

Bonnors Ferry Herald

Chester R. Baker, 82 3-19-09

Chester R. Baker, 82, passed away Thursday, March 12, 2009, at his Porthill area home from an extended illness.

His wife, Pam, and daughter, Irene, were at his bedside looking out at Hall and Goat mountains while white-tailed deer grazed in the nearby fields and eagles soared in the clear blue skies.

Chet was the fifth child of 10, born Aug. 12, 1926, in Stanford, Mont., to Alfred and Ora Glea Baker.

In 1928, the family moved from Montana and settled in Boundary County along the Kootenai River near Lucas Creek.

Chet joined the Army in 1944 during the final days of World War II at Panama Canal.

After serving his country, he returned to Boundary County and married Lois Cooper in 1949. They purchased land at the base of Hall Mountain and operated a small dairy farm. The cou-



ple had six children from 1950 to 1957.

In 1978, Chet met and married his soul mate Pam

Kolbe. Their true passion was exploring the Northwest. Together they searched for hot-springs and went hunting, fishing, hiking and boating. Chet also enjoyed ice skating and water skiing. He taught many neighbor kids to water ski on the Kootenai River at Porthill.

Chet loved working the land and continued to farm most of his life.

He wore many hats during his lifetime. Chet served three, 4-year terms as a county commissioner and worked 14 years as a school bus driver. He also was a radiator repairman, ambulance driver and served on numerous community organizational

committees.

Chet's favorite hat was that of Santa Claus, which he wore many times for the students at Mt. Hall School.

Chet was fond of people. He never met a stranger and truly had the "gift of gab." Most of the community will remember him as the jovial story-teller in the striped-bid overalls, beard and green felt hat.

He was preceded in death by his parents; siblings Curt, Robert, Milo and Crystal; son Merl; granddaughter Heather; and great-granddaughter Rachael.

Survivors include his wife; sons Boyd (Kathy) Baker of Colburn, Curt (Susan) Baker of Freeland, Wash.; daughters Irene (Stan) Parks of Spokane, Wash., Lorlene (Terry) Johnson of Moyie Springs, and Sherlene (Randy) Johnson of Porthill; grandchildren include Lance (Jolie) Taylor, Emma Jean Rombach, Kari (Jon) Wilson, Eldon (Crystal) Baker,

Charles (Kellie) Baker, Matthew (Andrea) Baker, Reuben (Jennifer) Baker, April Allen, Billijo (Terry) Beck, Casey (Brandi) Johnson, Jacob (Julie) Johnson, Denneil Baker-Johnson (Rob Becker), Nicholas (Megan) Johnson, Marlaina (Lyle) Davy, Jolene Johnson (Ben Adams); 21 great-grandchildren; siblings Eula Thompson of Sandpoint, and Joyce Gross, Joan Mead, Christine Jeffries and Alva (Elva) Baker, all of Bonnors Ferry; and a long list of extended family.

A private graveside service was held at Porthill Cemetery. Open to the community will be a celebration of life at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 21, at Copeland Hall. Bring a potluck dish, photo or story to share.

Family and friends can sign Chet's book at www.bonnorsferryfuneralhome.com.

Bonnors Ferry Funeral Home handled arrangements.