



Donald Ross Cannon

July 11, 1936 - January 12, 2014

Don Cannon, Entrepreneur, Naturalist, Community Leader, Freethinker

Donald Ross Cannon, of Seattle, father of Linda and Leslie, Euro-traveler, handsome gentleman, and charming optimist died on January 12, 2014 of lung cancer. He was 77. He passed away peacefully in Chelan at Regency Manor with his daughters by his side.

He was born in Glendive Montana in 1936 to Harvey James Cannon, a train conductor, and Julia Rose Knoll Cannon. He grew up in Spokane and graduated from Gonzaga Preparatory School.

While he didn't serve in any war, he took great pride that no one crashed during his service in the Air Force where he was stationed at Fairchild AFB and served as an Air Traffic Controller. After the military, he enrolled at the University of Washington and in 1959 married Bonnie Lu Riegel of Spokane. In 1960, he graduated from the UW with a degree in Business Administration and worked as an agent for Mutual Benefit Life Insurance. He and Bonnie resided in Seattle in the Laurelhurst neighborhood. Linda was born in 1964 and Leslie in 1968 and he always claimed that having two girls made him an instant feminist.

Don was an avid outdoorsman, photographer and naturalist. He joined the

Mountaineers and the Washington Hi-Lakers, a group dedicated to high lakes fishing and preserving the mountain environment. Before the trail systems were even in place, he and his friends carried baby trout in backpacks to seed the Alpine Lakes of the North Cascades. He was an early member of Outdoors Unlimited, Inc. and in 1967, he testified during the Senate Bill 1321 hearings which helped in establishing the North Cascade National Park complex. Later in life, in 2008, a solo exhibition of his photography was held at the Golden West Gallery at the Park Headquarters in Stehekin.

In the early 70s, after his job relocated him to San Francisco briefly, he and Bonnie decided to move the family to their favorite vacation spot, Lake Chelan. There, he had several jobs including deputy sheriff, fruit broker and disk jockey at KOZI Radio where he never failed to play "Rubber Ducky" for his young daughters. He also worked for the great St. Nicholas at North Pole Inc. and was the town Santa.

In 1972, Don and Bonnie purchased a hotel on the lake and turned it into a four-star vacation destination called Cannon's Resort. It was a family operation and everyone was expected to work, including the girls who worked as maids or ran the front desk. Don loved working outside and interacting with the guests and kept the grounds impeccable. His absolute favorite thing to do was throw his assistant groundskeeper into the pool. His love of gardening showed in the beautiful cascading petunias that covered every inch of the resort.

For over two decades, he was one of Lake Chelan's prominent community leaders. He was elected to Chelan City Council, served as Mayor Pro-Tem, was President of Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce and President of the Association of Washington Cities (AWC). He was elected and served as a Chelan County Port Commissioner. He was the organizer and Commodore of the annual Lake Chelan Sail Boat Regatta. This last job was primarily so he

could blast off his vintage brass cannon to signal the start of the race. He was a member of Lake Chelan Rotary.

In 1976, Don ran for State Representative (and lost) as a Republican. He was thoroughly interested in politics and after “learning the errors of his ways” he switched parties and became an unabashed liberal stating “I didn’t leave the Republican Party, the Republican Party left me.” He even was a delegate for Barack Obama in 2008. A recovering Catholic, he was strongly opposed organized religion and did not belong to any church.

He always loved travelling to the headwaters of Lake Chelan in his cabin cruiser with his family, often taking his girls out of school for an impromptu fishing trip. He spoiled his daughters with ski trips to Sun Valley and turned them both into lifelong lovers of the great outdoors. His fishing cabin at the Stehekin River Resort still holds all his fly rods and tattered Orvis catalogs.

Don and Bonnie divorced in 1981 and sold the resort. An innkeeper at heart, he continued to work in the hospitality industry at Campbell’s Resort in Chelan. He moved to Seattle in 1989 and briefly owned and operated Ravenswood Gallery in Pioneer Square, and then worked at Inn at the Market in Seattle until he retired in 1999.

After retiring, he completed the WSU Master Gardener course and enjoyed volunteering for the organization. He also spent his retirement travelling to Europe, taking many solo trips as well as several trips with his daughters to France, Italy, England, Ireland, Russia, Sweden and Croatia. In early 2000’s, he settled in Snoqualmie and continued gardening, puttering, and spending time with Carol going to dinner and movies. He also loved being a tourist in his own town and rarely missed a Skagit Tulip Festival, street fair, art opening or opportunity to see something new. Foreign movies were always his favorite,

but we suspect that was because he was hard of hearing and liked the subtitles. His favorite movie was “Amélie”.

He was a tan, handsome, fit gentleman who dressed in timeless fashion in clothes from the Yankee Peddler. His signature look was leather slip-on moccasins, khaki pants, checked button down Ralph Lauren shirt, a hand-knitted cardigan, plaid scarf draped jauntily and a Sun Valley cap. He always drove a nice German automobile, either a Porsche or a BMW, and smelled like Chanel. He was often told he looked like Hollywood heartthrob Jeff Chandler.

Though there is no direct proof, he was convinced he was Irish. He loved old cats, blue glass, crime shows, Rachel Maddow, Husky Football and Christmas. He was a huge fan of social media and “liked” everything he saw in his Facebook newsfeed, whether he liked it or not. He spent hours searching online for the perfect cartoon, silly joke or cute cat picture to share. His last Facebook post was a cat hugging a dog saying “goodnight!”

Per his wishes, there will be no public memorial service. Remembrances can be made in his honor to Squirty’s Fund at Lake Chelan Veterinary Hospital, (137 HWY 150, Chelan, WA, (509) 682-5812), which assists low-income seniors to pay for surgery for their pets or to Kitty Harbor, (3422 Harbor AVE SW, Seattle, WA 98126, (206) 935-1919), a rescue, rehabilitation and adoption facility for cats & kittens.

He is survived by his two daughters, Linda Lu Cannon (Ian McFail) of Seattle; Leslie Dee Fichtner (Timothy Fichtner) of Chelan, his long-time sweetheart, Carol Ann Stevens of Seattle; his friend and mother of his children Bonnie Cannon Cammack (Gordon) of Chelan; sister Sally Casey (Pat) of Rathdrum, ID; sister Marilyn Hill Moore (Denis) of Mead, WA; brother Gary Cannon (Joanne) of Sandpoint, ID; and his beloved 20 year old cat, Rosie. He is

preceded in death by his parents and brother James (Jim) Cannon.

Tribute Wall



“ *Donald Ross Cannon*

January 29, 2023 at 08:49 AM



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Precht Rose Chapel and Barnes Chapel - January 16, 2014 at 01:05 PM