

February 2018

Smokejumper Obituary: Courson, Richard J. (Cave Junction 1946)

National Smokejumper Association

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Smokejumper Obituary

Courson, Richard J. (Cave Junction 1946)

Dick died February 20, 2018, in Pendleton, Oregon. He was a retired Umatilla County district attorney and district court judge. Dick entered the Marines before finishing high school, volunteered for the Para Marines and went into combat Feb. 19, 1945, when he landed on Iwo Jima at age 19. He spent 30 days in combat before being evacuated due to illness and wounds.

Back from the war, Dick used his military jumping experience to hire on at Cave Junction where he jumped from 1946-50.

Although he never finished high school, he enrolled in Willamette University for two years before entering Lewis & Clark Law School where he obtained his law degree. He moved to Pendleton in 1956 to practice law and was later elected Umatilla County district attorney. Dick was appointed to the district court bench in 1967 where he served 25 years.

(end of excerpt)