

## **2023 Memorial Grove Booklet**

### **Charles Joseph (Chuck) Alluisi**



**Charles Joseph (Chuck) Alluisi** passed away Sept. 16, 2023. He was born July 1, 1949, in San Mateo, CA to Lester and Viola Alluisi and moved to Oregon as a child. He graduated from Oregon State University with a degree in forestry and spent three years in the Army as an Airborne Sensor Specialist.

Chuck worked in Forest Survey in Alaska in 1971 and was on the Mt. Hood in 1974. He married Denise Meyer in 1978. From 1976-1993, he was on the Siskiyou N. F. and then moved to Colorado in fire management on the Arapaho-Roosevelt NF. He retired in Dec. 2004. He continued to fight fire with on-call contracts. He loved hiking, spending time with family, working on home projects, and gardening. His real passion was helping others in disaster relief, ministry projects, and foster care. Chuck and Denise moved to Buena Vista in 2019 to be close to family.

Chuck is survived by his wife Denise; sons Nathaniel and Michael and their families including eight grandchildren; siblings Sharon, Les, and Beth, their families; and numerous relatives in Washington, Utah, and Oregon.

### **Linda Austin**



**Linda Austin** passed away on August 25, 2023. She was born on October 26, 1964, in Las Vegas, NV. Linda grew up in Nevada, Oregon, California, and Colorado. She graduated from Ft. Lewis College with a degree in Geology. She was an incredible outdoors woman, enjoyed traveling, crafts, cooking, church, and several community organizations.

Her federal career started and ended on the Arapaho-Roosevelt NF and Pawnee NG, but she also worked with the National Park Service mainly in Rocky Mountain NP and the Gunnison NF principally in fire positions, including fire crew, squad boss, engine crew, hot shot crew, and engine captain. She hiked almost every trail, ridgeline, peaks, mountains, and cross-country zone in the Rocky Mountain Park. She retired in Oct. 2022.

She will be missed deeply by her many friends for her beautiful/contagious smile, kind/loving presence, loving generosity and incredible sense of humor. Linda is survived by her father, James Hagihara; siblings, Carol and Diane and their families; and other family across the country and in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

## Linda Carol Drake Bell



**Linda Carol Drake Bell** passed away March 15, 2023. She was born July 14, 1948, in La Junta to Pettis and Norma Rector. After high school she went on to pursue her college degree in business as a single mother at the University of Southern Colorado. She retired after many years of faithful service on the Pike San Isabel Cimarron Comanche where she worked in Human Resources. One thing she enjoyed the most was going on fire assignments and helping the firefighters and other personnel.

Linda enjoyed going to places near and far with her husband, sister, and children. She loved her family and lived vicariously through all their adventures and successes. Raising her son and seeing him become a husband and father was her pride and joy. Linda thought being a grandma was the best thing ever and the second was being a great aunt.

She leaves behind her husband, Spencer; son Richard Jensen; sister Donna; brother Jim; and all their families, including granddaughter Makenzie and grandson Mason; and bonus children Douglas, Scott, Christopher, Penni, and grandchildren Autumn, Kayla, Ben, Noah, and Cameron.

## Sherrel Ann Clark



**Sherrel Ann Clark** passed away on November 9, 2023. She was born on December 6, 1946, in Norfolk, Nebraska to Pauline and Wilfred Tabler. Sherry grew up in Hot Springs, South Dakota where she had three children, Curt, Karie, and Kim. In the early 70's, she moved her family to Chadron, Nebraska where she could be closer to her mother, Pauline Jung.

In 1980, Sherry began working for Nebraska N. F. as a Purchasing Agent. She retired in 2009 and in 2010, she and her husband, Roland, moved to Arizona so Sherry could be closer to her two daughters, Karie and Kim. Sherry's hobbies included spoiling her two dogs, golfing, gardening, crafting, and watching the Denver Broncos! She was a loving mother and grandmother and was so very proud of all her family's accomplishments!

Sherry is survived by her son Curt; daughter-in-law Traci; daughters, Karie, Kim, Belinda; and son-in-law James. She is also survived by seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren and brother, John Jung in New Mexico.

## Jackie Lee Deeds



**Jackie Lee Deeds** passed away September 30, 2023. Jackie and his twin brother Jimmie were born in Seattle, WA, February 14, 1944. His father was in the military and the family had many moves before settling in Missoula when the boys were in high school. This is where Jack found his calling in fire and after one year on a fire crew, he joined the Missoula Smokejumpers in 1963 and held close the lifelong friendships with his band of brothers.

Jack received a degree from Montana State University and became an architect with the Forest Service. His career eventually took him to Denver, Colorado. Jack met the love of his life Peggy, and they were married in 1999. They enjoyed traveling, skiing, and working for the Broncos! Jack and Peggy treasured 24 wonderful years together.

Jack is survived by his wife Peggy; stepson Tom Steffes; brother Larry; sister Kay; and his twin brother Jimmie. His goddaughter Kira and her family held a special place in his heart. Jack loved his nieces and nephews and their families, he especially enjoyed sharing his stories with them.

## Judy Dexter



**Judy Dexter** passed away on July 13, 2023. She was born in Rushville, Nebraska in 1953 to Lloyd and Eunice Dexter. She had older sisters Janice and Ilene and brother Gerald.

Judy started work for FS in Wenatchee, WA as a copy machine operator in 1972 and moved to Denver in 1974. She first worked in Building 86 at the Federal Center, then the office on Quail, and then onto the Simms St. office. Over the course of her time in the Regional Office she worked for seven different Regional Foresters.

Judy was a Rocky Mountaineer member. She is survived by her sisters Jan and Ilene and brother Gary.

## **Richard A. Dieckman**



**Richard A. Dieckman** passed away on July 2, 2023. He was born in 1942 in New York in the Bronx to William and Irma Dieckman. He graduated from Colorado State University and proudly served his country in the Army in Korea. He began his long forty-year FS career on the Roosevelt N. F. and retired from the Regional Office.

After his retirement, his volunteer work teaching reading and math was a great source of pride to him. But most of all, Dick will be remembered for his gentle spirit, quiet kindness, wry sense of humor, and his love of the outdoors. He enjoyed hiking, kayaking, camping, and world-wide traveling. He had amazing woodworking skills and used those skills in handcrafting beautiful guitars and

kayaks. Dick was a Rocky Mountaineer member.

Richard is survived by his sister Linda Kantor (Dennis), nieces, great nieces and nephew, his cousins, and his loyal and caring friends, including Brian Morales and Don and Debbie Virgovic in Bow, WA.

## **James P. (Jim) Dunn**



**James P. (Jim) Dunn** passed away on June 16, 2023. He was born in Dell Rapids, SD, on Aug. 31, 1950, to Carmen and Lorraine Dunn. At the age of 5, the family moved to Canon City, CO. After high school, he received bachelor's and master's in forestry at CSU. He worked for the FS for 40 years and in fire season he worked in aviation management.

He married his childhood sweetheart, Debbie McCormick, in 1971 and they had one daughter Stacey. Jim loved being involved with his family's activities, games, meets, concerts, plays, and awards ceremonies. In 2009 he received the annual Lloyd McMillan Memorial Award. Jim officiated high school basketball and football for more than 35 years and coached the Montrose High School baseball teams for five seasons. He used overcoming diabetes in his own life to inspire hundreds of kids to be active in local athletics with the motto of "if I can, you can too." In 2015 he was inducted into the Colorado High School Association of Officials.

He is survived by his wife Debbie of Montrose; his daughter Stacey (Scott) and grandchildren, Alexis-Jaymes, Cooper, and Briar.



## **Edward R. Duran**

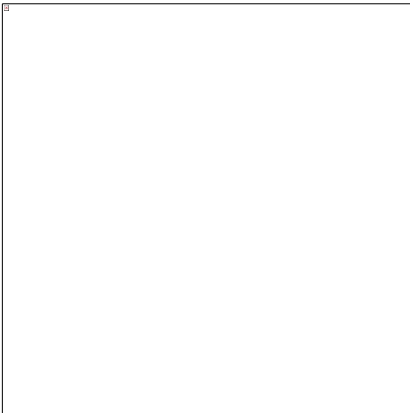


**Edward R. Duran** passed away on June 21, 2023, in Denver. Edward was born in Denver to Abraham and Rose Duran on August 31, 1938. He went to West High School in Denver. Edward was a hardworking man who mastered and worked in many fields and industries.

Ed worked as a candy maker for many years, where he developed a love and passion for the craft. He built a career with the Forest Service as a cartographer and photography developer, making maps and processing film for the needs of the Forest Service for 30 years. Ed had an avid love for the outdoors. He loved to hunt, fish and travel to all corners of the nation with his family and friends. Ed was a man of the people, always willing to lend a helping hand and help those in need. His love and compassion for helping others surpassed his own needs.

Edward is survived by his wife of sixty-five years, Marianita; his grandchildren, Adam, Sara, Alicia, Anthony, and Alexis and their families, including great-grandchildren Lilli, Payton, Gage, Hunter, Leo, and Adaline.

## **Dennis John Eckardt**



**Dennis John Eckardt** died June 8, 2023. He was born July 18, 1951, in Denver to Adam and Virginia Eckardt. He graduated from Colorado State in outdoor recreation and forestry and worked on the Bighorn Hotshot Crew. He met Ann and they were married in 1975.

He was on a trail crew in Colorado, a Wilderness Ranger on the Popo Agie Wilderness, on the Bighorn at Greybull, on to Powell, then to the Pike, and back to Wyoming in time for the '88 Yellowstone fires. He became District Ranger at Lovell which was his dream assignment. His last move was as a staff officer in Cody. The work in the field was wonderful; the litigation in court was not. Dennis retired in 2007.

In retirement he continued to hunt, fish, golf, and woodworking, but loved his family more than anything else. Ann was his “best friend,” and the kids were his hunting and fishing companions, the best reason to travel, and his reason to fight cancer. His grandchildren gave him laughter, joy, and love.

Dennis is survived by his wife Ann of 47 years; daughters Karen and Laura and sons Jerry and Dan and their families, including fourteen grandchildren.

## **Floyd Charles Fowler**



**Floyd Charles Fowler** passed away on August 31, 2023, in Spearfish, SD. Floyd was born July 11, 1932, in Michigan to Silas & Ida Fowler. After high school Floyd joined the Army in 1952 and married Rebecca Navarro in 1953. After leaving the Army in 1955 he was off to forestry college where he graduated from Michigan State in 1959.

He started his FS career in Montana on the Coeur d' Alene, Flathead, Lolo, and then on to Black Hills N. F. at Deadwood. Floyd received a National Award for introducing cable yarding systems in the Forest. Most of his positions were in timber management and he retired in 1994 with 35 years of service. Floyd cherished his family, which always came first. The Fowler Family was chosen for the "Family of Year" for the State of South Dakota

in the Knights of Columbus in 2004. He had numerous hobbies and interests, including sports, biking, hunting, fishing, and woodworking.

He is survived by brother, Samuel; children: Larry, Brian, Yvonne Plane, Eric, Angela Hebbert, and their families including grandchildren Jessica, Rachel, Brandon, Mandy, Jarrett, Zachary, Lauren, Joshua, and four great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

## **Sharon L. Green**



**Sharon L. Green** passed away at her home in New Castle on September 21, 2023. Sharon was born on September 11, 1946. She followed her husband's job to Glenwood Springs in 1971. She was a wonderful wife of 57 years and a loving mother and grandmother. She retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 2001.

She enjoyed traveling with her husband, having fond memories of Hawaii and the Oregon coast. She was also an avid reader, gardener, had an incredible talent for sewing and quilting and loved swimming laps at the Glenwood Hot Springs Pool.

She is survived by her loving husband Larry, daughters Tracie Green and Brooke Crofts and their families. She was very proud of her granddaughters Stella and Norah. Sharon wished that each of us would take the time to hug and embrace our family and loved ones every day.

## **Roderick W. (Rod) Hancock**



**Roderick Walter Hancock** passed away on April 19, 2023, in Sundance, WY. Rod was born on June 28, 1937, to Walter and Ruth Hancock in Twin Bridges, MT, and graduated from high school there in 1955. In 1959, Rod married Mary Kaatz. He went into the Army in 1961 and served until 1963. Following his military service Rod and Mary resided in Dillon, MT where their three daughters were born. He was an Engineering Technician there and in 1972 he transferred to Spearfish, SD on the Black Hills N. F. where Rod worked with the North Engineering Zone until retiring in 1984. Retirement was not for Rod, so he went to work for Lawrence County for another 15 years and retired completely and decided it was time to move to Pine Haven.

Rod is survived by his wife, Mary of Sundance; two daughters, Christi Haggberg and Cheryl Wolff and their families, including eight grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

## **Bonita L. Harris**

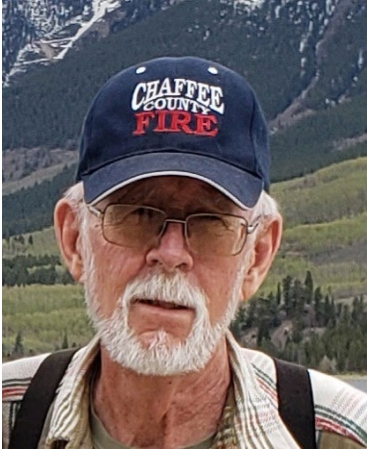


**Bonita L. Harris** passed away December 3, 2023, in Custer, SD. Bonita was born to Otto and Lois Prokop on June 13, 1933, and lived in a small tarpaper shack on the prairies near Kadoka, SD. Days were full with hauling water in a wagon from the river miles away, haying, caring for stock, and the everyday life of living in the depression-era 30's. She worked for her room and board while attending Kadoka High School. After high school she worked and had a dream to one day own a ranch. She married Clair Harris in 1955 and in 1968 they were able to buy a ranch near Custer. She started with the Forest Service answering phones and became a financial officer in the Black Hills. N. F.

Bonita kept busy in the community, including 4-H, horseshoe tournaments, Good Sams, and when they spent winters in Arizona was able to pursue her love of music and joined the band and played guitar, harmonica, mandolin, sang, and even added the fiddle to her repertoire.

Bonita loved her family, her community, her cows, her music, her multitude of interests and her many friends. She is survived by her daughters Jane and Sheri and their families, including grandchildren and great grandchildren.

## **Ronald Lee Hassell**



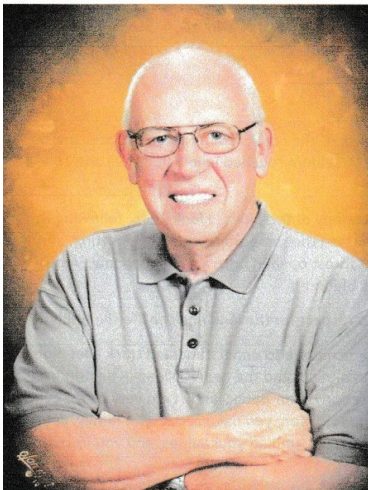
**Ronald Lee Hassell** passed away on June 23, 2023. He was born to Ralph and Helen Hassell on June 3, 1947, in Grand Junction. A Salida graduate with ties to the Taylor Park area, he married Judy Francisco in 1970 and settled in Buena Vista.

Ron was a family man with a passion for the outdoors, love for his community and a heart for service. He was a founding member of the volunteer Chaffee County Fire Protection District serving over 45 years, and a Charter member of the Chaffee County Sheriff's Patrol/ Search & Rescue. Ron spent his working years as a police officer, local business owner and Forester for the USFS, where he fought and commanded numerous national wildland fires across the country.

Ron was a man of few words, a legend in snowmobiling, but a mentor to many friends and family in forestry, firefighting, and the outdoors,

Ron led with respect and authenticity and cherished his family above all else. Ron is survived by his wife Judy Hassell; daughters Jacquelyn Schirmer and Renee Nyhus and their families including grandchildren Adam, Kristin, Kylee, Jaidee, Luka, and Renya.

## **Gerald G. (Gary) Heath**



**Gerald G. (Gary) Heath**, passed away on March 15, 2023. Gary was born to George and Blanche Heath and grew up in Libby, MT. Gary went to Montana State University and graduated in Civil Engineering in 1960 and married Pat Kamhoot in July 1960.

He worked for the Forest Service on seven national forests across the northwest including the Flathead, Idaho Panhandle, Gallatin, Colville, Mount Hood, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF before concluded his career as Forest Supervisor of the Medicine Bow in Wyoming. Pat and Gary retired to Grand Junction, CO where he served as the Western Colorado Contractor's Association Director.

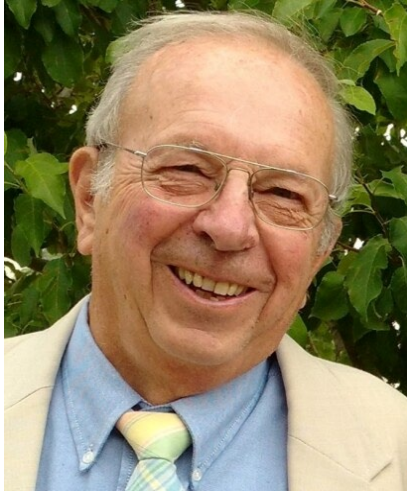
He was a member of the Lion's and Elks Club and enjoyed the outdoors, including coaching baseball, skiing, hiking, and hunting.

He was a kind, light-hearted person who loved his wife, children, grandchildren, extended family, and friends. He loved spending time at his log cabin in Montana that he and his father built when he was a young man.

His wife Pat passed away shortly after Gary's death on June 25, 2023. They are survived by son Corey and daughter Tracy and their families, including four grandchildren.



## **David R. W. Hoefler**



**David R. W. Hoefler** passed away on October 26, 2023. He was born on September 8, 1937, and was the middle child of five children born to Reverend Elmer and Thekla Hoefler in Rochester, NY. His childhood included many family camping trips which influenced his love of the outdoors and led him to pursue a career in forestry at Colorado State University where he met his wife, Nancy, and they were married in 1960.

David's 35-year career with the Forest Service began in 1959 on the San Juan, then the White River, and Routt. After receiving his master's at Michigan State, he worked on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in Idaho, and then moved to the Regional Office in Odgen. In retirement David and Nancy moved back to Grand Junction. He was a mountaineer, hiker,

skier, rafter, Dutch oven cook, wood worker, cyclist, and celebrated his German heritage by wearing lederhosen.

David's death came only a few weeks after losing Nancy. David is survived by two brothers, Jon and Philip; his children Stephen, Laura Conant, and Kristen Seiff and their families, including grandchildren Rachel, Abbey, and Ben.

## **Gloria Jean Holley**



**Gloria Jean Holley** passed away on July 9, 2023. Gloria was born in Mesa, AZ on October 28, 1943, to Carter and Myrtle Matthews. In 1964, she married Dennis Holley and in 1967 they moved to Montrose. Gloria began her career with the Forest Service in 1967 and gave 30 years of service before retiring in 1997.

She made the transition to Wildland Fire Dispatching and spent 20+ years in the dispatch community. Along with her strong faith that shined wherever she went, her name in the fire community is also spoken in reverence. She traveled all over the country working fires or for FEMA.

Anyone who met her remembers the first time they met or worked with her and the impact she had on them. She was inclusive, happy, friendly, loving, caring regardless of how anyone differed from her. Anyone who met or worked with her has been "Gloria-fied".

She is survived by her daughters Jill Cox and Dawn Barlow and their families, including her beloved grandchildren Braunsen, Skylar, Tessa, Bethany, Mackenzie, Chantz, Gannon, Wiley and ten great grandchildren.

## **Linda Kay Lanham**



**Linda Kay Lanham** died on May 14, 2023. She was born on May 25, 1957, in San Francisco, CA to John and Peggy Lanham. She was raised in Grand Junction, CO where her father was a science teacher. After high school she went to the Colorado School of Mines, graduating with a degree in Mining Engineering in 1980. After receiving her degree, she became one of the first women engineers in the agency working on the Nezperce and Lolo, and eventually to Delta on the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison. Responsibilities in her positions included road management, bridge design, and mine tailing remediation. Linda was an officer in the Society of Women Engineers while in college and supported the organization her whole career. Linda was an ardent supporter of women in engineering and technical careers. She retired after 40 years of service.

Her interests included tennis, coaching girls' softball, and watching Colorado Mesa University sports with her father in Grand Junction. She was a regular fan of the Juco Junior College Championship baseball tournament.

She is survived by one brother, Greg, and four nieces and nephews and their children.

## **Paul Glenn Lans**



**Paul Glenn Lans** of Chadron, NE passed away on October 31, 2023. Paul was born February 20, 1962, in Alma, Nebraska to Roland and Irene Lans. After high school he attained a bachelor's degree in engineering at the University of Nebraska.

Paul began his career with the Bureau of Reclamation in Grand Junction from 1982-2004 before moving to the Forest Service on the Toiyabe N. F. There he met Ericka Bartlett and they moved to Chadron, Nebraska, continuing both their careers with the Forest Service. Paul was a licensed Civil Engineer, in both Colorado and Nebraska and worked until his retirement in 2018, with over 36 years of Federal Government Service.

Paul and Erika had two boys, Gunnar and Aksel. Paul was previously married to Christella Stucker, from that marriage Paul had two boys, Logan and Corey. Paul loved being outdoors, biking hiking, riding motorcycles, riding horses, and he enjoyed music.

Paul is survived by his wife Ericka; sons Gunnar, Aksel, Logan and Corey; his brother Bruce; sister Shirley; and sister-in-law Trudy Lans; and all their families.

## **Mark Douglas Lauer**



**Mark Douglas Lauer** passed away, May 21, 2023, in Cortez, Colorado. He was born on June 18, 1957, to Willard and Audrey Lauer. After high school, Mark attended Concordia College and Emporia State University in Kansas. He moved to Dolores, CO to work for the Forest Service as a wildlife biologist technician. His passion was working in fire and after years in the fire organization he became the San Juan Fire Management Officer.

Mark loved the outdoors, fishing, hunting, hiking, skiing and being in the mountains were his passions. After retirement from the Forest Service, Mark saw the need for a good restaurant in Dolores where he leased and ran the Riverside Grill. He provided employment for many and offered a social gathering spot for friends and visitors to Dolores.

Family and close friends knew the battle Mark was waging with a degenerative spine disorder that was stealing his mobility to hunt and hike but he continued to remain positive. Mark is survived by his father, Willard; brothers, Michael, William; sister Marcia Hartford; and nephews, William, Joseph, James, Robert, Nieces; Catherine, Jessica, and Megan.

## **Barbara 'Bobbie' Ledgerwood**



**Barbara (Bobbie) Ledgerwood** died August 25, 2023, in Durango. She was born October 13, 1924, to Alfred Brown and Annabelle Brown in rural Cambridge, Kansas. After graduating from high school in 1942 she married classmate Billy Ledgerwood who served in the Coast Guard during the war. The couple had a son and two daughters and were later divorced. Bobbie moved to Durango to be near her daughters. She worked for the San Juan as an Information Specialist for seven years. Bobbie always said, 'It was my favorite job, other than the job as wife and mother.'

Bobbie had many interests and hobbies throughout her life: homemaking, gardening, family and family reunions, travel, writing, American history, and genealogy. She was a proud member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She wrote and self-published her life story so her grandchildren would know about life during the Great Depression—life without running water, a flush toilet, or electricity.

Bobbie is survived by daughter Julie McCallister; brother Lynn Brown; daughter in- law Janelle Ledgerwood; and all their families, including eight grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren, and seven great-great grandchildren.



## **Vincent E Maloney Jr.**



**Vincent E Maloney Jr.** passed away on November 10, 2023. He was born on October 29, 1929, to Vincent and Virginia Maloney in Missouri. He leaves an exemplary legacy in the hearts of all who knew him. Vince was a patriot, serving his country in the SEABEES and as a Naval Aviator during his second tour. The Stars and Stripes flew at his house every day.

Vince attended Colorado College and University of Colorado where he graduated as a Civil Engineer. He enjoyed his career with the Forest Service and was forest engineer on the San Juan N. F. from 1972 through 1976. He later worked with the BIA. In retirement he voluntarily tutored students at an elementary school serving dyslexic and gifted students. Vince was a man of faith and served in many capacities at his church in Durango.

Vince is survived by his wife Romelle; four children Mark, Marilyn Heide, Jeff, and Tom and their families including eleven grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren, and one great, great, grandchild.

## **Lloyd Clifford Newland**



**Lloyd Clifford Newland** passed away on February 22, 2023. He was born in Bayfield, CO on April 30, 1932, to Ellis and Twila Newland. Lloyd graduated in 1955 from Colorado A&M (CSU) with a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Most of his time with the Forest Service from 1961 to 1982 included assignments on the San Juan, the Arapaho, the Roosevelt, and the Regional Office. He worked on a variety of engineering projects such as early development work on 3-point seat belts and seedling green houses. In addition, he worked on fires providing support to fire teams.

He was an avid hunter, fisherman, gardener, and had animals on their property for the grandkids to enjoy. He belonged to the Masonic Lodge, El Jebel Shriners, Sons of Norway, and the Rocky Mountaineers, as well as his church. He and Donna traveled to many places around the world. Lloyd was instrumental in supporting Memorial Grove for many years.

He is survived by his wife Donna; children Janice, Lloyd, and Donna, his sister Dorothy; and his stepchildren Jim, Dian, Michael, Ileen, and Dan; and all their families including sixteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.



## **Joseph Junior (Joe) Newton**



**Joseph Junior (Joe) Newton** passed away in Grand Junction on January 24, 2023. He was born in Leadville, Co on April 14, 1934, to Joseph and Zelma Newton. He grew up and resided in Gunnison County until entering the Air Force in 1952. While in the Air Force he served in Germany and France.

After his discharge in 1956, Joe came to the Forest Service, first in Gunnison and then Walden where he met Gaye Huston. They were married in 1959. He graduated from Colorado State University in 1963 and then back to Forest Service on the Medicine Bow, the Black Hills, the Pike San Isabel, the Rio Grande and finally the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison N. F.s.

He retired after 35 years of service. Joe was an avid crossword solver, loved bowling (with a 196 average), and enjoyed many years of RV traveling along with the Grand Mesa Campers and other friends. He is survived by his wife Gaye, his son Corey, his daughter JaVona, and his siblings, Leslie, and Kenneth and all their families.

## **Sigfrid George (Sig) Palm**



**Sigfrid George (Sig) Palm** passed away March 13, 2023, in Sheridan, WY. He was born on November 26, 1942, in Denver to Sigfrid and Cecilia Palm. His father was a game warden, so he was raised close to the outdoors. After high school in Fort Collins and he studied at Colorado and Utah State University, and after time in the Army, graduated with a degree in Forest Range Management. He worked on the Roosevelt where he met his wife Judi, a the district clerk at Laramie River and they were married in 1968.

They moved twelve times starting as a crew leader for the Bighorn and Pike Hot Shots, then on to the Prescott, Gila, Tonto as ranger, the Roosevelt, and the Bighorn. He was in R-9 in Cooperative Fire Protection and the Washington Office. He worked in fire for 58 seasons and assignments in 22 states, including incident commander and multi-agency coordination in the '88 Yellowstone fires. He was involved in Boy Scouts, loved fishing, and he and Judi traveled.

He is survived by Judi, daughters Diane and Andrea and their families including 12 grandchildren, and a brother Stan.

## Gerald Lee (Jerry) Poe



**Gerald Lee (Jerry) Poe** of Sandy, UT, passed away on October 19, 2023. Jerry was born June 25, 1942, in Bisbee, AZ to Leon Poe and Laphrona Shugart. He graduated from the University of Arizona with a bachelor's in Range. He was in the Army in Vietnam from '67-'69 and was discharged in '73.

He was employed by the Forest Service for 29 years, living in Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Nebraska, and Colorado. Jerry was never happier than when he was in nature. His many hobbies included cooking, gardening, rockhounding, hunting, fishing, bird watching, writing stories, and making jewelry. His jewelry will be a cherished reminder of his love for all those in

his life. He retired from the Rio Grande N. F.

In 2017, Jerry moved to Utah to be closer to some of his children and grandchildren. He loved his grandchildren and was proud of each of them. Jerry is survived by his five children Levi, Justin, Renee, Tanner, and Lara Umar and their families including grandchildren Camryn, Clayton, Jaxon, Alivia, Journi, Avalyn, Nico, Max, Oliver, Marley, TJ, Troy, Riya, Kenna, and Avren.

## Alex John Rudney



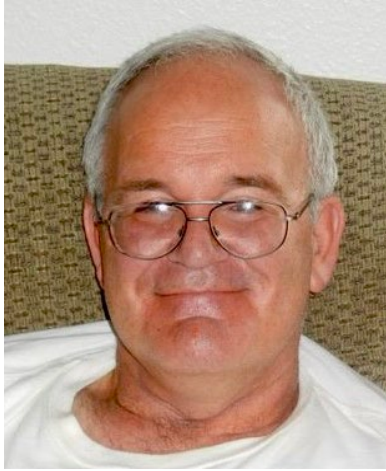
**Alex John Rudney**, silviculturist for the San Isabel, died March 31, 2023. He was born July 1, 1970, and grew up in New York City. Alex greatly admired his mom, Christine Rudney, and spent many summers at her childhood home in Connecticut with his beloved grandparents.

Alex's brother, Christopher, was also his close friend. After high school graduation in '88, Alex headed west to live out his dreams. He graduated from Colorado State University, married, bought a house in Salida, and had two sons. Zane and Wyatt were his pride and joy. He enjoyed playing catch, fishing, ice skating, and traveling with his boys.

Alex began working for the Forest Service in 1991. He worked on the Stanislaus in CA, the White River, and the Pike-San Isabel. He served as silviculturist for the San Isabel since 2003. He maintained fire qualifications and responded to wildfires throughout his career. He was dedicated to the agency and would say, "I ride for the brand."

Alex is survived by his mother Christine; stepfather Joseph Yuskaitis; sons Zane and Wyatt; their mother Dionne, brother Chris; partner Jen Swacina and many friends.

## **Gerald John (Jerry) Ryszka**



**Gerald John (Jerry) Ryszka** passed away on January 5th, 2023, near Livingston, MT. He was born on April 13, 1953, in Detroit, MI to Walter and Regina Ryszka. After high school he earned a bachelor's degree in forestry at Michigan Tech and later received a master's degree at Oregon State. He began his work with the Forest Service on the Gallatin where he met Davina Gray. After a stint in Oregon, he returned to Montana and married Davina. They moved to Idaho and then to Black Hills. In 1995 the family, with five children, moved to Delta, CO where Jerry worked as the Regional Timber Measurement Specialist. After 16 years in Colorado, he retired in 2011.

After his retirement, they moved back to Livingston to be near Davina's parents and work on the ranch. Jerry had a fun sense of humor, and an easy-going disposition. He loved gardening, music, woodworking, hunting, cooking, gardening, being outdoors, and with family.

Jerry is survived by Davina; his children Wendy Bournazian, Jennifer Alexander, John, Robert, and Gerri and their families including fourteen grandchildren; his siblings, Leonard, Carol Ross, and Tom.

## **Sandra L. (Sandy) Smyth**



**Sandra L. (Sandy) Smyth** died August 15, 2023, in Houston TX. Sandy was born on March 19, 1945, in Orange, TX to Earl and Vera Horn. After high school, she served in the Army and served a tour in Germany where she met Herbert R. Smyth. They were married on September 28, 1984, in Liberty, Texas. They moved to Salida where Herb helped with the family ranch.

Sandy's Forest Service career began on the Salida Ranger District of the Pike San Isabel National Forest. She first worked in 1994 as a seasonal compliance officer. She was hired permanently in 1995 as the District's Administrative Clerk. She retired in April 2012. Sandy liked to read and do puzzles, and she loved cats. Sandy was a member of the Rocky Mountaineers.

She is survived by her sister Marlene Schoubroek, stepdaughter Staci Dewey, step-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

## **Phillip Sprague Steers**



**Phillip Sprague Steers** died on August 13, 2023, in Glenwood Springs. He was born in Glen Cove, NY on January 17, 1958, to J. Rich and Judith Steers. After high school he went to the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse, graduating in 1982 with a bachelor's in forestry.

Phil's Forest Service career began in 1983 and he worked mostly in forest management in Wyoming, Oregon, Colorado, California, Michigan, and Oklahoma. Phil worked on the White River at Rifle for many years and retired in 2021. He was meticulous and his work was always first rate. Phil loved being outdoors and working in the forest.

He took great pride in his work and cared deeply for the lands he worked on.

Phillip had a passion for history and archaeology and was trained to be a para-archaeologist, helping to find and preserve cultural resources. He was very involved in the local historic society. He was a good friend to many and generous man who lived a life of passion and service. Phillip is survived by his mother Judith Harvey Steers and brothers James, George and Robert.

## **Samuel Leslie (Sam) Suazo**



**Samuel Leslie (Sam) Suazo** died June 12, 2023, in Alamosa. He was born in Alamosa on August 23, 1947, the proud son of Samuel and Elidia Suazo. He married the love of his life, Lynne Adam in Alamosa on August 5, 2000.

Sam served in the Army and was honorably discharged as a Medical Corpsman. He worked for many years for the Bureau of Land Management and later for the Forest Service as a Visitor Information Specialist in Estrella. For those who knew Sam, he was quite a character and a wonderful guy who brought much laughter to Conejos Peak. Sam loved spending weekends in the mountains camping and both stream and fly fishing. In his younger years, he

enjoyed back country skiing.

He is survived by Lynne; his siblings Dennis, Becky Tonso, and Elmo; his sisters-in-law Sherry, Geri; his brothers-in-law Mike and Tim; as well as his niece Rayanna and numerous extended family and friends.



## **Robert L Vaught, Jr.**



**Robert L Vaught, Jr.** died on March 19, 2023. He was born to Robert and Ruby Vaught on April 26, 1951. Upon graduating high school in 1969, he joined the Army and served in Vietnam in 1969-70 in the 198th Light Infantry Brigade under Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf. The men he served with were some of the best and bravest he would ever know.

After the army he went to Alaska, attended college, and worked for the state Fish & Game and then the Forest Service. For the next 30 years he worked for the Forest Service on the Humboldt, was Deputy Supervisor on the Tongass; Supervisor on the Colville; Supervisor on the Humboldt Toiyabe; Chief of Staff for the Deputy

Chief in DC; and Director of Natural Resources in the Rocky Mountain Region. He truly believed that working for the Forest Service was an amazing experience as well as knowing, meeting, and working with many amazing people dedicated to natural resource management.

He is survived by son Jeremy, daughter Bethany Kykman, three brothers and one sister, and seven grandchildren.

## **Marilyn Whalon**



**Marilyn Whalon** passed away in Denver on Jan. 30, 2023. She was born to Grant and Helen Flink in Joliet, Illinois on Jan. 12, 1945. She graduated from Saint Francis Academy High School and married Clifford J. Whalon in 1972. They lived first in Illinois where built a home in Plainfield and Marilyn was active in her community and served in the Plainfield Women's Civic Organization.

In 1979, the family, with three children, moved to Lakewood where Marilyn worked for Nicor Exploration, and then moved their empty nest to Santa Fe, NM in 1987 where Marilyn started her career with the federal

government. She transferred back to the Denver area in 1992 and retired in 2011 after a 21-year career with the Forest Service. Marilyn was an active member of Christ on the Mountain Catholic parish where she sang and served as the choir librarian. Marilyn skied, fly-fished, loved dogs, enjoyed golf, and dressed beautifully. She had many friends who filled her social calendar.

She is survived by her husband Clifford; three children, Greg, John, and Karen and their families including five grandchildren and six great grandchildren; and twin sister, Madely

## **Not Forgotten**

### **Lois Heinis**



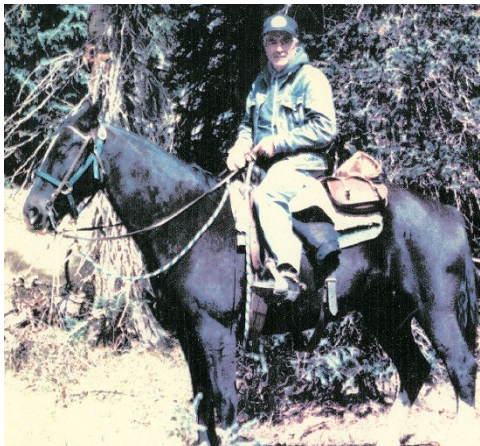
**Lois Heinis** passed away on June 8, 2015, in Spearfish, SD. She was born on December 30, 1926, to L.G. and Doris Harris at their home in Polo Alto County, Iowa.

She met LeRoy Heinis, and the couple was married in 1945 in Marshall, MN. They farmed northwest of Lynd, MN until 1956 when they moved to Sioux Falls, SD. She worked for the National Air Guard for several years. They then moved to the Black Hills when she got a job with the Forest Service in Spearfish, SD. In 1980, they moved to Quincy, CA still with the Forest Service and in 1984 she transferred to Conroe, TX and retired in 1989 and moved back to Spearfish. She enjoyed

dancing and in 1989 she started clogging. She took over the teaching position when the instructor passed away. She continued teaching clogging until January 2010.

She participated in Cub Scouts when the boys were young. She is survived by her sons, Steven, Ronald, Donald, Douglas, and Robert and their families including thirteen grandchildren, numerous great-grandchildren, three great-great grandchildren; and sister, June Hatfield.

### **Jose Robert Ortiz**



**Jose Robert Ortiz** was born in 1919 and passed away in 2004. He was born and raised on his family's sheep ranch near Capulin, in the San Luis Vally. He was taught to ride and pack horses at an early age because it was what you did on a sheep ranch. At about age 20, he worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps at a camp near Wolf Creek Pass. In 1941 he joined the Army and was in the South Pacific through the duration of WWII.

After the war, he returned to the San Luis Valley where he managed his family sheep operations for many years. In 1974, he was hired to work in range management on the Alamosa Ranger District of the Rio Grande. Robert worked

hard and was very dedicated to the Forest Service until 1990. Because of his knowledge of the mountains, horsemanship and livestock packing skills, he was well respected by the livestock permittees and by the range staff on the Forest. He enjoyed sharing his adventures and stories of his time on the high-country range.

## **Frances Mae Pettit**



**Frances Mae Pettit** of Custer, SD, passed away May 26, 2018. Fran was born January 25, 1930, in Hill City, SD, to Florence and Roy Belmont. After graduating from Hill City High School in 1948, she attended Spearfish Normal earning a teaching certificate. In 1949 she taught 1-8 grade at the Slate Creek School near Mystic and married Louis “Punk” Pettit on June 5, 1949. They lived in various communities while in the Black Hills, settling in Custer in 1957. She was active in community organizations and church. Fran was a bookkeeper at the Custer Lumber Company before working in budget and finance for the Black Hills National Forest. She retired in 1993.

Fran enjoyed her family, and her summers were often filled with grandchildren. She was always busy gardening, crocheting, sewing and baking.

Fran is survived by her daughters, Janet Reindl; Pamela Pettit; and Nancy Budden and their families including grandchildren, Staci, Travis, Sara, Tamara, Thayne and Will; step-grandchildren, Jeanne, and Jessie; 17 great grandchildren; sisters, Nadine Henschel and Linda Hiermeier; and brother, William Belmont.