

May 2011

Smokejumper Obituary: Dethlefs, Ted A. (Missoula 1947)

National Smokejumper Association

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Recommended Citation

National Smokejumper Association, "Smokejumper Obituary: Dethlefs, Ted A. (Missoula 1947)" (2011).
Smokejumper Obituaries. 887.
https://dc.ewu.edu/smokejumper_bios/887

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Smokejumper Obituary

Dethlefs, Ted A. (Missoula 1947)

Ted, 85, died May 7, 2011, in Salem, Oregon. He served in the Navy Air Corps after joining at age 17 and served 1943-46. Ted was commissioned a Lieutenant Junior Grade just as the war ended; he served briefly in Hawaii shuttling troops and equipment back to the states.

Ted learned of the smokejumper program while he was a forestry student at Washington State. Although he had no prior fire experience, he was hired as a smokejumper in 1947. By the time his season was over Ted's six fire jumps had landed him in two states and on five national forests.

He went on to earn a B.A. in business economics and then a M.A. in Recreation at Washington State. The years following college found Ted in Kellogg, Idaho, (1 year) with the YMCA, then with the City of Tacoma at a Community Center and with the State of Washington at the Western State Hospital as a recreation therapist. For the next 40 years Ted was with the State of Oregon as Recreation Director for the Institution for the Retarded and then with the Oregon State Parks as a Community Consultant.

(end of excerpt)