

September 2014

## Smokejumper Obituary: Miller, Leland (Missoula 1944)

National Smokejumper Association

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## Smokejumper Obituary

### Miller, Leland (Missoula 1944)

Lee of Spokane Valley, Washington, died September 17, 2014. He was born in a Mennonite community near Marion, South Dakota, in 1921. Lee attended local schools, was an avid hunter, loved to sing and graduated from high school in 1939.

He entered Civilian Public Service in 1942 and was stationed at La Pine, Oregon, where he learned to fell and climb trees, drive a bulldozer and put out forest fires. Lee reported to the smokejumper unit in 1944. "The CPS camps were really just an extension of my local Mennonite community, but the smokejumper unit was a whole new perspective. Many of these guys had actually made their decision to be pacifists in the face of tremendous opposition from their communities." Lee jumped with the CPS-103 smokejumpers in 1944 and 1945.

After the war he returned to South Dakota but eventually moved to Sioux Falls, Iowa, and worked for the Caterpillar dealership with heavy equipment. In 1965 he moved to the Spokane area still working with the Caterpillar dealership and worked there until 1984 when he retired.

"I hope that in some way I have helped someone to carry on the mission to bring together the human race as caring and sharing brothers and sisters."

*(end of excerpt)*