

4-5-2023

Smokejumper biographies for 1954 rookie class, K-W

National Smokejumper Association

1954 Rookie Class L-W

Robert Garrett Lewis (Cave Junction '54)

Bob, 89, died May 26, 2020, in Beaverton, Oregon. He was born May 7, 1931. Bob first rookied at Missoula in 1952 but broke his leg on his third training jump and worked as an aerial observer for the rest of that summer. He graduated with his master's in Forestry from Oregon State in 1954 and completed his rookied training at Cave Junction where he jumped the 1954 season before going into the Marine Corps 1954-58.

After leaving the Marine Corps, Bob had a long career with the USFS working on the Siskiyou NF, Rogue River NF, Okanogan NF, Wenatchee NF, and ending in the Regional Office in Portland where he retired in 1993.

Forest Frank "Woody" Liebe (Missoula '54)

Woody, 77, died April 8, 2011, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, of leukemia. He born in Wallace, Idaho, on May 1, 1933. He was raised in Kellogg, Idaho, and lived in the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, area since the late 1970s.

He attended the University of Montana, where he was a member of the track and field team. Woody served in the military for two years before becoming a contractor and builder for most of his career. He was also an innovator, holding several patents on his inventions. He jumped at Missoula in 1954 and 1956.

Larry G. Looney (Idaho City '54)

Larry, of Boise, Idaho, died February 16, 2010, at his winter residence in Palm Springs of leukemia. After serving in the Coast Guard, he graduated from the University of Idaho with bachelor's and master's degrees in 1958. After serving as a teacher, principal and superintendent in various school districts, Larry moved to Idaho in 1964 where he worked in the Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene school systems.

In 1968 Larry was elected as a State Representative from District Two and served two terms in the House of Representatives. Larry was appointed Commissioner, Dept. of Revenue and Taxation, Idaho in 1975 and moved to Boise. He retired in 1993. Larry jumped at Idaho city 1954-56, McCall 1959-61 and 1965.

James Thomas Manion (Missoula '54)

Jim died June 3, 2018, at his home in Colville, WA. He was born October 11, 1929, in Libby, Montana.

Jim was raised on the family ranch in Cardwell, MT where he attended school and graduated from Whitehall High School in 1947. He enlisted in

the USAF after his high school graduation and served 1949-53. Jim enrolled in the University of Montana after his discharge and graduated with a degree in education in 1956. He taught high school in Montana and Washington from 1961-63.

In 1963 Jim went to work as a contracting officer for the USFS and retired in 1984. Jim jumped at Missoula 1954-56 and West Yellowstone 1957-60.

Donald E. “Don” Maypole (Idaho City '54)

Don was born July 7, 1934, in Boise, Idaho, and graduated from Boise H.S. 1952. He received his bachelor's from Idaho State College in 1957 and went into the USAF Aviation Cadet program in San Antonio, Texas.

While an undergraduate student he was in the Idaho Army National Guard and jumped 1954-56 at Idaho City. Don is a retired Lt. Col., having served as a jet fighter pilot in the Air National Guard (Idaho and Wisconsin), US Air Force and NATO (in West Germany). He also served as an intelligence officer in the Air National Guard.

Starting as a social worker in a state mental hospital, in 1961, Don became the assistant director of a bureau in the State of Wisconsin mental health agency in 1969. In 1971, he became the executive director of a new 3-county community mental health center in Wisconsin.

Don entered the Univ. of Minnesota in Minneapolis and received his Ph.D. in 1979. In 1979, he led the development and accreditation of the social work department at the Univ. of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. His and a colleague's early 1980s research and publications on sexual harassment at work were some of the first in the nation.

In 1986, he became the head of the new graduate social work department at the Univ. of Minnesota Duluth, in Duluth MN and led its accreditation. Before retiring from UMD he taught courses in universities in Portugal, Lithuania and Latvia and gave lectures in China, Egypt, England, and Qatar. He enjoyed being an invited visiting professor in the 2002 teaching project of the (Canadian) Univ. of Manitoba, at the university in Lviv, Ukraine.

Don received three Fulbright Teaching Awards, a Rotary International Teaching Award, a letter of appreciation from a WI governor and a certificate of appreciation from an American embassy.

Don and his wife, Mary Jane, have been married for 57 years (2021). In 2011 he made his last parachute jump (tethered to an instructor), from 14,000 feet, at the airport in Superior, WI.

Jon Hobert McBride (Missoula '54)

Jon, 74, died of acute heart failure while on a bicycle trek with the "Boys of Wednesday," a group of close friends, on June 2, 2010, near Missoula. The "boys" biked, hiked or skied every Wednesday throughout the year.

Jon graduated from Springfield, MO, Central High School in 1953, studied at Drury College in Springfield, and worked in white pine, blister rust control for the U.S. Forest Service near Haugan, Mont. He studied forestry at the University of Montana from 1954 to 1957 and, while attending the university, was a smokejumper and smokejumper squadleader in the 1954 through 1956 fire seasons. He qualified for the Navy's NAVCAD Program in 1957 and was trained as a fighter pilot, eventually flying the F-8 Crusader from the carrier Bon Homme Richard with VF 191. He also served in an instructor training squadron at Miramar, Calif. Following his discharge as a full lieutenant from the Navy in 1965, Jon was hired as one of the Mobil Oil Corporation's first corporate jet pilots. While flying for that firm, he was stationed in White Plains, N.Y., Singapore and Washington, D.C. He retired as Mobil's Worldwide Director of Aviation in 1995 and returned to Missoula where he had attended college and was based as a smokejumper.

With former smokejumper Art Jukkala (MSO-56), he founded a trail maintenance program for the National Smokejumper Association in 1999. Jukkala died of a heart attack that year while on the program's first project, and Jon assumed its lead. Under his management for the last 10 years, former and current smokejumpers have rehabilitated well over a thousand miles of trails for the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service and restored dozens of structures, including historic lookouts and ranger stations in Montana, Idaho, Alaska, Oregon, California, Colorado, Utah, and Minnesota.

Jon also founded and managed a scholarship program in memory of Jukkala to benefit children of smokejumpers killed in the line of duty or in war. His leadership was recognized in a letter from President Barack Obama and an award from the chief of the U.S. Forest Service.

Albert Charles "Chuck" Michael (Missoula '54)

Chuck, 90, died May 8, 2018, in Bozeman, Montana. He was born January 11, 1928, Oeiwein, Iowa. His occupation was listed at "Forest Ranger." He jumped at Missoula during the 1954-55 seasons.

Carl E. Neufelder (Missoula '54)

Carl was born June 27, 1935 and jumped at Missoula 1954-55 and Fairbanks 1962-65. He attended the University of Montana Forestry School

and spent two years in the Army stationed in Alaska. He served as a BLM forester in Oregon and worked for the BLM in Alaska. Carl has traveled extensively (44 countries), climbed Mt. McKinley in 1979, and has run 25 marathons. He currently (2022) lives in Denver, Colorado.

Charles Theodore “Ted” Nyquest (Missoula '54)

Ted was born July 9, 1934, in Boulder, Montana, where he grew up and graduated from high school in 1953. He went to the University of Montana on a track scholarship, started in the School of Forestry, but switch to Psychiatry and graduates with a master's degree. Ted served in the Marine Corps for two years active and eight years in the reserves. He entered the CIA in 1959 and helped develop the Sky Hook Program at Marana Air Base in Arizona and worked in Guatemala and Honduras during the Bay of Pigs.

As a young man Ted worked at ranches around Boulder and was hired during the summers as a “Gandy Dancer” by the Great Northern Railroad at age 16. He worked at a Lookout for the USFS for two summers before his rookie season at Missoula in 1954. Ted jumped at Missoula 1954, 61-62, 67-68, Grangeville 1957-58, 60, 63-64, and at West Yellowstone 1965-66, and 1974. He worked as a Dry Kiln operator at Champion Lumber for nine years. As a retiree, he has been delivering Meals on Wheels for 20+ years.

Mahlon “Lonnie” Park (McCall '54)

Lonnie was born July 2, 1936, in Blackfoot, Idaho, and grew up in Boise where he graduated from Boise H.S. in 1954. He then received his bachelor's in Marketing from the University of Idaho in 1958. Lonnie spent two years in the Army Infantry as a 1st Lieutenant in Korea and Fort Ord, California. He completed Airborne Jump School at Fort Benning, GA.

Work Career: Commercial Banking Group, First Security Corp 36+ years. Based in Boise, Idaho Member of First Security Bank Board of Directors.

Retirement: “I set up my own mortgage business. Had a good run and turned it over to my kids. I live in Boise, Idaho, and have a cabin in McCall, where I spend my summers, and play as much golf as possible. I winter in Palm Desert, CA.” Lonnie jumped at McCall 1954-58.

Tony Percival (North Cascades '54)

Tony, 82, died on June 14, 2016, at his home in Tucson, Arizona. He graduated from Wenatchee High School in 1952 and worked two summers on the Lake Wenatchee District while attending college. His smokejumping career with the USFS started in 1954. Tony worked on the early Silver City

crew in '55 and eventually left Winthrop and moved to Redmond when it was established.

Tony jumped at NCSB 1954-56, 61-63 and Redmond 1966-71. He was in the Army 1957-58 in Germany. After Redmond, he was the Bly FMO on the Fremont NF, then on to Marana, AZ. as the R-3 West Zone Dispatch Center, completing his career at NARTC. He retired in Tucson with his wife, Lorraine, of 49 years.

Sterling G. Pickering (North Cascades '54)

Sterling was born November 9, 1936, in Okanogan, Washington, and jumped at NCSB the 1954-55 seasons. He was hired by Francis Lufkin when he was 17. Sterling earned a degree from Washington State University in 1958, and a Ph.D. in Biophysics from the University of California Berkeley in 1966. In 1969 he accepted a teaching job at a university in Canada for a few years before starting work as an independent writer. "I personally hand-planted nearly 15,000 trees on my retirement farm."

Frank Bates Pino (North Cascades '54)

Frank was born January 22, 1935, in Gallup, New Mexico, and grew up in Omak, Washington, where he graduated from Omak H.S. in 1953. He earned his bachelor's from Central Washington University in 1968. Frank was a Marine Corps helicopter pilot 1955-60, and Rotor Aids helicopter pilot 1960-66. He then flew for the Los Angeles Co. Fire Dept. 1968-79 and was retired after crashing into a fire in 1979. Frank lived in Hawaii for 20 years before moving to Arizona where he currently lives (2021). He jumped at NCSB 1954-55. Frank's brothers Bob, Buck, and John also jumped at NCSB.

Rex Hubert Post (Missoula '54)

In the April 1996 issue of the Newsletter, we mentioned Steve Henault (MSO-46) and his death, along with two others, in the crash of an Alaska Army National Guard aircraft at the 14,880-foot level of Mt. Sanford, 200 miles east of Anchorage, on March 19, 1971. He was flying the aircraft from California to his home base at Fort Richardson, Alaska.

We also stated that a two-man volunteer rescue team, made up of famed Alaska mountain climber and guide, Ray Genet of Talkeetna, and Rex Post, a Pan American World Airways captain on leave, had been dropped off from an Army helicopter at the 15,500-foot level in an attempt to reach the wreckage.

At the time we did not realize that Rex was also a former Missoula jumper. Rex died on the mountain in the rescue attempt from "high altitude sickness," a situation wherein one's lungs fill with fluid and a person actually suffocates. Connie Orr (MSO-53) gave us additional information about Rex recently. Rex was 38 years old at the time of this death. He had been living at Seahurst, Washington, in the Seattle area.

Rex, 33, was born March 7, 1933, and died March 19, 1971. He was in the Navy 1957-62 and jumped at Missoula 1954-56.

Ellsworth J. "Busty" Roggow (North Cascades '54)

Jim died September 20, 1997, in Zillah, Washington. He was born April 8, 1935, in Tonasket, Washington. Jim jumped at NCSB 1954, and 1957. He served two years in the Army in Korea.

Ken Neal "Moose" Salyer (McCall '54)

Ken, 30, died in crash of Twin Beech on a cargo run 50 miles west of McCall on July 9, 1965. Ken was a veteran jumper of 12 seasons and had over 100 jumps. He was a football and wrestling coach and industrial arts teacher at Fairmont Jr. High School in Boise.

Ken was a football star and state wrestling champion at East High School in Iowa. He was married to Mary Kay Stuart, and they were the parents of a four-year old son, Michael. Ken was born December 21, 1934, in Elmer, Missouri, graduated from East H. S. in 1953 and won the Iowa State wrestling championships in 1953-54. He graduated from Allensburg University in Allensburg, Washington, and had taught in the Boise schools since 1963. Ken jumped at McCall 1954-65.

John E. Schlegel (Missoula '54)

John died in house fire in Redding December 5, 1994. He jumped at Missoula 1954-58 and flew out of Redding 1959-64. He left a wife, Virginia, and six children.

Gerald Evert Schmidt (Missoula '54)

Jerry, 97, died July 25, 2021, in Billings, Montana. He was born July 2, 1924, in Bloomington, Nebraska. Jerry jumped at Missoula 1954-56. He graduated from Franklin H.S. in 1942, enlisted in the Navy and served in the Pacific during WWII. Following his discharge, he used his GI benefits to attend college and earned his law degree from the University of Denver. He was self-employed as a business and estate planner in Wyoming and Montana during his career. Jerry jumped at Missoula 1954-56.

Glen T. “Rip” Smith (Idaho City’ 54)

Glen died January 2, 2020, at his home near Kuna, Idaho. His father was career USFS and Glen lived in many different locations while growing up. After he graduated from Boise H.S., Glen attended Boise Jr. College and jumped at Idaho City 1954-55. Rip started as an entry-level surveyor with the state department of highways but was quickly noticed for his abilities by Don McCarter. He joined forces with Don and Bill Tuller to start the surveying firm of McCarter and Tuller in Boise. Rip was the lead surveyor for the business for over 40 years retiring in 2002.

Douglas P. Stinson (Cave Junction ’54)

Doug was born in Chicago Heights, Illinois, on April 13, 1933, and at age fifteen, moved to Mountain View, Missouri, where Doug graduated from high school. He then moved to Columbia, Missouri, where he studied Forestry at the University of Missouri. After graduation, Doug became a captain in the Marine Corps and was stationed in Okinawa, the Philippines, and Japan. In 1958 Doug moved to Alaska with the aim of homesteading, but soon discovered farming would be difficult there. He joined the U.S Forest Service and worked as a forester from 1959-1964. During this time, he met Fae Marie Beck, a schoolteacher. They married and had two children in Alaska, Steven Douglas Stinson in 1961 and Ann Marie Stinson in 1963. In 1964 the young family moved to Roseburg, Oregon and another daughter, Julie Dawn Stinson was born in 1965.

From 1964-1979 Doug worked for Champion International in Roseburg, Seattle, and Morton Washington. In 1979, he joined Conifer Pacific and worked there as a forester and mill manager. In 1990, Doug left industry to manage his own tree farm, Cowlitz Ridge Tree Farm. He continues this work today. (2021)

Over the years Doug and his family have won many awards for outstanding stewardship of their timberland. In 1993 he was named Washington State Tree Farmer of the Year and in 1994 earned the title of Western Region Tree Farmer of the Year. Doug has served on the Washington State Forest Practice Board and on committees for the American Tree Farm System and the American Forest Foundation.

He and Fae Marie have traveled widely, often to visit forests. They’ve traveled to Sweden, Japan, New Zealand, Tasmania, Chile, Switzerland, Austria, Brazil, Hungary, and Spain. His most recent overseas adventure was to Japan with daughter, Ann.

In addition to international travels, Doug has used his retirement to paddle many rivers including the Nahani, the Owyhee, and the Grand Ronde. His son Steve and his daughter Julie accompanied him on many of these trips. Doug jumped at Cave Junction 1954-55.

Warren Webb (Cave Junction '54)

Warren, 77, died Feb. 28, 2012, in Lebanon, Oregon. He attended Oregon State University, where he received bachelor's degrees in Business and Forestry, including a doctorate in the latter. Warren jumped from Cave Junction during 1954-56, Redding in 1957 and 1959-61, and Fairbanks in 1962.

He went on to teach and perform research in the fields of forestry and microclimatology at Oregon State, including a year's sabbatical in New Zealand. In the 1990s, Warren planted and managed an apple orchard on the banks of the Luckiamute River in Oregon.

Dallas "Bruce" Yergenson (McCall '54)

Bruce, 80, died November 24, 2015. He was born in Payette, Idaho, and grew up in the area and lived most of his life in McCall. He retired from the Forest Service in 1985 having worked as a smokejumper and district carpenter. He continued his work as a professional carpenter into his 70s. Bruce jumped at McCall 54, 57-66, 68-75 and Anchorage in 1967.

Austin L. Young (McCall '54)

Austin was born May 2, 1934, in Shoshone, Idaho. In 1939 the family moved from Shoshone and lived in various parts of the United States. The family returned to Shoshone when Austin was entering the sixth grade. By this time, he had attended eleven different grade schools. He completed elementary and high school and graduated from Shoshone H.S. in 1953. Austin was active in high school football and basketball.

After high school, Austin attended college for two years at Idaho State University and three years at the University of Idaho. He graduated with a bachelor's in Geology in 1958. During this period Austin worked summers as a smokejumper at McCall, Idaho, and jumped in Silver City, New Mexico in 1959. He jumped at McCall 1954-57 and 1959.

His work career varied over the years. He worked as an underground uranium mine geologist near Grants, New Mexico, mined underground storage caverns for the storage of LP Gas in the Midwest, and constructed petrochemical plants in various areas of the United States. He worked for Morrison-Knudsen's (MK) Building Group for twenty years as a Project

Manager and then as Division Manager. After leaving Morrison-Knudsen, Austin worked as an independent construction consult for six years. All this required extensive moving and traveling. He retired four times. The last was in 2006. "What was the best job I ever had...smokejumper."

Austin lives in Boise, Idaho, enjoying life traveling, his wife Mary of 60 years, grandchildren, great grandchildren, old smokejumper gatherings and riding his four-wheeler in the Owyhee's Mountains in Idaho. "Some may know me as "Barney Bear."