

Richard Randolph Mason Sr., 80, died peacefully of pancreatic cancer while surrounded by his family Sunday morning at his home in Corvallis.

Dick was born Oct. 3, 1930, to Max and Lucy Mason in Ferguson, Mo., where he was raised and graduated from Saint Louis Country Day School.

After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1952, he was stationed in Okinawa while serving in the U.S. Army for two years. Following his discharge, he resumed his education at the University of Michigan, receiving a master's degree in the mid-1950s before marrying Lois Jean Oberdorfer in Iron River, Mich., on July 25, 1956.

The couple then moved to Cleveland, Tenn., where Dick worked as a forester for Bowaters Paper Co. and they had their four children. While working at Bowaters, Dick completed his requirements for his Ph.D. in forest entomology from the University of Michigan before moving his family to Corvallis in 1965. There he began work as a research forest entomologist with the U.S. Forest Service. Dick was transferred to the Forest Service's Forestry and Range Sciences Lab in La Grande in 1982, where he continued to do research for the remainder of his career.

Dick retired from the Forest Service in 1998. He and Lois moved back to Corvallis, but often returned to La Grande. Dick considered Northeast Oregon to be his second home. He had a great passion for nature, whether it be camping at Waldo Lake or working in his large backyard at home. Dick's love for the Northwest began in the 1940s while spending his summers fighting fires in Northern California. Dick loved baseball. He often attended games at the old Sportman's Park in St. Louis while growing up. He became a lifelong fan of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team.

He is survived by Lois, his beloved wife of 55 years; his three sons, Richard Jr. of La Grande, John and his wife, Sally, of Memphis, Tenn., and Phil and his wife, Kathryn, of Corvallis; his daughter, Anne Salazar and her husband, Steven, of Portland; and five grandchildren.

Dick's family says he was a wonderful husband and father and will be missed by all.

*Obituary from The Observer, La Grande, OR.*