

May 2020

Smokeyjumper Obituary: Rivera, Ray (North Cascades 1961)

National Smokeyjumper Association

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.ewu.edu/smokeyjumper_bios



Part of the [Forest Management Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

National Smokeyjumper Association, "Smokeyjumper Obituary: Rivera, Ray (North Cascades 1961)" (2020).
Smokeyjumper Obituaries. 500.
https://dc.ewu.edu/smokeyjumper_bios/500

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Smokeyjumper Digital Archive at EWU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Smokeyjumper Obituaries by an authorized administrator of EWU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jotto@ewu.edu.

Smokejumper Obituary

Rivera, Ray (North Cascades 1961)

Ray, 31, died July 16, 1978, near Reserve, New Mexico. He previously lived in Silver City, New Mexico, where he was a businessman and active in civic organizations. Ray owned and operated a business selling automobile tires, batteries, paint, and other related merchandise.

Fred Cooper tells more about Ray: Ray was a smokejumper at the NCSB 1961-63. When Ray wasn't fighting fires, he loved to comb the countryside for rattlesnakes, much to the chagrin of his fellow jumpers. He'd hold the snake behind its head, sneaking up close to someone with the rattles buzzing away. He would also put snakes in a sack and place the sack near the head the bunk of a sleeping jumper. After a short period of time, the snake would start rattling. This "rattled" guys out of their bunks, lucky to make it out alive after hitting their heads on the upper bunk or falling to the floor off the top bunk. To redeem himself, he made delicious rattlesnake steaks, barbequing them as appetizers before our evening cookhouse dinners. Ray was also a tenacious firefighter digging more fireline and faster than anyone. That's the main reason "Pappy" Lufkin never fired Ray.

(end of excerpt)