

# Obituary

## Jim Holcomb

May 1, 1944 – January 31, 2015

Jim Holcomb passed away suddenly while hiking near Sisters on January 31, 2015.

Jim was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 1, 1944 to James and Ann Holcomb. He received a Bachelor of Arts in secondary education from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh and completed his post-graduate degree at Arizona State University. He married his wife Jeanne on July 6, 1968 and they began their life together as teachers for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Pt. Barrow, Alaska.

Jim was a private pilot and worked as a flight traffic controller for the FAA from 1973 until he resumed his teaching career in 1981. In 1977 Jim and Jeanne moved to Homer, Alaska, where they raised their three children.

In 1996, they relocated to Central Oregon and have lived in Sisters since 2000, where Jim pursued kayaking, hiking, backpacking, running, camping, cycling and skiing. A part of his heart always stayed in Alaska and for his 60th birthday, Jim and Jeanne took a self-contained bike trip from Anchorage, Alaska, to Sand Point, Idaho.

Jim worked as a fitness trainer at Sisters Athletic Club where he was able to share his gift for recognizing and helping others to reach their true potential. He was an active member of the St. Edward the Martyr Catholic Church Justice and Peace ministry.

His family and friends will remember Jim as a man of irrepressible energy, steadfast integrity, quick



wit, strong opinions and spiritual depth. Jim lived by an abiding sense of justice and compassion and always strove to learn more, try harder and become better. He inspired others to do the same.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his brother Jon and sister Ellen; by Jeanne, his beloved wife of 46 years; son James (Genny) and grandson Zachariah; daughter Deevy (Jim) and granddaughter Zidane; and son Josh. Known for providing others with apt nicknames, Jim received one of his own by his then-baby granddaughter. To her and others, he will forever be remembered as “Dumpy.”

The family wishes to extend gratitude to the Deschutes County Sheriff deputies and Search and Rescue volunteers who answered our call on January 31. Your kindness and respect lightened our burden.

Services will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, February 14, at St. Edward the Martyr Catholic Church, 123 Trinity Way, Sisters. Memorial contributions may be made to The Shepherd’s House, 1854 N.E. Division St., Bend OR 97701 or Catholic Relief Services, www.crs.org.

## LETTERS

Continued from page 2

inclusive community outreach been accomplished, prior to the costly required government processes, the outcome of this project may have been different.

Let’s learn from these mistakes, stay transparent, find common ground, side-step name-calling and practice respect. We all chose to invest our lives in this community and its surroundings; we all should be allowed input in the trails that will impact its future.

Joanne Anttila

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To the Editor:

Boy, talk about sour grapes. Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) President Chuck Humphreys just won’t let it go (*“Trail advocates honor volunteers,” The Nugget, February 4*).

As leader of the STA, Humphreys chose to allocate \$25,000 of the group’s money to pursue an ill-conceived and under-supported plan to pave portions of U.S. forest land. Contrary to Humphreys’ attempt to position the project’s collapse as a “victory of selfishness over the best interests of the community,” the plan ultimately failed on its own merits. The reality is the Forest Service effectively pulled the plug on the plan after concluding that the initiative did not have near the widespread community support that Humphreys presumed his plan would garner.

Interesting to note that Humphreys’ adversarial language (“victory of selfishness”) re-confirms that STA leadership was never interested in seeking any sort of compromise with any group that stood in opposition to their project. They miscalculated by creating a winner-take-all scenario and consequently came away with nothing.

Economists refer to this type of failure (spending a bunch of money and having absolutely nothing to show for it) as a “poor spend.” Patch your flat and move on.

By the way, the section of the forest that stretches between McDonald’s and the entrance to Tollgate is still littered with numerous plastic neon flags that the STA was responsible for placing. These plastic flags are nothing more than litter and truly are an eyesore. Perhaps President Humphreys’ ambitious agenda for this upcoming year could include cleaning up a mess he left behind last year. There are many selfish residents in Tollgate and others who regularly use the fire trails in the area that would greatly appreciate it.

Greg Werts

♦ ♦ ♦

To the Editor:

Last week’s *Nugget Newspaper* quoted the Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) president as saying that the Crossroads Property Owners Association’s opposition to [a] \$1 million paved trail from the Sisters High School to Crossroads was “a victory of selfishness over the best interests of the community.” Over a year ago, a Sisters School District representative said that Crossroads, in opposing a trail, was only responding to rumors.

Speaking only for myself and not the association, here are the facts. A review of the facts shows that STA never contacted Crossroads or its more than 170 individual property owners to review their trail plans and to solicit comments. Then four STA members, including the STA president at the time, got elected to the seven-member Crossroads board of directors without revealing any STA affiliation and as a majority of the board continued to deal with the Forest Service on trails. For a time, the STA webpage showed the paved trail entering private property and roads in Crossroads until STA responded to a request to remove this.

Meanwhile, the Forest Service permitted one of their employees to chair the STA trails committee rather than serving as an advisor. He still is the vice chair. The agency approved trails to be built and signed on public lands on all sides of Crossroads with no contact to the association or individual owners.

When opposition continued on the trail entering Crossroads, the agency called our emergency fire exit an “alley” and mentioned using eminent domain to have the trail enter the subdivision. A legal opinion obtained by Crossroads stated that the exit was not an alley or an entrance, but rather an exit for use by Crossroads residents. When this approach failed, plans were discussed to construct the trail right up the Crossroads boundary and let users decide how to proceed. The Forest Service then was advised that if it proceeded with this plan, there likely would be a lawsuit charging the agency with encouraging trespass.

Make no mistake, most Crossroads residents I have talked to do support trails. They have said many times that a trail close to Highway 242 and ending near the Crossroads entrance road would be preferred. This route would provide a safe travel route for both children and adults and would respect private property rights.

These facts on this issue do not indicate selfishness or a response to rumors.

Jim Fisher

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