

OBITUARIES

Guy E. Backus
Sweet Home
Dec. 14, 1949 — Feb. 3, 2020



Guy Edward Backus passed away on the afternoon of Feb. 3 at his home in Sweet Home, Oregon, at age 70, after an illness of several months.

He was born on Dec. 14, 1949, at the U.S. Navy Dispensary, Naval Station Tongue Point, in Astoria, Oregon. Being from a Navy family, while growing up he lived in Japan and at several locations in California, before permanently moving to Seaside in 1965. He lived in Salem for many years prior to moving to Sweet Home.

He graduated from Seaside Union High School in the Class of 1968. He was a 12-year veteran of the U.S. Army, and served in the Vietnam conflict, at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, Wiesbaden Army Base, Germany, Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He loved to hunt and fish, and enjoyed watching classic movies and professional wrestling.

He is survived by his wife, Joy Farley Backus; his father, Gouverneur C. Backus, of



Guy Backus

Seaside, Oregon; brother Charles S. Backus, of Seaside, Oregon; sister Tara B. Ruth, and her husband, Dennis, of Corvallis, Oregon; daughter Becky L. Hagan, of Weiser, Idaho; son Charles E. Backus, of Weiser, Idaho; grandchildren Jasmine Hust, of Baker City, Oregon, Kameron Pierce, of Mountain Home, Idaho, and Chelsie Backus, of Portland, Oregon; great-grandson Carson Backus, of Portland, Oregon; an uncle, John C. Riley, of Oregon City, Oregon; three nieces, two great-nieces, two great-nephews and cousins; and stepchildren James Bradford of Lebanon, Oregon, Jesse Rincon of Willimina, Oregon, and Maria Rincon of McMinnville, Oregon.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Shirley Aline Riley Backus, in June 2016.

A memorial marker will be placed at Willamette National Cemetery in Portland, Oregon, with private family services.

Weddle Funeral Service in Lebanon is in charge of the arrangements.

Jeffrey Ralph Riekkola
Astoria
July 11, 1956 — Jan. 30, 2020

Jeffrey Ralph Riekkola, 63, of Astoria, Oregon, passed away unexpectedly the morning of Jan. 30, 2020, 13 days after the passing of his beloved wife of 15 years. He died of natural causes.

Jeff was born on July 11, 1956 in Astoria, Oregon, to Archie and Dorothy Riekkola. He attended Astoria schools, working on the family farm as a boy, and at the Astoria Plywood Mill after graduating from Astoria High School in 1974.

Jeff was a longtime log trucker of 40 years, who loved what he did. He will always be remembered as a tenacious driver, trying to figure out how to get in one more load before the end of the day. He also loved fishing, duck hunting, bowling and Oregon's timber history. He had compassion for animals, and loved his Chesapeake Bay retrievers. Although Jeff was a bit rough around the edges, it was part of his charm. He will be dearly missed by those who loved and knew him.

Jeff is survived by his daughter, Kristen Patton (husband Brad Patton), of Spring Creek, Nevada; son Brian Riekkola (wife Chelsea Riekkola), of Anchorage, Alaska;



Jeff Riekkola

three grandsons, Dylan Patton, Ethan Patton and Sven Riekkola; stepchildren Mark Tornquist, Bryan Tornquist, Brandy Tornquist, Kelly Adele, Kevin Maakestad, Stacy McGraw and Meagan Maakestad; siblings Ben Riekkola, Dave Riekkola and Mary Nauha; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Jeff is preceded in death by his parents, Archie and Dorothy Riekkola; his brother, Jon Riekkola; and the love of his life, his wife, Robin Riekkola.

A parade of truckers will be held in his memory on Saturday on Oregon Highway 202, immediately followed by a celebration of life at Coastline Christian Fellowship in Olney at 2 p.m. Please arrive at the church early for parking and best viewing of the parade. Many thanks to J. M. Browning, his employer of the last 20 years, for their help in coordinating the event, and to all those in the timber industry who showed Jeff such great respect and enjoyed his friendship over the years.

Ocean View Cremation & Burial Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements. An online guest book is available at oceanviewastoria.com

Karen Jessmer Manners Wellinger
Nixa, Missouri
1950 — 2019

Karen Jessmer Manners Wellinger died at her home on Friday, Oct. 11, 2019, at the age of 69. One of her big wishes was to be able to create a home for her children and grandchildren to live in and flourish. Her children were present at the time of her passing in the home that she made possible.

Karen was born in 1950 in Malone, New York, to Elmer "Jess" and Lillian Jessmer. She graduated from Palmetto High School in Miami, Florida.

She spent part of her life with her family on the Oregon Coast, where she and her husband owned two mom-and-pop grocery stores in Astoria's Uppertown in the late 1970s. She went on to teach children's swimming classes at the YMCA.

She later moved to California and then on to Missouri. She was well-loved by those around her; even with strangers, she could strike up a conversation with just about anyone, at any time. But she was truly adored by children and animals, which she in turn adored back.

Karen loved sports, and she played soft-



Karen Wellinger

ball, often winning trophies and a few MVPs; she was the catcher for many successful teams in Astoria, Oregon, and Stockton, California; she loved attending sporting events of her kids and grandkids.

Her favorite pastimes included going to flea markets, crossword puzzles, listening to music and spending time with her children, Cam and Mariah Manners, and her grandchildren, Camila and Jacob Manners. She spent time checking in on her favorite people on a fairly regular basis, often bringing snacks, or something that the person needed.

A few highlights of her life included seeing the Beatles, Elvis Presley and Queen. She was a mother, stepmother, grandmother, step-grandmother, wife, sister, aunt, cousin, best friend and just a really hilarious and fun lady. She will be missed terribly.

A celebration will take place this spring. We hope to have a grand party, because Karen loved all things fun!

To honor Karen's life, please consider donating to Clatsop Animal Assistance in Warrenton, Oregon.

Robin Horton Riekkola
Astoria
Aug. 15, 1954 — Jan. 17, 2020

Robin Horton Riekkola of Astoria, Oregon, passed away on Jan. 17, 2020, at the age of 65, ending a courageous battle with emphysema.

Robin was born in Los Angeles, California, and resided in Orange County, California, until 1998 when she moved to Astoria, Oregon. Robin grew up in Fullerton, and graduated from Buena Park High School in 1972.

She was preceded in death by her father, Frank, and siblings Barbara, Frank and John.

She is survived by her brother, Horst; children Mark, Bryan, Brandy, Kelly,

Kevin, Stacy and Meagan; and grandchildren Gwyneth, Kristopher, Trevor, Lillian, Tiffany, Kaitlyn, Preston, Kaydence, Makayla, Ella and Luke.

A parade of truckers on Oregon Highway 202 precedes a joint celebration of life that is being held for Robin and her husband, Jeffrey Riekkola, at Coastline Christian Fellowship in Olney at 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Ocean View Cremation & Burial Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements. An online guest book is available at oceanviewastoria.com



Robin Riekkola

Concordia University set to close

By JIM RYAN
The Oregonian

Concordia University, a northeast Portland institution since the early 1900s, announced Monday it will close this year.

The private, nonprofit Lutheran university's Board of Regents voted last Friday to cease operations at the end of its spring semester. The university's 24-acre campus is expected to eventually go up for sale.

"The Board made this decision to prioritize the well-being of students, faculty, and staff and fulfill its fiduciary obligations," Concordia said in a statement. "In the Board's best judgment, a thoughtful and orderly closure process offers the best possible outcome for all affected parties."

The university said the closure comes "after years of mounting financial challenges, and a challenging and changing educational landscape."

Nearly 5,900 students attended Concordia in 2018, according to its website. The university said it's in talks to provide students the chance to continue their education elsewhere.

The university faculty includes 63 full-time and 172 part-time instructors.

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education alleged Concordia illegally outsourced some of its online programs to a private contractor HotChalk Inc. Online instruction was the pivotal force that propelled Concordia's rise to one of the nation's largest providers of Master of Education degrees. A \$1 million agreement was reached to settle the claim while denying wrongdoing.

Concordia, in statements to The Oregonian at the time, said it had not outsourced any part of its academic program.

"We have made certain that we have always acted in the best interest of students," said Madeline Turnock, a school spokeswoman.

In their 2018 annual report, university officials claimed \$113.2 million in reve-

nues — down from \$143.3 million in fiscal year 2015 — with the majority of dollars coming in from tuition and fees. The report also noted an "upward trajectory" of enrollment with more than 6,000 students worldwide on campus and online.

The university's strategic plan, called Vision 2024, stressed that officials would continue to "expand its physical campuses" and "ensure good stewardship of its resources and long-term mission viability while safeguarding a strong value for return on student investment in their education."

Just last week, the university held its ninth annual Victor Atiyeh Leadership in Education Awards. Rapper Common, the event's keynote speaker, spoke of Concordia's work to make early childhood education a priority and its unique partnership with Faubion Elementary called 3toPhD. Concordia later announced on Facebook that the event last Tuesday raised \$355,000 for student scholarships for the program.

By Monday, a few commenters on the page asked where the money would go. A school official responded that the university is consulting with the Oregon Attorney General and will "keep donors informed."

Wim Wiewel, president of Lewis & Clark College, said private schools with strong reputations and endowments will survive. But in this era of smaller enrollments, he said, no school can afford to stand still.

Lewis & Clark is considering adding new programs in data science, entrepreneurship and health studies. The education experience at private colleges is generally of high quality simply because class sizes are generally smaller, he argues. Lewis & Clark's student faculty ratio is 12-1, half the number of Oregon public colleges.

"But that's not cheap, Wiewel said. "So you need that brand strength and endorsement to make it work. Schools that don't have those assets are going to experience some difficulty."

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
49 42	50 42	48 39	49 41	50 42	49 42	49 38
A shower in the a.m.	Mostly cloudy	Cloudy, showers around	A brief shower or two	Cloudy, rain possible	Rain possible	Cloudy, rain possible

ALMANAC

Astoria through Sunday

Temperatures

High/low	49/30
Normal high/low	51/37
Record high	67 in 2016
Record low	13 in 1933

Precipitation

Sunday	0.00"
Month to date	4.68"
Normal month to date	2.43"
Year to date	22.82"
Normal year to date	12.63"

Forecasts and graphics provided by
AccuWeather, Inc. ©2020

UNDER THE SKY

Tonight's Sky: Mercury at greatest elongation east (3:48).

Source: Jim Todd, OMSI

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:26 a.m.
Sunset tonight	5:35 p.m.
Moonrise today	8:57 p.m.
Moonset today	9:09 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Feb 15	Feb 23	Mar 2	Mar 9

TODAY'S TIDES

Astoria / Port Docks	Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
2:53 a.m.	8.4	8:50 a.m.	1.6	
2:34 p.m.	9.1	9:17 p.m.	-0.8	
Cape Disappointment				
2:26 a.m.	8.5	7:53 a.m.	1.9	
2:06 p.m.	9.1	8:22 p.m.	-0.8	
Hammond				
2:39 a.m.	8.7	8:14 a.m.	1.6	
2:19 p.m.	9.5	8:43 p.m.	-0.9	
Warrenton				
2:48 a.m.	8.8	8:34 a.m.	1.7	
2:29 p.m.	9.5	9:01 p.m.	-0.7	
Knappa				
3:30 a.m.	8.7	9:51 a.m.	1.4	
3:11 p.m.	9.3	10:18 p.m.	-0.6	
Depoe Bay				
1:41 a.m.	8.6	7:22 a.m.	1.8	
1:18 p.m.	9.4	7:53 p.m.	-1.0	

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Wed.
Atlanta	70/57/r	71/62/c
Boston	46/35/r	48/36/s
Chicago	33/21/s	39/20/sn
Dallas	44/40/r	51/34/r
Denver	33/18/s	33/10/pc
Honolulu	78/64/s	80/67/sh
Houston	68/61/t	67/45/t
Los Angeles	71/47/s	68/47/s
Miami	83/74/s	83/73/pc
New York City	49/37/r	46/38/pc
Phoenix	60/43/c	64/45/s
San Francisco	66/45/s	62/46/s
Wash., DC	60/41/r	48/40/c
Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.		

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REGIONAL FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.											
Aberdeen	48/42	Olympia	48/39	Longview	49/42	Portland	50/41	Salem	52/39	Corvallis	53/38
Seattle	48/42	Tacoma	47/39	Yakima	53/29	Kennewick	56/33	Walla Walla	51/35	Lewiston	49/34
Wenatchee	46/31	Moses Lake	50/28	Hermiston	55/36	Pendleton	53/36	La Grande	45/33	Enterprise	43/30
Spokane	42/25	Pullman	43/31	John Day	47/32	Burns	48/25	Ontario	45/29	Caldwell	45/30
Medford	55/36	Klamath Falls	53/23	Bend	50/30	Medford	55/36	Medford	55/36	Medford	55/36
City	Today	Wed.	City	Today	Wed.	City	Today	Wed.	City	Today	Wed.
Baker City	43/29/sf	44/27/c	North Bend	54/41/s	53/41/c	Brookings	61/41/s	56/43/pc	Roseburg	55/38/s	54/36/c
Ilwaco	49/44/r	49/42/c	Seaside	49/44/sh	50/40/c	Newberg	51/39/pc	49/37/c	Springfield	53/38/s	51/35/c
Newport	50/41/pc	50/41/c	Vancouver	50/40/pc	49/39/c						