. Jerry would soon change the name of the business to Jerry's Home Furnishings and eventually open stores under this name in Madras and Sunnyside, Washington. Returning to his department store roots, he opened Kid's Stuff, a children's clothing store, inside the furniture store which continued into the early 1980s. Jerry would also open Central Oregon Liquidators in Prineville and co-own Wall Street Interiors in Bend.

A member of the Downtowner's, Jerry could often be seen putting up holiday decorations on the light posts in Downtown Bend and participating in "Zany Days", a fun retail festival held downtown every year.

Jerry was never one to pass up an opportunity and, in 1987, he bought an old machine that sewed mattresses together and opened The Mattress Factory. The rest, as they say, is local retail history. The Mattress Factory soon outgrew every location until settling on Highway 20 East of Pilot Butte. For over 20 years, The Mattress Factory was a fixture of the east Bend retail district. The largest mattress store in town and the only manufacturer in the region. The Mattress Factory soon became a household name, especially when Jerry's mother appeared on local television saying to everyone that she inspired him to start the store by telling him to "make his bed". "Can we make your bed today?" became the store's catchphrase.

Jerry could often be seen in his Mattress Factory shirt, Costco jeans and sneakers nearly every day - no matter what the occasion. From delivering mattresses while listening to country music, at his desk at the store, or helping a customer, Jerry was never shy about sharing his latest joke - with his characteristic Nebraska farm boy charm. Spending a day in a truck driving between his stores in Bend and Moxee, Washington would be one of the high points of his week.

Jerry loved Bend and was always ready to help those in need. He served as President of Central Oregon Hospice in the organization's early years and would provide a hospital bed free of charge for patients so they could remain in their homes. He enjoyed driving local veterans to Portland for medical care in the VA van monthly and over his lifetime gave gallons of blood through the local Red Cross. In his later years he enjoyed judging local Boy Scout cooking competitions. Jerry was always there to help if local residents were displaced to make sure they had a bed to sleep in. Even though he was very much engaged in helping the community, Jerry never sought recognition for any of his community support.

Jerry was also devoted to his family, always ready to help when needed even if it was just by being present. His many nieces and nephews, and even more friends, will remember his kindness and fun loving nature which was always no more than a phone call away.

Jerry was preceded in death by his parents, his four brothers, his wife Marilyn and their son James Walter. He is survived by his son Brian and daughter Jodi, both of Bend, daughter Jolene of Wilson, Wyoming, grandchildren Jerri, Miranda, Riley, Sean-Michael, James and Mark, two great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial viewing will be held at Niswonger-Reynolds Chapel in Bend on Friday, January 22, 2021 from 1 until 5 PM. A formal memorial service will be held at a later date.

Memorial contributions in Jerry's name may be made to Partner's In Care - Bend, 2075 NE Wyatt Court, Bend, Oregon 97701, Crater Lake Council of Boy Scouts of America, 61383 S. Highway 97 Ste. F, Bend, Oregon 97702 and/or donate a pint of blood to your local Red Cross.