Our dear friend and long-time Methow Valley resident, David "Red" McComb, passed away at his home March 10, 2013. A friend to everyone who met him, Red was a fixture of the Methow Valley. Though small in stature, Red left a huge impression on all of us who knew and loved him. Always a gentleman, Red made many local establishments his home and endeared himself to the wait staff(s) with his always happy, congenial demeanor.

David "Red" McComb was born Oct. 25, 1921, to David McComb and Margaret Jane Huston, in Philadelphia, Penn. Raised and schooled in the Philadelphia area, he graduated from Roxborough High School in 1940. After graduation, Red set off on a cross-country trip that took him to the western United States. Spending 16 days hitchhiking to and from the Pacific Coast, Red became enamored with the West.

Frustrated by the lack of direct U.S. involvement in the war effort, Red joined the Royal Canadian Air Force on Dec.6, 1941, the day before Pearl Harbor. A little over a year later Red was released by the RCAF to allow him to join the U.S. Marine Corps. Red served proudly as a Marine through the rest of the war and participated in the landmark battle of Guadalcanal. It was also during this time that Red's interest in insects began due to his tropical environment in the South Pacific.

Upon leaving the military, Red enrolled in college, taking advantage of the GI Bill, and received a degree in biology/entomology from Utah State University. Upon graduation he moved back to the East Coast but found himself uneasy and yearning for the "West."

Taking advantage of a job opportunity, Red left a job in Georgia to begin working for the U.S. Forest Service as a professional entomologist out of the Portland, Ore., regional office. Red's keen attention to detail and uncanny organizational skills made it a perfect job for him and one that would occupy him for the rest of his working career.

While on assignment researching a spruce budworm infestation in 1968, Red was introduced to the Methow Valley. Commuting back and forth from Portland while on assignments, Red became attached to the valley and finally decided to become a permanent resident a few years later. After buying property in the Mazama area, Red re-assembled a cabin he had purchased five years prior from the old Copper Glance mine. It was here, along Highway 20, that Red would live for the next 30-plus years.

Perhaps Red is best known for his bug crews made up mostly, but not entirely, of young women who worked summers collecting insect samples and larvae. Many of Red's "bug girls" still reside in the valley and recall fondly their time spent with Red helping protect our local forests. Mr. McComb retired from the Forest Service in 1980 only to start working again for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources as an entomologist for another 16 years before fully retiring in 1996.

Red will be remembered for his dedicated attendance at various high school sports and numerous Methow events. He was a constant fixture at many valley restaurants, coffee shops and local hangouts, always taking time to engage in conversations with friends and community members. Hockey was one of his favorite topics and nothing pleased him more than taking in a good game or talking about one!

Red was preceded in death by his mother, father and brother, John McComb.

A burial service will be held on Saturday (March 23) at 1 p.m. at Sullivan Cemetery in Winthrop. A celebration of Red's life will be held later in April at a time and location to be announced. Remembrances can be made to Aero Methow Rescue Service.

The above obituary was published in the Methow Valley News
(volume 110, issue 45) on March 20, 2013.

Jim Evenden gave a luncheon talk on the history of the Coeur d'Alene Lab at the 1969 WFIWC. Attending were these former employees, from left: Phil Johnson, Dave Fellin, Red McComb, Bob Denton, Evenden, Tom Terrell, and Galen Trostle. Johnson

succeeded Jim as leader when the lab was transferred to Missoula in 1955. *Photo and caption provided by [Mal Furniss](#).*