

Bonnors Ferry Herald, Thursday, July 27, 2006

**Lee (Leroy) Mahler, 75**

Lee (Leroy) Mahler, age 75, passed away on Tuesday, July 18, 2006 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Lee Mahler was born on March 23, 1931 to Henry and Eva Mahler in Black, Texas. They moved to Highland Flats outside of Bonnors Ferry in 1938. In the early 1940's Lee's mother, Eva, married Paul Marcy. On their family farm, Paul helped instill a strong sense of family and a terrific work ethic in Lee. In his spare time Paul taught Lee and his how to hunt, fish and the art of storytelling.

Lee graduated from Bonnors Ferry High School in 1949 where he was president of his senior class and enjoyed a stellar high school sports career. He lettered his freshman year through senior year in boxing, in addition to football and track. After graduating he soon began working at the First National Bank of Bonnors Ferry.

In 1951 the Korean War was in progress, so Lee joined the Navy. He served on the aircraft carrier USS Bairoko off the coasts of Korea. He was also a witness to the first series of hydrogen bomb explosions in the Bikini islands, an unforgettable experience.

Lee married Peggy L. MacDonald in Coeru d'Alene on September 20, 1953.

On March 21, 1954 he was awarded a Good Conduct Medal and an honorable discharge from the US Navy. Lee and Peggy then returned to Bonnors Ferry, where he resumed work at the First National Bank. The Bank of Idaho purchased the First National Bank of Bonnors Ferry March 1, 1962 and in 1963 Lee was transferred to the Sandpoint branch. He was promoted to branch manager in January of 1965. He retained his title through acquisitions by First Interstate Bank and Wells Fargo until his retirement in 1991.

Lee was an avid sportsman, hunting and fishing with friends and family. His love of the forest and outdoors created and or maintained many family traditions. He spent as much time as possible on the lakes, and in the mountains and forests of Idaho.

Most of his extended family has learned to love time in the woods, whether backpacking to an alpine lake for fishing, searching for and picking the little purple huckleberries, or simply spending time together. Lee always placed his family first, including hosting an adopted-like daughter from Germany, Verena Bannert. Lee was a long-time active member of the Sandpoint Lions Club for the past 42 years. He also was a Sandpoint Elk for more than 40 years. He has given much time and energy to our community.

Lee is survived by his wife of 53 years, Peggy MacDonald Mahler; his daughter, Dianna Sauer of Coeur d'Alene; his son, Alan Mahler and daughter-in-law Aida Mahler of Sandpoint; Aunt Hazel Hareno of Kellogg; his granddaughter Nicole Sauer of Coeur d'Alene; grandsons Ryan Mahler of Orange, CA, Cody Andrews of Sandpoint, Blake Mahler of Sandpoint, Jordan and Jerod Sauer of Coeur d'Alene; and a great grandson, Kail Sauer of Coeur d'Alene. There are also numerous nieces and nephews from Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, and Wyoming.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Eva Marcy, stepfather, Paul Marcy, father Henry Mahler; daughter Carol Mahler-Gutierrez; brothers, Raydean, Charlie and Tom Mahler.

Memorials may be made to Wells Fargo Bank, account #7912327181, in Sandpoint, Idaho.

Arrangements are entrusted to the care of Coffelt Funeral Service.

Funeral Services were held at 11 a.m., Monday, July 24, 2006 at Coffelt's Funeral Chapel, 109 N. Divison St., in Sandpoint, Idaho. Burial followed at Lakeview Cemetery in Sandpoint, Idaho with Military Honors.