

Bonnors Ferry Herald, Thursday, April 27, 2006

Herman Allen Mesenbrink, 74

Herman Allen Mesenbrink, 74 passed away on April 21, 2006 while snowmobiling at Phoebe's Tip in the Cow Creek Meadows area. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, April 28, 2006 at the Wellspring Community Church in Bonnors Ferry, with interment immediately following in Grandview Cemetery.

Herman was born on December 19, 1931 to John August and Dorthea Mildred LaFountain Mesenbrink on their homestead in the Skin Creek area. He joined his two older brothers, Eugene, who was born in 1927, and Rene, who was born in 1929. Subsequently, their youngest brother; Joseph, was born in 1945.

He started his education at Buckhorn Elementary School, which he attended for 8 years. Thereafter; he attended Bonnors Ferry High School, where he graduated in 1949. During the school year, his parents moved Herman, along with his mother and his two older brothers, to Bonnors Ferry for the cold winters. His father stayed behind at the family homestead to maintain and care for the farm. Around the seventh grade, Herman started his official working career, when he handled a paper route in Bonnors Ferry for a couple years. During his junior and senior year in high school, he worked for Winston Cook at Cook's Electric as a radio repairman.

During the four years following high school, he worked with his father, John, on the family farm. In 1953, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served in the Korean War while being stationed in Japan. Afterwards, he was in the Air Force Reserves for eight years. Upon his return to Boundary County, he purchased a sawmill and relocated it to the former family farm site on old Highway 2.

During this time, he met his future wife, Carol Lee Vetter, daughter of Maynard and Helen Raveling Vetter, at a dance at the Curly Creek Hall. During the festivities, Herman's mother was hounding him to dance. Upon hearing that he would only dance with girls he knew and he didn't know anyone at the festivity, his mother drug him across the dance floor, introduced him to Carol, and told him "Okay, now you know someone, so dance." They eventually married on July 15, 1961. Herman and Carol had six children together; Sandra Denise (born in 1962), Vicki Sue (born in 1964), Christopher Rene (born in 1965), Mark Allen (born in 1969), Craig Eugene (born in 1973), and Dean Vincent (born in 1976).

In 1969, Herman and Carol purchased 18 acres immediately due west of the Moyie River Bridge. Two years later, the sawmill was moved here and their family home was built. Herman and Carol lived and worked here at the time of his death.

During Herman's life, he devoted numerous hours to community service.

He was elected to and served on the City Council of Moyie Springs for 24 years, the Boundary County Planning and Zone Committee for eight years, and the Boundary County Board of County Commissioners for eight years (four of these eight years he acted as the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners). He also participated in the Soil Conservation Service and the American Legion.

Herman had two passions in life; working and snowmobiling. Regarding work, he spent countless hours at the sawmill to not only provide and care for his family, but to also produce a high quality timber product to his customers. Herman was known in the community as a fair and ethical business man. In 2001, Herman was named "Bull of the Woods" during the 11th Annual North Idaho Timberfest held in Sandpoint, Idaho.

Because of Herman's passion for snowmobiling, he opened an Artic Cat dealership in 1970, which he operated for approximately 15 years.

Throughout his lifetime not only did he race snowmobiles, but he also spent hours upon hours exploring the mountains of Boundary County. Herman loved telling stories of his snowmobile adventures with Dean Zimmerman, his sons, his brothers, and other family and friends.

Herman was passionately devoted to his family, especially his children and grandchildren. Nothing brought a bigger or more satisfying smile to his face than when his entire family was gathered together, whether for a birthday, a wedding, or the holidays. The laughter and fun had by all brought immense peace and contentment to his soul.

Herman had a deep concern for helping others, as evident in the number of times he put others before himself – he stayed home from college to take care of his mother and ill father; he worked hard and earned money for others to go to college; and he helped others with their business ventures.

Herman is survived by his wife of 44 years, Carol Lee Mesenbrink, of Moyie Springs, Idaho; his daughter Sandra Jones and her husband Mark, of Snohomish, Wash.; his daughter Vicki, of Thousand Oaks, Calif.; his son Chris and his wife Valerie, of Hayden, Idaho; his son Mark, of Kettle Falls, Wash.; his son Craig and his wife Destiney, of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho his son Dean and his wife Alana, of Libby, Mont; his brother Rene, of Moyie Springs; his brother Joe, of Moyie Springs, two grandsons, Logan and Kyren; three granddaughters, Alexis, Christin, and Kyndal; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his mother and father; John and Dorthea Mesenbrink; his brother, Eugene Mesenbrink; and his nephew, Jeffery Mesenbrink.