

Donald Davis McPherson

July 3, 1926 - Jan. 21, 2011

Don McPherson, of Kooskia, passed away Friday, Jan. 21, 2011, at St. Mary's Hospital in Cottonwood, surrounded by his family. Don was the second of four children born to William and Almie Davis McPherson, near Kooskia.

He was raised in Kooskia and Asotin, graduating from Kooskia High School in 1947, after serving three years in the U.S. Navy.

He married his high school sweetheart, Lorraine Yenney, in Moscow on June 1, 1949. They enjoyed 61 years of marriage, traveling and raising their two children, Kathy Ann and Donald Eugene (Gene) McPherson.

Don served in the U.S. Navy as a Seaman 1st Class, gunner's mate, on the USS Whitney, a destroyer tender, from February 1944 to May 1946.

Following an honorable discharge from the Navy and high school graduation, he and Lorraine attended North Idaho College of Education (now Lewis-Clark State College). Don and Lorraine spent three winters in Adel, Ore., where he worked as a ranch hand and Lorraine taught school. In the summers of 1950 and 1951, he was employed as a packer for Glacier National Park in Montana. Between 1952 and 1981, Don was a conservation officer for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, living in Horseshoe Bend, Lowman, Garden Valley, The Lapwai bird farm, Salmon, and finally moving to Kooskia in 1961, where he finished his 30-year career. During his career, he spent many hours searching for lost hunters, hikers, berry pickers, campers, etc., in the backcountry of Idaho. Don taught gun safety in the Salmon, Kooskia and Kamiah schools for several years.

After Don retired from the Idaho Fish and Game Department in 1981, he spent a few years as a law enforcement officer for the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Board. Don became the house husband while Lorraine finished her career teaching elementary school in Kooskia. Perhaps Don's greatest enjoyment during retirement was taking family and friends into the backcountry for summer fishing or fall hunting trips. While the second week of August might have been his most favorite time in the backcountry, he was known to spend most of the summer months riding the trails and fishing the high mountain lakes. He is scouting out new lakes and campsites to show us when we catch up with him.

He was very active in the Idaho Horse Council; Idaho Trails Council; Back Country Horsemen of North Central Idaho; state of Idaho Back Country Horsemen; and Back Country Horsemen of America, and helped produce the "Horse Sense Video." He was a member of the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) committee and helped develop a plan for the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. He served as a member of the Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) for the five counties in central Idaho, and was a charter member of the Idaho County Sheriff's Posse.

Don was the Grangeville Border Days Grand Marshal in 2003 and rode his horse in the yearly parade every year thereafter. In 2009, Don and Lorraine were the Grand Marshals for the Elk City Wagon Road Days.

Don attended several U.S. Navy reunions throughout the United States, visiting his old shipmates. He regaled in telling hunting, packing and fishing stories, and showing pictures to anyone and everyone who would listen to his tales. A stranger was simply a friend Don had not met yet.

Don went on several trail rides with the Hold Your Horses 4-H Club and enjoyed watching the members' growth in their horsemanship skills. He and Lorraine attended football, volleyball, basketball and baseball games at Kooskia, Kamiah and Grangeville, watching the local student athletes perform.

Don is survived by his wife Lorraine; his sister, Marie Palmer of Lewiston; his brother, Larry and Mary McPherson of Clearwater; his sister-in-law, Pat Yenney of Deary; his daughter, Kathy and Todd Brown of Grangeville; his son, Gene and Wendy McPherson of McCall; eight grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren; along with numerous nieces, nephews and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; older brother, William (Billy); and brothers-in-law Curt Yenney and Robert Palmer.

A celebration of Don's life with military honors will be conducted at 1 p.m. Feb. 12 in the Clearwater Valley High School gymnasium at Kooskia. The Rev. Luann Howard will officiate. A covered-dish dinner will follow in the high-school cafeteria.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Kooskia Ambulance, P.O. Box 339, Kooskia, ID 83539; or to the Tahoe Quick Response Unit, 786 Leitch Creek Road, Kooskia, ID 83539.