



Dwight Raymond Smith

July 28, 1921 - September 30, 2011

Dwight Raymond Smith died peacefully, surrounded by family, the evening of September 30, 2011 in Ft. Collins. He was born to Andrew Leonard Smith and Effie Simons Smith in Sanders, Idaho on July 28, 1921. His education took place in a one-room schoolhouse through eighth grade. At age 9, Dwight was diagnosed with tuberculosis, after having had polio. The prescription was fresh air, sunshine, exercise, and olive oil rub-downs. After 3 summers of living in tents in the mountains, where his dad worked as a lumberjack and his mom cooked for the crews, he was free of TB. His family moved to St. Maries so he could attend high school. After graduating at age 16, he worked a year ranching and driving a team of horses. He studied agriculture and forestry at the University of Idaho before working in Alaska at an army base. Soon he enlisted, which later landed him in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium and other major campaigns, earning the bronze star. During his service in the infantry, he met Carol Breclaw at a dance in Oregon and proposed to her 3 days later. She said no. He transferred to Kansas, continued to court her, and married her in Kentucky in 1944. Born in Czekaj, Poland, Carol moved to America with her family when she was 2. She and Dwight were next at a Brooklyn Army base where one day he was put on a ship to Wales without a chance to say goodbye. He did not see his bride for over a year. Moscow, ID became home briefly while Dwight completed his BS and MS in wildlife management. His study of bighorn sheep involved 50-mile snowshoe treks and living in isolated cabins. He began his teaching and research career with CSU in wildlife and

ecology in 1956. In 1971 he earned his PhD through the University of Utah. There were now 4 children, but two sons eldest: Alan and youngest: Mark later died as teenagers in separate car accidents. His wife of 39 years passed away in 1983. The losses brought devastation, then resolve, as Dwight planned an epic healing journey: a 14, 000 solo bike trip around the perimeter of the U.S. From this he later wrote *One Mile at a Time: Cycling through Loss to Renewal*. It was his second published book; the first, *Above Timberline*, describes 6 months of research and life! at 11, 000 feet near Buena Vista. Dwight completed the El Tour de Tucson 100 mile bike race many times, and several Ride the Rockies Tours. One "El Tour" was dedicated to him as the oldest rider of the perimeter of the U.S. Despite severe arthritis, he persisted in long-distance riding into his eighties, and rode in all 50 states. At age 64, Dwight earned his pilot's license; flying became a passion. He flew in 26 states and 4 provinces, and as far as Alaska. To Dwight, flying in the serene blue sky was as close to heaven as one could get. In 1994 Dwight had the good fortune to meet Yvonne Keefe of Denver, with whom he gratefully spent his remaining years. She has been his bike companion, best friend, supporter, book promoter, relentless advocate, and love. Dwight is listed in *Who's Who in America* and *Contemporary Authors*, and is a member of Explorers Club and numerous other wildlife, wilderness, and honorary societies. He was dedicated to wise management of natural resources and contributed some 25 articles and reviews to scientific journals. But more than his accomplishments, Dwight will be remembered for his individualism, passion, hard work, dedication to his students, strength of character, eloquence, love of family and all close to him, and wonderful sense of humor. Dwight leaves behind his beloved Yvonne of Ft. Collins; son, Gary Kati of AZ; daughter, Sharon Dequine of Aspen, grandson, Dusty Dequine of Carbondale; granddaughter, Kari Spencer Harden of New Orleans; and numerous other family and friends. Many are feeling a deep loss now, yet gently hold sweet and special memories. A Catholic Mass of Joyful Resurrection will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday at Blessed John XXIII University Center 1 block west of

Shields on University Ave.. Viewing is at 9:00 a.m. A luncheon will immediately follow the service, and all are invited. Contributions can be made to Pathway Hospice or Perimeter Bicycling Association of America PBAA in care of Bohlander Funeral Chapel, 121 W. Olive, Fort Collins, Colorado 80524 or to a charity of your choice.

Tribute Wall

JP

“ So sorry to hear of your loss. Dwight was a hard worker and such an interesting person.... Yvonne, your smile was always so welcoming! All the best, Jenny PT

Jenny PT - October 10, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ Dwight was a gentle man. We will always remember him as warm, easy going and highly intellectual. Our sincere condolences are offered to Yvonne and all his family and close friends who, we know, will miss him dearly.

Bill & Loretta Way - October 09, 2011 at 12:00 AM

AE

“ Colorado has lost a gentle soul. "One Mile At A Time" was such an inspiration our couples book club not only reviewed the book but invited Dwight and Yvonne over to our home for dinner and discussion. Dwight with his quick wit replied when one member said "So you two are living in sin." Dwight quickly replied with a twinkle in his eyes and a smile, "At my age there is no sin." I have recommended the book to family, friends, and many others. Some people found a great way to deal with a loss by reading this book. In prayer. Bob and Ann Eatman

Ann Eatman - October 08, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ Back in the 1960's I worked for Dwight at CSU, as a student and after graduation. We shared an office, and it was my great pleasure to benefit from his character, integrity, spirit of adventure, and intelligence. I have been honored over the years to stay in touch with him, and hear his real-life adventure stories. I trust that his wonderful spirit lives on in the many students and acquaintances that he encountered during his full life.

Jerry White - October 08, 2011 at 12:00 AM

RF

“ With my feet on the pedals, wheels rolling, and my face in the wind, I will always remember Dwight.

Randy Ramig and Family - October 08, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ Just want you to know how saddened we are by Dwight's passing. His strength of character is a role model for all of us. We will never forget the inspirational journey he made as told in ONE MILE AT A TIME. Yvonne, thank you for the many times you brought Dwight to Mass. It was a constant reminder of what genuine faith is. We know Dwight's life will continue to nourish all of us. Morris and Frances Burns Ft. Collins

Morris and Frances Burns - October 07, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ I'll always remember Dwight as "my older cousin." He taught me to ride a bicycle when he was a teenager. We were visited in Glendale by him on his ride around the United States. What an inspiration! You made our family proud. - Kathy

Kathryn B. Hull - October 05, 2011 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ On behalf of the Blomquist family and Dwights Aunt Ruby Blomquist, now deceased, I send my love and encouragement at this time of a great loss to the family and Dwights many friends. I will long remember him and the wonderful times enjoying his slide shows and listening to his accompanying stories. He was truly "one of a kind" and I held him in the highest esteem.

David L Blomquist - October 05, 2011 at 12:00 AM

TB

“ I share your loss today and offer my deepest sympathy and wishes of comfort to all of you. I fondly recall and cherish the thoughts and experiences that Dwight and I shared while he was my graduate advisor nearly 40 years ago. We shared respect for honesty and authenticity, and Dwight possessed a bone-deep commitment to these principles. It was my privilege to have shared time with this man. He truly exemplified the true joy of a purposeful life as George Bernard Shaw described. " I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as I live it is my privilege - my privilege - to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I love. I rejoice in life for its own sake." I will take the example Dwight set forward in life as I strive to work harder, love more, and rejoice in life.

Tim Baumann - October 05, 2011 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ We were saddened when we heard Dwight had passed on. His spirit, inquisitive mind, seemingly tireless body and love will be missed by many and motivational to many more. He was a cool, almost-larger-than-life great uncle to have among the Breclaw clan. Thoughts and prayers to all his family.

Taylor Polomis Family - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM

NH

“ I will miss Dwight and his wonderful humor and stories. He was one of my favorite cousins. May God be with you and comfort you as you miss Dwight. Know you are in my prayers. Love, Norma

Norma Hamilton - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ I didn't know Dwight other than through his book "Above Timberline" which I truly loved. I had searched out his phone number and planned to call him and tell him how much I enjoyed his book - now it's too late and I'm so sorry. My condolence to all his loved ones.

Shirley Cressler - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM

BL

“ It was one of life's special privileges to know Dwight. Sometimes gruff, often humorous, he faced many very difficult situations with grace and perseverance. I enjoyed our friendship and appreciated the care and concern that Yvonne showed for Dwight over many years. My deepest sympathy is extended to Yvonne and to Dwight's family.

Bill Lentz - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Our condolences and prayers for the loss of a wonderful man, a friend and colleague for nearly 50 years.

Jim and Louise Meiman - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM

LK

“ Yvonne and Family, We are so sad to hear of Dwight's passing and our thoughts and good memories are with you. My daughter Layne received one of Dwight's high school scholarships and that was our first meeting in 2000. During the years we have seen him and always enjoyed his vibrant personality. He will be well remembered and we are lucky to have known such an extraordinary man. Lauren and Layne Kaufman

Lauren Kaufman - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JM

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Jim and Louise Meiman - October 04, 2011 at 12:00 AM