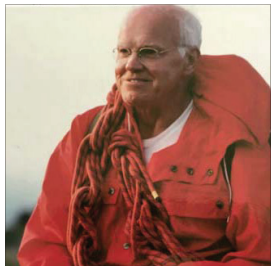


OBITUARIES



Norman Wallace Benton

April 21, 1923 –
Oct. 4, 2019

Norman Wallace Benton, known to many of his friends as Norm, departed for his heavenly home on Oct. 4, 2019 and now is in the presence of the Lord.

Norm was born on April 21, 1923, in Redmond, Oregon, to Earle and Clara (Woods) Benton, the youngest of their seven children. The family moved from Redmond to Creswell, Oregon, in 1927, and Norman was a resident of Lane County for 86 years before he moved to Redmond in 2013.

Norman graduated from Creswell High School in 1940. While still in high school, he became a member of the First Baptist Church of Eugene. He regularly attended church and was a familiar face as an usher, and for a time as the clerk of the church. He was a member of First Baptist Church of Eugene for 81 years.

After the outbreak of World War II, he worked in defense industries in Bremerton, Washington, and San Diego. Drafted in 1943, he was assigned to the U.S. Army Air Corps and was trained to be a B-29 bomber ground crew mechanic in California, Texas, Illinois, Washington, New Mexico, and Kansas. He was assigned to the 870th Bomb Squadron which arrived in Saipan in October 1944.

After the war in the Pacific ended, he returned to the U.S. by way of Iwo Jima and was discharged at Fort Lewis in time to reach home in Creswell by Christmas Eve, 1945.

Two years later he went to work as a rural mail carrier in the Creswell-Pleasant Hill area, a job he held from 1947 until 1979. He prided himself on his ability to work quickly and efficiently and his familiarity with the people on his route. He became an avid sports fan, especially following the University of Oregon's basketball and track teams.

His military service had taken him many places and as a civilian he continued to be a traveler, first making annual trips "back east"

to get a new car, but soon beginning to set his sights on further destinations.

His life changed on Labor Day 1948 when he reached the summit of his first mountain, the South Sister. From this first ascent, he was hooked on mountain climbing and began tackling other peaks in the Cascades in Oregon and Washington, and his beloved Canadian Rockies. By the mid-1950s he was actively mentoring young men and women in the skills and disciplines of hiking and climbing.

He then expanded the world of his climbing. In 1964 he climbed Denali in Alaska along with several other members of the Seattle Mountaineers. In 1965 he climbed the three Mexican volcanoes (Orizaba, Popo and Ixti). Over the following decades he visited all seven continents and reached the summits of the tallest mountains on five of them: Denali in North America; Aconcagua in South America, Kilimanjaro in Africa, Elbrus in Europe and Kosciusko in Australia.

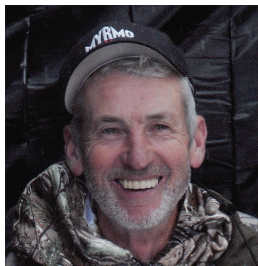
He climbed with the Eugene Obsidians, the Seattle Mountaineers and the Iowa Mountaineers. In 1967 he was part of the American-Japanese Joint Expedition to the Wrangall Range in Alaska that made a first ascent of Mt. Kobe, at 14,000 feet, the highest unclimbed peak in Alaska.

Articles about Norman's ascents of Denali, Mt. Kobe, and other peaks throughout the world appeared in local newspapers.

In his later years, he continued to take treks and simply travel throughout the world. Altogether he visited more than 80 countries in his lifetime.

Early in his climbing years, Norman developed an interest in photography and always traveled with a camera in hand, thus capturing places and experiences. Many remember his slideshows back in the time before digital photography. Norman also wrote of his experiences and those accounts were gathered into four volumes entitled "The Adventures of Norman Benton."

He is survived by 12 nieces and nephews living in Oregon, Washington, California, Colorado, Kansas, Michigan and North Carolina.



Frank 'Lowell' Solesbee

Oct. 3, 2019 -
Feb. 23, 1940

Frank "Lowell" Solesbee left this earth Thursday afternoon on Oct. 3, 2019 followed by a celebratory Willamette Valley downpour.

His 79 adventure-filled years of loving life began on Feb. 23, 1940 in Murphy, North Carolina, with his father Jerry, mother Annice and 12 siblings.

Lowell's short career as an elementary school boy wasn't an indication of the profound impact his years on this earth would have on so many strangers yet to meet. His home base of Cottage Grove, Oregon for the most recent 65 years is scattered with monuments of his ability to perform a vast array of manly wooden creation and construction projects.

His reverence for wildlife and wilderness was ever present in his yearly, 11-month preparation for hunting season. He funded his relentless passion for hunting big game with a remarkably skilled 60-year career as a faller (logger). His world-ranked, most dangerous job left many piles of brush, perfectly cut stumps and countless friends.

Lowell's only two mistakes in life were smothered by his quiet, endless kindness as a father to his lovely daughter and two handsome sons, as grandfather to seven amazing young adults and as great-grandfather to eight spirited children.

Among a long list of talents and lifelong principles, he possessed an ability to see past the fog of religion and man's faults at times, to a deep love of Jesus. He found his church, his office and playground in the "woods."

A Celebration of Life and Reception will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 19, 2019 at New Hope Baptist Church, 597 S. Front St., Creswell, Oregon. Arrangements in the care of Smith Lund Mills Funeral Chapel of Cottage Grove.



Seasons never change the same way in Peggy Bryant's backyard.. Last year, the tree was smattered with soothing purples; this year, a deep red, Bryant said. ERIN TIERNEY/THE CHRONICLE

Obituaries are printed for free
at The Chronicle. Email info to
Erin@Chronicle1909.com

The Columbarium at Creswell Pioneer Cemetery is located just west of town. Situated in a beautiful historic cemetery surrounded by Pacific Madrone and towering old growth Douglas Fir. Constructed of solid granite, each private compartment fits up to two urns and is complimented by a solid-cast name plate and optional vase. The Columbarium provides a simple, lasting tribute for family, friends and generations to come.

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