

Walking On...

Richard Dorland "Mushy" Ray

June 23, 1947 – April 11, 2016

Tribal Elder Richard Dorland "Mushy" Ray, 68, was born June 23, 1947, at the hospital in McMinnville, Ore., and passed away at Willamette Valley Medical Center in McMinnville on April 11, 2016, after being ill for a short time with cancer.



Mushy Ray lived in Willamina, Ore., most of his life after moving from Crescent City, Calif., where he lived with his parents. He learned how to drive big trucks at an early age, being tutored by his uncle Bob Smith, who referred to Richard as "Dick" then, who drove off-road log trucks with Mushy and was right in the truck with him.

After he was old enough to get his commercial driver's license, Mushy branched out on his own, driving for many logging businesses in the West Valley area. He wrecked a few in his younger, more invincible years, but ended up being a driver who could drive just about anything, including being able to back up trailers hooked up to his truck.

Around 1980, he gave his notice to Zimbrick Logging and bought his own truck. He and his wife, Kathi, built that very used truck into a mobile home toter and began their own business as Richard Ray Trucking. They both retired in 2009. Retirement didn't suit him, so Mushy went to work for Hurst Berry Farm (HBF International) in Sheridan, Ore. He worked for HBF until cancer prevented him from working any longer.

He is survived by his wife of 31 years, Kathryn "Kathi" M. Ray and many children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, all who were from either biological births, marriage or a gathering of others because he cared.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Madeline L. Smith-Nelson; father, Arnold Houck; stepfather, John G. Nelson; stepmother, Joyce Houck; daughter, Stacy; and granddaughter, Mercedes.

A memorial service was held at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 30, at the Grand Ronde Tribal gym with a meal that followed at the Elders Activity Center.

Dallas Mortuary Tribute Center cared for the family. To send an online condolence, go to www.dallastrIBUTE.com.

Ethel "Josephine" Towers

Aug. 28, 1916 – April 13, 2016

Ethel "Josephine" Towers passed away peacefully at home on April 13, 2016, at age 99. She was with her family and caregivers as she began her journey to join her ancestors.



Jo was a descendant of Chief Tumulth and Susan Tumulth. Tumulth was chief of the Cascade Watlala Band of Indians and was a principal signer of the Treaty of the Willamette Valley, dated 1855. This treaty turned over lands in the Willamette Valley and the Columbia Gorge to the U.S. government. Chief Tumulth and his band lived near North Bonneville, Wash., and Jo didn't stray far from her roots.

She was born to Carrie Ethel Williams Grenia and Joseph Frank Grenia on Aug. 28, 1916, in Stevenson, Wash. Her grandparents were Charles and Amanda Williams and James P. and Ella Grenia. The golf course in North Bonneville is located on her Grenia grandparent's former orchard.

Jo's brother, Carroll Frank Grenia, was born in 1917. He was a decorated B-17 pilot in World War II.

Jo liked to say that her "claim to fame" was seeing Charles Lindbergh fly his Spirit of St. Louis airplane under the Bridge of the Gods at Cascade Locks in 1927. She and her schoolmates just happened to look out the window at the right time.

Jo met Bob Towers at a dance in Portland and they were wed in 1954. They were happily married for 53 years. Bob and Jo had an upholstery business in White Salmon for many years. Jo was a wonderful cook and baker, and her garden was her true delight. She grew beautiful flowers.

Jo had many cousins who adored her. She was always full of good humor and loved to laugh at their little jokes. She is survived by her stepson, Gene Towers, and a nephew, niece and a great-niece.

Jo was preceded in death by her husband, Bob; parents, Joe and Carrie Grenia; brother and sister-in-law, Carroll and Trudy Grenia; and two nieces, Rebecca Grenia and Debbi Grenia Cannon.

Jo leaves many friends and relatives who will miss her sunny disposition and her deep knowledge of Columbia Gorge history and her family's history in the Gorge.

Her burial was at the Cascades Pioneer Cemetery at North Bonneville on Saturday, April 30, at 1 p.m. A celebration of life followed at the Event Center in North Bonneville.

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For more information and to register online visit our website at www.NativeWellness.com or email us at info@nativewellness.com.
 Contact Rhonda Leno 503-879-2034 or rhonda.leno@grandronde.org

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