



Terry F. Oakes

January 7, 1946 - March 4, 2015

On March 4, 2015 Terry Oakes quietly slipped away from his family and friends to join his sweetheart of 34 years, Myrtha Wilson. He passed as he had lived in quiet, humble and honest dignity with his brother and friends at his side.

Terry was born in Bellingham, WA to Francis and Rosetta (Pee Wee Linker) Oakes on January 7, 1946. Raised on the family farm in the Mt. View neighborhood of Ferndale, he attended school in Ferndale graduating in 1964. Many will remember Terry as a gifted all-around athlete. Following high school, he was signed by the New York Yankees to play professional baseball in their farm system. The following fall he enrolled in Western Washington State College (now WWU). As with many others his age, he enlisted in the US Army in 1966 and served in Germany, North Africa and in the Vietnam War. His military training included operating heavy equipment, building military bases and other large scale projects.

Returning home in 1969, he re-enrolled at Western graduating in 1972 with his B.A. in History. Then using the training gained while in the service he worked for the Whatcom County Public Works Department for the next 27 years. He earned the reputation of being the best road grader operator the county had ever employed. Terry was known for his strong work ethics and dependability by all his co-workers. He was there to help build roads and then

plow snow from those roads. Working through the night during total whiteout northeast snow storms was not unusual. He retired in 2000. Thank you, Terry and all of your friends at the county roads department for the years of hard work.

An avid snow and water skier, Terry, Myrtha and friends traveled often to ski most of the major snow resorts in the western US. For many years they enjoyed water skiing on the local lakes, on the salt water at Neptune Beach, and the Columbia River, teaching several friends to ski. Fast pitch softball was a sport he enjoyed with many of his sports buddies. Whenever friends gather there are so many wonderful, funny stories from this time that we all love to re-live.

Growing up, Terry joined his extended family for many hunting trips to Eastern Washington. Fishing was also a favorite past time, as was photography. He knew Myrtha from the time they were kids and started dating while in college. A special joy of Terry's was traveling with Myrtha in his truck and camper to beautiful areas and parks in the western states. After finishing college he and his friend, Jim Hannah, spent a couple of months traveling throughout Europe. This was a great experience for Terry with his love of history. All who knew Terry knew his sharp memory for names, dates and events. Local, US and World history were always a keen interest of Terry's.

Terry was a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, WWU Foundation, and WWU Alumni Association.

Terry is survived by his much loved brother Mike, Aunt Marie Linker, cousins Bob Kirkham, Renee Pederson, Ron Fry, Guy Fry, Jack Balicki, several nieces and nephews and Myrtha's extended family. He was pre-deceased by his parents and sweetheart Myrtha Wilson.

Graveside services will be held at 1pm on March 12, 2015 at Greenacres Memorial Park in Ferndale. There will be an informal gathering following with refreshments and time for sharing some of those great stories.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Terry's name to Lynden Christian Rest Home, Terry Oakes and Myrtha Wilson Endowment Fund at WWU Foundation or the Bellingham Theater Guild.

Tribute Wall

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“ *It is very sad to lose another wonderful classmate, but I know that Terry is no longer suffering and is with his beloved Myrtha. I'm glad he was here to share in the 50th Class Reunion festivities, which we all enjoyed so much. May he rest in peace in God's hands.*

Linda Earl - March 04, 2015 at 12:00 AM