



City of Hermiston/Contributed Photo, File

John Perkins as Santa with children at the Hermiston Family Aquatic Center pool in July 2021.

Perkins

Continued from A1
100 degrees.

He said he was cooler in his Santa suit than without it?

John Richard Perkins was born Sept. 25, 1951, in Pendleton. He died from pancreatic cancer July 27, 2022, at his home in Umatilla.

He grew up with an absent father and an abusive brother, he said in a 2021 interview, and his family suffered poverty. He explained, when he turned 14, his mother no longer qualified for government assistance.

Perkins quit school in the 10th grade to support his mother. He accepted agricultural work, then he was a truck driver. He joined the U.S. Navy

in 1970, serving three tours in Vietnam on USS Midway before his honorable discharge in 1976.

His service was difficult, he said, as exposure to Agent Orange in the Vietnam War eventually caused him to lose feeling in his legs. His service also left him with post-traumatic stress disorder, which continued to affect him. Still, he described himself as a happy, optimistic person who tried to share his positivity with others.

He wed Jeanne R. Otis at Pendleton in 1970. He credited his wife with encouraging his pleasant outlook. From the beginning of their relationship, he said, she was a steady influence.

Perkins worked as an electrician for Union Pacific Railroad

at Hinkle from 1976 to 1986, then as an electrical supervisor for Ash Grove Cement in Durkee. He retired in 1998, Burns Mortuary of Hermiston reported.

Perkins served as mayor of Stanfield from 1980 to 1984 and as Local International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers No. 112 president from 1984 to 1986. A member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he described himself as a religious man who believed in community. He also worked as a volunteer firefighter and was active in Milton Lodge No. 96 of the Masons and Shriners and rode motorcycle escort in the Oregon Food Bank's caravan.

He was a member of Oregon Motorcycle Riders Association

and the Veterans and Friends of Oregon motorcycle clubs, organizing poker runs and raising money for Shriners Hospital. Perkins loved riding motorcycles, camping, fishing, crabbing, boating and photography.

He obtained his high school diploma and walked in cap and gown with the Hermiston High School Class of 2010, he said.

He served as Santa for 13 years, 2008-21, throughout Umatilla County, the Tri-Cities and Walla Walla.

Perkins picked up the mantle of Santa to honor his father-in-law, Roy Otis, who had been Santa but died. His wife, Jeanne Perkins, made him the costume he still wore. It is a suit made with love, he said.

Other trademarks of the role

were his prior to becoming Santa. The white hairs, he said, started coming in while he was a high school student, and the beard was fully flushed out before he ever put on the Santa outfit.

Playing Santa through the years, he has toured the region, appearing in and around Hermiston, even going to Walla Walla. The role crept into his daily life, he said, as children recognize him as Santa year-round.

He first noticed something wrong in March 2021, when he saw a bruise on his belly, he said. It grew, so he saw a doctor. After tests, Perkins learned he had stage four pancreatic cancer, he said. Chemo weakened him, he admitted.

"I made a commitment to the city of Hermiston, and I will do everything I can," he said before the tree lighting. "I would be happy if I can do this."

Perkins was in the midst of stage four pancreatic cancer on Dec. 2 when lived up to his commitment and brought Santa Claus to Hermiston's Christmas tree lighting ceremony.

Perkins is survived by his wife of 51 years, a daughter and son, three grandchildren, a sister and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents, stepfather and brother.

His funeral service was scheduled for Aug. 4, at 10 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 850 S.W. 11 St., Hermiston.

Coffee Break!



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11				12				14	
15				16				17	
18				19				21	
22				23				24	
25	26	27	28	29					
30								31	
32								33	34
35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42		
43								44	
45	46	47							
48								50	51
52								53	54
55								56	57
58								59	60
61								62	63
64									

- CLUES ACROSS**
- Breezed through
 - Time units (abbr.)
 - Pigeon's murmur
 - Moves aside in fright
 - Partner to "ahh"
 - Taxis
 - Monetary units of Turkey
 - Returned material authorization (abbr.)
 - Prolific Italian opera composer
 - Restaurants
 - One's grandmother
 - Ancient Greek City
 - Italian mountain ranges
 - Data
 - Acted in an obedient way
 - Autonomic nervous system
 - Not on the up-and-up
 - Mock lightly
 - Mimic
 - Built
 - A neighborhood
 - Inflammation of the kidneys
 - Semitic fertility god
 - Temporary name of Seaborgium
 - Wise people
 - Tear down
 - ...-fi (slang)
 - Diamond weight
 - Frosted
 - Predecessor to EU

- Makes changes to
- Some are secret
- Tooth caregiver
- Old English poet
- Sign language
- In style
- Norwegian river
- People with impaired hearing
- Large stinging paper wasp
- Bucharest is its capital
- River in Ireland
- Type of TV
- Double-reed instruments
- Spanish motorcycle manufacturer
- Midway between south and southeast
- French commune
- Alike
- A bachelor's apartment
- Foot part between the ball and ankle
- Belonging to a thing
- Japanese classical theater
- Supervises flying
- Not even
- Capital of Saudi Arabia
- Electronic countermeasure
- Consumed
- American politician (abbr.)
- Sun up in New York
- Casually looked through
- Revealed the presence of
- Peyton's little brother
- Diana, singer
- Study of moral values and rules
- Civil Rights group
- Makes less severe
- Made an emotional appeal
- Vivacity of style
- One who is highly skilled
- Gets around in pursuit of pleasure
- Famed guitarist Clapton

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to golf.

LABL

SUDOKU

6					8
		6			5
			1	2	
	8		7		1
5	7		2		
3					4
4			1		
8	3		4		9
6	5		2	7	3

Level: Intermediate

Guess Who?

I am an actor born in Australia on August 11, 1983. I started my career on an Australian soap opera. While I was cast in various films, my big break came playing the god of thunder in a Marvel film series.

CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to golf. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 5 = C)

A. 4 18 18
Clue: Cleared area on golf course

B. 5 23 20 22 10
Clue: Used in golf play

C. 5 1 20 2 10 18
Clue: Where to play golf

D. 26 25 21 17 16 5 25 3
Clue: Average number of strokes over par

TEE OFF WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

AIMING
ALIGNMENT
APPROACH
ATTACK
BACKSWING
BALANCE
BALATA
BIRDIE
BLOCK
BOBBING
BOGEY
BUNKER
CADDIE
CARRY
CHIP
CONNECTION
DIVOT
DRIVER
EAGLE
GRIP
PUTT
ROTATION
SHAFT
SWING

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