

OBITUARIES

Merledene Harrison

Sept. 23, 1928 — Sept. 26, 2021

Pendleton

Merledene passed away Sunday, Sept. 26, 2021, at a local care facility in Pendleton, from complications due to Alzheimer's. She had just turned 93.

She was born Sept. 23, 1928, in Spring Green Precinct, Wilsonville, Nebraska to Merl and Ada Rennecker. Merledene had an older sister by two years, Darlene "Dolly," and Bonnalyn "Bonnie," two years younger.

Merledene began school at the age of 4 in a one-room country schoolhouse near Beaver City, Nebraska. Herself and her older sister, Dolly, rode a Shetland pony, named Kewpie, three miles to school. When she turned 6, her family moved to Pondsosa. She continued grade school at a school with three rooms and an auditorium. She finished eighth grade in Baker City, ninth grade in John Day and graduated from Hermiston High School in 1945. She continued her education at BMCC in Pendleton taking classes of interest — legal terminology, cross-country skiing, accounting, basket making and astronomy.

Merledene took on many jobs throughout high school including the Umatilla Army Depot, and Moore Theater in Hermiston. After graduation, she spent time at Piersol Dry Cleaners. She was offered this job by the owner at her graduation ceremonies. At the age of 17, she moved to Seattle and started work at Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co., in the long distance unit. After transferring to Pendleton with the telephone company, she worked as an operator and in the business office until resigning after 16 years. She spoke fondly of her time in Seattle. Working later for Joe Green CPA and doing temporary work was very satisfying for her. She loved learning new skills!

She married Harvey Lee Harrison Dec. 17, 1955, in Pendleton, and they had one daughter, Holly Lee Harrison. They made their home in Pendleton.



Harrison

Merledene enjoyed many hobbies including cooking, sewing, quilting, painting and reading. It was always important to her to continue learning! She enjoyed traveling. Her first trip was to Tahiti. She had a "Tahiti fund" and worked hard to save for this first trip. She also traveled to Australia, Germany, Thailand and many other places of interest. Finally

her husband, Harvey got on board and they traveled together.

One of her most enjoyable things to do was make costumes for the BMCC Community Theatre and she also volunteered at schools and organizations that helped people. After Holly was born, Merledene stayed home to raise her, but always continued to volunteer and do what she could.

In 1993, she was surprised and honored to be recognized as "Woman of the Year." She lived such an enriched life surrounded by her family and many, many friends. Manners, good grammar and meeting new acquaintances were important to her. She could type with fire in her fingers, cook a meal from scratch like nobody's business and took pride in hand-writing letters and thank you notes. Her smile was contagious and she never knew a stranger. Before you knew it, you were sitting at their dinner table being served a home-cooked meal!

Merledene is survived by her daughter, Holly Harrison of Pendleton; two granddaughters, Kendall (Ryan) Hulce, Mallory Davis; and one grandson, Mason Davis, all of Pendleton; two great-grandchildren, Peyton and Phoenix Hulce, and one on the way.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her sisters; and her beloved husband, Harvey, of nearly 63 years. Today, they are together again! Mom and Dad, I LOVE and MISS you dearly!

Arrangements are with Burns Mortuary of Pendleton. Sign the online guestbook at burnsmortuary.com.

James Donald 'Jim' James

Nov. 24, 1933 — Sept. 10, 2021

Pendleton

James Donald "Jim" James, formerly of Pendleton, was born Nov. 24, 1933, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to Gladys Marguerite (Largent) James and Harry William James, passed away on Sept. 10, 2021, in Sun City West, Arizona, with his loved ones by his side, from complication of Parkinson's disease.

In October 1965, Jim married the love of his life, Margaret Simpson, and he acquired two sons, Kevin & Terry. In March 1966, they moved to Concord, California, and in 1969 their daughter, Kellie Marie James, was born. The family lived in California until 1972 when he transferred to Pendleton.

Jim was raised in northern Idaho and graduated from Priest River High School in 1952. After high school he worked in logging until he joined the Army and was stationed in Japan and Korea. Upon his discharge, he moved to Seattle, attended Bremerton Community College and went to work for Boeing.

In 1960, he started his employment with Greyhound Bus Lines and drove approximately 30 years until his retirement. While living in Pendleton, Jim had many requested Greyhound charters that he enjoyed; the Pendleton High School Orchestra,

Pendleton Round-Up directors, PGG, Elks and the Eagle lodges. He was pleased when he had a charter back east for the Centennial Celebration.

Jim enjoyed going elk hunting in Eastern Oregon and sometimes had success; however, enjoyed the company of the same friends he went with every year.

In 2003, after Jim and Marge both retired they moved to Sun City West, Arizona. Jim took up golf and went every chance he had until health issues took over.

Jim's friendship was easily given and his humor and love will be missed by all that had known him.

He is preceded in death by his parents and sister, Margie Kay Dunkle. He is survived by his wife, Marge; sons, Kevin James of Sun City West, Arizona and Terry James of Burien, Washington; daughter, Kellie King (Chris); grandson, James Donald Petaia of El Mirage, Arizona; brother, Jerry L. James of Sun City West, Arizona; and several nieces and nephews who were very special to him.

Jim requested his body be donated to Parkinson's Research at Barrow Institute, Sun City, Arizona. Jim will be entrusted at the Willamette National Cemetery in Portland at a later date.



James



Molly Keudell

Feb. 5, 1936 — Sept. 17, 2021

Pendleton

Molly Keudell, 85, was born and raised in Pendleton and passed away in Portland.

She attended Oregon State University from 1954 to 1956, was a proud Kappa Kappa Gamma and active in PEO. Molly had a knack for making everyone in her orbit feel special and loved. She was a great wife, mother and homemaker. Nothing made Molly happier than going for a drive, exploring the beauty of Oregon and having a good meal followed by dessert.



Keudell

Molly is survived by her husband, Ken Keudell; her sons, Barry and Devin, and their spouses, Colleen and Matt; three grandchildren, Alex (Allyson), Jake (Lauren), Maddie (Matt); and great-grandchild, Simone. Her family takes comfort knowing that she has reunited with her large circle of friends and long departed mother and father.

A celebration of life will be arranged at a later date. Donations may be sent to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

DEATH NOTICES

Lenora 'Susie' Esther

May 10, 1963 — Sept. 29, 2021

Hermiston

Lenora "Susie" Esther, 58, of Hermiston, died Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2021. She was born May 10, 1963, in Hermiston, the daughter of Max and Beverly (Bradfield) Dobbins. Arrangements are with Burns Mortuary of Hermiston.

Patricia Turk

April 4, 1945 — Sept. 30, 2021

Reith

Patricia Turk, 76, of Reith, died Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021, at St. Anthony Hospital. She was born April 4, 1945, in Sweet Home. Arrangements are with Pendleton Pioneer Chapel, Folsom-Bishop. Online condolences may be sent to pioneerchapel.com.

Dorothy I. 'Dot' Hensley

May 31, 1943 — Sept. 26, 2021

Hermiston

Dorothy I. "Dot" Hensley, 78, of Hermiston, died Sunday, Sept. 26, 2021, at her home in Hermiston. She was born May 31, 1943, in Pendleton. A celebration of life following state guidelines will be held Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2021, at 11 a.m., Faith Presbyterian Church, 1005 S.E. Ninth St., Hermiston. Arrangements are with Burns Mortuary of Hermiston. Please share memories of Dot with her family at burnsmortuaryhermiston.com.

Gerald Leach

March 19, 1962 — Sept. 30, 2021

Pendleton

Gerald Leach, 59, of Pendleton, died Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021, at his home. He was born March 19, 1962, in Bickburg, Germany. Arrangements are with Pendleton Pioneer Chapel, Folsom-Bishop. Online condolences may be sent to pioneerchapel.com.

Vernon L. Russell

Nov. 27, 1925 — Sept. 28, 2021

Boardman

Vernon L. Russell, 95, of Boardman, died Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021, at his home in Boardman. He was born Nov. 27, 1925, in Prineville. A graveside service with military honors will be held Saturday, Oct. 9 at 1 p.m., Riverview Cemetery, Boardman. Arrangements are with Burns Mortuary of Hermiston. Please share memories of Vern with his family at burnsmortuaryhermiston.com.

Victor Antonio Santana-Torres

Jan. 26, 1998 — Sept. 30, 2021

Walla Walla

Victor Antonio Santana-Torres, 23, of Walla Walla, died Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021, near Milton-Freewater. He was born Jan. 26, 1998. Arrangements are with Munselle-Rhodes Funeral Home of Milton-Freewater.

UPCOMING SERVICES

Saturday, Oct. 2

Bennett, John — Celebration of life at 11 a.m., Gray's West & Company Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave., Baker City. Reception following at Coles Tribute Center, 1950 Place St., Baker City.

Bishop-Banks, Jill — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Shockman Field, 210 Catherine Ave., followed by a gathering at Yantis Park, 210 DeHaven St., both in Milton-Freewater. A private interment will be held at the Milton-Freewater Cemetery.

Christman, Larry — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Cloverleaf Hall, 600 N.W. First St., Enterprise.

Colcord, Gene — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., meet at the Ukiah Thicket Cafe, 108 Main St., Ukiah.

Correa, Becky — Funeral service at 11 a.m., Hermiston Assembly of God Church, 730 E. Hurlburt Ave. A livestream also will be available. Burial will follow at the Hermiston Cemetery.

Gaines, Delbert — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Life Church, 222 S.W. Third St., Pilot Rock.

Pace, Kayonna — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Owens 5 Ranch, 84372 Meharry Road, Milton-Freewater.

Rhoads, Doris — Memorial service at 11 a.m., Summerville Cemetery Chapel, 67463 Summerville Road.

Sunday, Oct. 3

Davis, Bob — Celebration of life at 2 p.m., Elkins Resort, 404 Elkins Road, Nordman, Idaho.

Weathermon, Joyce — Celebration of life at 11 a.m., Island City City Hall, 10605 Island Ave.

OBITUARY POLICY

The East Oregonian publishes paid obituaries; death notices and information about services are published at no charge. Obituaries can include small photos and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. Obituaries can be submitted via the funeral home, by email to obits@eastoregonian.com or in person at the East Oregonian office. For more information, call 541-966-0818.



Thomas

Monte 'Terrill' Thomas

Oct. 8, 1971 — Sept. 18, 2021

Milton-Freewater

Monte "Terrill" Thomas, 49, of Milton-Freewater, passed away Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021, in Walla Walla. A celebration in honor of his 50th birthday will be held Friday, Oct. 8, 2021, at 1 p.m. at the Pioneer Posse Grounds, Milton-Freewater.

Terrill, a cowboy through and through, was born Oct. 8, 1971, in Walla Walla, to Monte and Dawn (Kayser) Thomas. He was raised on the family ranch in Milton-Freewater with his younger brother, Mitch. He attended school in Milton-Freewater and graduated from McLoughlin High School in 1990. Following high school, he attended Walla Walla Community College and then Washington State University, graduating in 1994 with an animal science degree and a minor in agricultural business.

On Oct. 18, 1997, he finally married Heidi Jones. They lived in Milton-Freewater, where together they made the decision to pursue Terrill's dream of running cattle. Their motto was "do what you love and you'll find a way to make a living," and they did just that with their daughter, Macy, born in Jan. 2003. It was never an easy endeavor and wasn't without struggle, but they never went hungry, always had a roof over their heads, and built a wonderful family and strong network of friends who have supported them steadily and generously throughout their entire lives.

Terrill was involved in many organizations, including 4-H, FFA, the Cayuse Junior Rodeo Association, NHSRA, NIRA, NPRA, PRCA, and both the Wash-

ington and Oregon Cattlemen's associations. He graciously gave much of his time volunteering when he could, as well as providing resources to anyone in need. He enjoyed competing in rodeos as a calf roper, team roper, steer roper, and steer wrestler, and could be found on horseback any time he had the opportunity.

Through the good, as well as the bad, Terrill's love was cattle. He had tremendous knowledge of his herd, as well as everyone else's, and his photographic memory was a huge asset in all his endeavors. He built strong relationships with those around him, and had immense appreciation for the good crew of people he amassed along the way. We will greatly miss the gentle and sincere way he lived his life, how he so willingly helped others and his expertise in ranching.

Survivors include his wife, Heidi; daughter, Macy; and mother, Dawn Thomas of Milton-Freewater; his brother, Mitch and his wife, Katy and their children, Neah and Payson Thomas of Baker City; his horse, Elvis; his faithful dog, Bud; and numerous relatives found across the northwest. He is preceded in death by his father, Monte Thomas, of Milton-Freewater.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to either the Milton-Freewater Junior Show, P.O. Box 379, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862, or Pioneer Posse, P.O. Box 478, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862.

To leave a condolence online visit munsellerhodes.com.

Ruth Ann Kelly

May 24, 1938 — Sept. 28, 2021

Lancaster, California

Ruth Ann Kelly of Lancaster, California, formerly of Eastern Oregon, was born May 24, 1938, in Nyssa, the daughter of William and Ethel (Willis) Parker. She passed away in Richland, Washington, Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021, at the age of 83.

As a child, Ruth lived in Kennewick for several years before moving to Irrigon. She graduated from Irrigon High School in the class of 1956. She lived in the Eastern Oregon communities of Irrigon, Umatilla and Hermiston until moving to Lancaster, California, in 2009. She worked in area grocery stores, drove busses for Morrow County schools and worked for Carlson Drug Store in Umatilla for several years.

Ruth married Ronald Coleman in 1957 and from this union three children were born: Kevin, Stacy and Michelle. Ronald preceded her in death in 1965. In 1967, she married Joseph C. Coleman and the couple had one son, Jon. The couple later divorced.

In 2009, she reconnected with her high school sweetheart, William Kelly, and moved to Lancaster, California. She married William Kelly on April 15, 2010.

Ruth enjoyed gardening, tending to her flower gardens and going dancing

with her husband. She was an excellent cook, made friends wherever she went and enjoyed volunteering and serving the communities she resided in. Her family was her first priority and she loved spending time with family whenever the opportunity arose.

She is survived by her husband, William; children, Kevin and wife, Robbin Coleman, Stacy and wife, Lorie Coleman, Michelle and husband, Darrell Gale, and Jon and wife, Dawn Coleman; stepsons, Bradley and wife, Xochilt Kelly, and Brian and wife, Karen Kelly; brother, Harold and wife, Dolly Parker; sister, Janice and husband, Terry Witherpoon; 13 grandchildren; and 17 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents and six siblings.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 7, 2021, at the Burns Mortuary Chapel, 685 W. Hermiston Ave., Hermiston. Arrangements are with Burns Mortuary of Hermiston.

To leave an online condolence for the family, please go to burnsmortuaryhermiston.com. In lieu of flowers, family request memorial donations be made to a charity of one's choice.



Kelly