

obituary

Jim Fisher

February 20, 1935 - April 14, 2021

James "Jim" Gordon Fisher, 86, died April 14, 2021 in Redmond after a lengthy illness.

He was born February 20, 1935 in Sac City, Iowa, the second of three children born to Ronald Gardner Fisher and Vivian Onita (Michael) Fisher.

In 1941, the family moved to Oregon, living in Portland for the summer and then settling in Klamath Falls. There, he attended grade school and high school, graduating from Klamath Union High School in 1952. Beginning at the age of 16 and continuing through college, he worked five summers for the USDA Forest Service in fire control and recreation at Lake of the Woods. One summer there, Jim met his future wife, Dorene Ann Cantrall. Just 10 weeks later, on September 16, 1954, they eloped to Reno, Nev., beginning their 66-year marriage.

In 1956, after graduating from Oregon State University with a major in forestry and a minor in journalism, Jim began a combined 34-year career with the Oregon Department of Forestry. For four years, he worked in fire control and forestry assistance in Medford. He stepped away from the department to serve one year as associate editor at the Oregon Forest Research Center in Corvallis.

Jim returned to the Oregon Department of Forestry in 1961 where he held several positions over the years: safety officer, personnel assistant, training director, and five years as personnel director. In 1972, he became public affairs director where he helped guide the department through the environmental issues of that time including the impact of wildfires on homes in forested areas.

He also served in a part-time capacity as an instructor in supervision and communications at Chemeketa Community College for 10 years, and as an adjunct professor for the Oregon State University Department of Technical



JIM FISHER

Journalism for 10 years.

From 1962 to 1990, the Fishers lived in Keizer with their four active children. Jim served as president of the PTA at Kennedy Elementary School and served on the Local School Advisory Council at both Whiteaker and McNary. There was rarely a prom, homecoming dance, or special event that Jim and his wife didn't attend or chaperone, including the 1975 McNary Highlanders trip to Hawaii. He also served on the board of directors for the Salem-Keizer Babe Ruth program for several years.

He retired in 1990 and he and his wife moved to their second home near Sisters. Retirement did not last long for Jim. He served as executive director of the Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce from 1991 to 1996 and was a public relations manager for his daughter's public relations/advertising firm for 10 years. Additionally, Jim was a long-time writer for The Nugget Newspaper in Sisters. He devoted much of his free time to writing, RV travel, and enjoying his extensive library of books.

From the age of 15, he was an active hiker. In 1967, Jim, his wife, and their four young children ages 6, 8, 10, and 11 hiked 366 miles of the Skyline Trail (now Pacific Crest Trail) in just 28 days from the Columbia River Gorge to southern Oregon's Lake of the Woods.

Jim and Dorene founded what became the "by invitation only" Sisters Reride Association in the late 1970s to welcome their children and school friends to a gathering at the family home during rodeo weekend in Sisters. Over the next 30 years, the "Reriders" grew to more

than 40 members, including spouses and children of the original Reriders and they became a fixture in the gold section at the Sisters Rodeo. The group participated in the Sisters Rodeo Parade and beginning in 1993 became part of the Oregon Department of Transportation's Adopt-a-Highway program, picking up litter on a portion of the McKenzie Pass Highway near milepost 76.

Jim's volunteer activities included serving as board member and vice president of the Oregon State Employees Association, Chairman of the OSEA Services Board of Directors, Chairman of the Marion County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, and chair of the World Forestry Center's Education Committee. He served on the board of directors of the Oregon State University Dads Club and was President during the club's 50th anniversary.

He was named to the Pacific Crest Trail Advisory Council to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture (1978-1989), then served on the Pacific Crest Trail Association board of directors (1991-1994) as a member, secretary and vice chair.

Jim proposed the establishment of the Oregon Forestry Retirees Association in 1983 and later served as President and member of that organization's executive committee. In recent years, he was secretary and trustee for the Board of Trustees for Tillamook Heritage Forest Center, founding member and president of the Oregon State Fair Foundation, and a member of the Forest History Center board of directors.

In Central Oregon, he was chair of the Crossroads Property Owners

Association board of directors, chair of the Sisters High Mountains Dixieland Jazz, member of the Deschutes County Historical Landmarks Commission, and a member of the St. Charles Medical Center Foundation board of directors. He also taught communications at Central Oregon Community College for one year.

In 1965, the Oregon Jaycees named him Outstanding Public Employee of the Year. In 1991, he received the prestigious Bronze Smokey Bear Award from the USDA Forest Service, National Association of State Foresters, and The Advertising Council for his service in wildfire prevention.

A prolific writer, Jim was the author of several corporate histories, a centennial history of the Oregon Department of Forestry, a history of Oregon State University's Department of Microbiology, numerous magazine articles, and hundreds of newspaper articles on history, people and places.

In addition to his wife, Dorene of Sisters, Jim is survived by his children: Jeff Fisher (Ed Cunningham) of Portland; Sue Fisher (Addison Jones) of Redmond; Dave Fisher (Tasha) of Keizer; and Jerry Fisher (Gina) of Canby. He also survived by grandchildren Matt Fisher, Kim Fisher, and Tessa Fisher, and Keenen Dabney. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his brother Robert and his sister Patricia.

Charitable donations in Jim's name may be made to Hospice of Redmond (hospiceofredmond.org); the Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust (tillamooktrust.org), or to Keep Oregon Green (keeporengreen.org). No services are planned at this time.

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