



Howard Ross Pywell, III

July 28, 1944 - January 18, 2019

Howard Ross Pywell III, age 74, known to family and friends as Ross, passed away at Poudre Valley University of Colorado hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado, on January 18, 2019, in the company of his best friend, companion, and love for life, his wife Jan, and dedicated staff of the hospital after an uncomplaining 3½-year battle with cancer. He is now at home with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Ross was born on July 28, 1944, in Boston, Massachusetts, to Howard Ross Pywell Jr. and Louise Olga (Galley) Pywell. He graduated from Canton High School and earned a B.S. in Forestry at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, in 1967. He was inducted into the Forestry Honorary, Xi Sigma Pi.

During the Vietnam War, Ross served as gunner's mate on the USS Mullinnix in the Gulf of Tonkin and the Mediterranean Sea. His proudest moment in the Navy was the night his crew hand-carried star shells all through the night from the depths of the ship's magazine to the on-deck guns in order to light the beach for medics operating on the beach.

Returning to Amherst after military service, Ross completed his M.S. and Ph.D. in Forestry, focusing on Forest Hydrology and Land Use Planning. His dissertation, "Current Study of Historical Land Use Change of Quabbin Area 1952-1972," provided a foundation for decision makers in watershed management for decades.

After seasonal work with the Forest Service, in 1975 Ross began work as a permanent Federal government employee with the USDA Forest Service, serving on the Nez Perce National Forest Planning Team in Grangeville, Idaho. He moved to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as Senior Mapping Specialist for the newly created National Wetlands Mapping Inventory in St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1976. He transferred to the Washington, D.C., headquarters of the Inventory in 1978 serving as a biologist.

Returning to his roots, Ross was appointed State Extension Forester at the University of Massachusetts in 1980. In 1981, he moved to Fort Collins, CO, to continue his work as a

Wetlands Biologist/Cartographer. Former colleagues corroborate Ross was a central figure in the creation of a national geo-referenced wetlands database which has become foundational to managing wetlands in the U.S. His graduate work at the University of Massachusetts on "Massachusetts Map Down," a state-wide land use mapping project using remote sensing and geographic information overlays, was seminal to the creation of the National Wetlands Mapping Inventory.

Using GIS (Geographic Information Systems) expertise he acquired at University of Massachusetts and further developed through his years with the Wetlands Mapping Inventory, Ross returned to the USDA Forest Service in 1991 to work on the Forest Health Technology Enterprise Team in Fort Collins. There he helped to develop systems, techniques, and tools for aerial surveying of forest health including insect and disease damage. His contribution to the development of a digital sketch mapping system led to work and assistance to various states in the US. He also traveled to Russia, Taiwan, and New Zealand to promote the system. He authored or co-authored over 40 papers and presented his findings at regional and national meetings throughout the U.S. In 1993 as program manager he received the Forest Service Chief's Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer presented at a special ceremony in Alexandria, Virginia. He retired in 2004 with over 30 years of Federal Service.

He married Janice Elaine (Rienstra) Schoo on June 27, 1999, and is survived by Jan. From previous marriages he is survived by sons Jeffrey Mark Pywell (wife Juliann, grandson John Michael Paris) of Newberry Park, CA, and Jonathan Robert Pywell (wife Jen) of Corvallis, OR. He also leaves behind his sister Karin (Pywell) Alexander (husband Mark) of Bloomfield, NY; brother Mark Robert Pywell (wife Shari) of Seattle, WA; and three nieces and nephews. In addition, he is survived by two step-sons, Nolan Bruce Schoo and Jordan Cameron Schoo, both of Idaho, a step-daughter-in law and four step-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Bohlender Funeral Chapel at a later date.

Events

MAY **Memorial Service** 02:00PM - 04:00PM

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Bohlender Funeral Chapel

121 W. Olive Street, Fort Collins, CO, US, 80524