



Edwin Leroy Sondenaa

May 22, 1943 - February 29, 2016

Edwin Leroy Sondenaa was born into this world in Toledo, Oregon on May 22, 1943 to Raymond and Viola (Logan) Sondenaa. He returned to the creator on February 29, 2016 when he passed away at his home along the Siletz River.

Ed grew up with his two brothers on Ojalla Road north of Siletz, Oregon. During high school he was an outstanding athlete with a particular talent for football. It was during high school that he met and fell in love with Brenda Tindall whom he married shortly after graduation. She must have really loved him because their graduation-night date consisted of "eeling" by lantern light on the Siletz River. She married him anyway and within a few years they had built a home on Ojalla Road next to his parents. They had four children together, sons Loney and Jeffrey and daughters Angela and Annette. Ed would often load the family into the Toyota Land Cruiser and head for the mountains for long days of four wheeling, berry picking, and talking on the CB radio. Although their marriage eventually ended in divorce they regained friendly relations later in life when Ed would often shared holiday meals with Brenda and their children.

In the early 1980's Ed married Kimberly Shepard and became stepfather to her son Bruce. They had many happy years together as they enjoyed camping and spending time at the Toledo Elk's Club. This marriage too ended in divorce after which Ed remained single for the rest of his days. It wasn't that

he didn't like the ladies but his bad habits and independent spirit just didn't seem to be compatible with marital bliss.

One thing he was good at was working hard. Ed spent his whole life in the logging industry and was one of the many "damned fine loggers" that Siletz is known for. He worked every job in the woods from setting chokers to running loader and driving truck. He was particularly talented at running heavy machinery which is a trait he shared with his father and youngest son Jeffrey. He even spent some time operating a log loader on the docks of Oakland, California. Running machinery came easily to him and when things broke down he could fix the equipment as well.

As a Siletz Tribal member, Ed keenly felt the trauma of termination in 1954. During the seventies he worked alongside many others to bring Federal recognition back to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz. He served on the first tribal council elected in 1973. He also served on the Siletz Tribal Economic Development Committee for several years. Although work and family obligations prevented him from continuing on in Tribal government, he actively followed events as his tribe travelled the journey to self determination.

Ed was always happiest when out in the forests and on the rivers of Lincoln County. He liked to fish but his biggest passion in life was hunting big game. He pursued deer and the elusive wapiti with everything from a self-made muzzleloader to a compound bow and as far away as central Idaho. He especially enjoyed nearly annual trips to "the ranch" in eastern Oregon with his Uncle Elmer and their buddy Pete. They always returned with deer and great memories.

Ed was a lifetime member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and enjoyed attending their banquets to raise funds for habitat conservation. He was also a member of the F.O.E. Eagles (Aerie #2219), and a lifetime member of the

B.P.O.E. Elks Club. He was elected to all officer positions at the Toledo Elk's Lodge #1664, including a short tenure as Exalted Ruler. He was especially proud of their work helping children.

Ed was an excellent cook who could fry an elk steak to perfection and bake an apple pie to make his mamma proud. He grew a big garden and pressure canned the produce. He also loved to pick berries, go clam digging, mushrooming, and otherwise foraging for nature's bounty. He often joked that he was born 100 years too late, and he may have been right. A subsistence lifestyle in the coastal rainforest would have suited him perfectly.

He lived his life on his own terms and remained fiercely independent and strong willed until the end; just like he wanted. We can all smile at the image of him in paradise where the sun gently shines and the elk are plentiful. Rest in peace Ed as your struggles in this life are over.

He was preceded in death by his parents Raymond and Viola (Logan) Sondenaa; his son Loney Sondenaa; and a nephew Raymond Sondenaa, III. He is survived by his brothers: Larry (Debbie) Sondenaa and Raymond (Lynn) Sondenaa; son Jeffrey Sondenaa; daughters: Annette Sondenaa and Angela (Larry) Sondenaa; grandson Edwin Sondenaa; and several nieces.

A celebration of life will be held at the Siletz Community Center on March 12, 2016 at 11:00 am with a potluck lunch to follow. In lieu of flowers the family requests that you plant a tree in Ed's memory (maybe something prickly like a spruce).