



Richard C. "Dick" Fields

(January 10, 1931 - April 23, 2014)

Richard ("Dick") C. Fields, 83, passed away unexpectedly on April 23, 2014 while recovering from a fall suffered on March 19. Dick was born in Waterloo, Iowa on January 10, 1931, the son of George and Emily Fields. When he was 9, his family moved to Boise with his sister, Ann (Kaufman), and, in 1948, he was graduated from Boise High School, where his father was the principal and later became the superintendent of Boise schools. Dick and his two best friends (the "Three Musketeers") ventured outside of Idaho for college, with Dick going to Harvard, and the other two attending Columbia and Yale. Dick was graduated from [Harvard University](#) (magna cum laude) in 1952 with an Economics degree. After college, he served in the Air Force as a First

Lieutenant at the Miho Air Force Base in Japan. Dick fell in love with the beautiful country and a Japanese woman (Taiko Izawa, later baptized Shirley Fields) who worked as a translator and interpreter in the communications office of the headquarters building where he was the adjutant. When he completed his service, Dick became a reporter and editor for the Associated Press in Helena, Montana. He surprised his co-workers one day and announced that he was returning to Japan to marry Shirley. On November 25, 1957, they embarked upon their 57-year marriage with a wedding ceremony at the Lutheran Church in Tokyo, and a day later, a Japanese ceremony at the Japanese consulate, followed by receptions at the renowned Meguro Gajyoen in Tokyo and later in Boise. They returned to Helena, and Dick often recalled fondly the warm welcome he and Shirley received there, including when their first daughter (Stephanie) was born in 1959. Because he wanted to stay in the West, Dick moved to Denver to attend law school at the University of Denver College of Law where he was graduated with a doctorate of jurisprudence (Order of St. Ives) in 1964, while working full time as a supervisor of the editorial department at the Martin Company. He began his legal career working in Denver as a staff attorney for the National Labor Relations Board. In 1965, Dick and Shirley moved with two daughters born in Denver (Diana and Debbie) to Boise to be closer to his parents, and there they had their only son (Steve).

In Boise, Dick joined his childhood friend and fellow "Musketeer," Eugene Thomas, at the law firm of Moffatt Thomas Barrett Rock & Fields, where for nearly 50 years he counseled clients in the areas of labor and employment and litigation, trying over 150 cases in state and federal courts throughout the Mountain States and Pacific Northwest. For the last 15 years, although he was no longer a shareholder or salaried member of the firm, Dick went to the office every day he was in town, voluntarily serving the firm's Boise, Pocatello, and Idaho Falls offices nearly full time as a mentor, in-house counsel, and general troubleshooter. Throughout his lifetime, Dick gave his time, knowledge, and financial resources to a wide array of professional and community causes. Almost every lawyer and judge who knew him would say that he epitomized what it meant to be a lawyer. He was recognized for his leadership and ethics by many legal organizations, including the Idaho State Bar (receiving awards for Outstanding Service [1990], Professionalism [1992], and its highest honor, Distinguished Lawyer [2000]), the Federal Bar Association (Exemplary Service Award in 2008), the American College of Trial Lawyers, and the Boise chapter of the American Inns of Court, which he founded. He served as commissioner and president of the Idaho State Bar, chaired several Bar sections, and led many other legal organizations, such as the state's chapter of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the American Board of Trial Advocates, the Idaho Association of Defense Counsel, the Jackrabbit States Bar, the Western States Bar, and the Federal Bar Association. He also served as the representative to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. He was known in the legal community as an advocate for professionalism and civility in the practice of law and for legal education (teaching classes at Boise State University, Idaho State Bar programs, the Citizens Law Academy, and grading bar examinations for 30 years). Believing lawyers should give back to their communities and that there should be access to the justice system for all, he helped to establish and served on the board of the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, which provides pro bono legal services, and recently had volunteered legal counsel for pregnant teens and single mothers. He served on the Boise City Civil Service Commission and had lately assumed an active role in the Diversity Section of the Idaho State Bar, which helps to ensure that professionalism, nondiscrimination and diversity are promoted at Idaho law schools and throughout the legal profession in Idaho.

Dick lived the motto of [Rotary International](#): "Service Above Self." He was committed to creating positive and lasting change in his community and the world. He was an active Rotarian since 1973, and following in his father's footsteps, became president of The Boise Rotary Club, and then District Governor, exactly 30 years after his father served in that role, with he and Shirley visiting the 41-club southern Idaho/eastern Oregon district. He was awarded a Citation for Meritorious Service by the Rotary Foundation in 2005, was a district delegate to Rotary International's Council on Legislation in Chicago, and chaired the Permanent Fund Committee (raising \$1 million for its endowment fund). Dick and Shirley's philanthropy was recognized through multiple Paul Harris Fellow awards, a Rotary International Major Donor and Bequest Society membership, as well as a Greater Boise Rotary Foundation Robert S. Gibb Fellow award. Both Dick and Shirley recently were honored as the first recipients of an award that will continue in their names, "The Dick and Shirley Fields Award for Substantial Financial Contributions to Rotary," which will be awarded annually. Without seeking the limelight, Dick quietly led many other charitable institutions in Boise. Dick was proud to have served as the past chairman of the Ada County Emergency Medical Society Advisory Board, setting up the state's first paramedic program when the private contractor then running the county's ambulances suddenly went out of business. Since the early 1970s, he also was a member of the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army, and was given the organization's William Booth Award (its highest award) in 1999. As long-term patrons of the Boise Philharmonic Association (Dick and Shirley tried never to miss a concert), Dick served as a board member and two years as its president, helping, among other things, with formation of the highly successful Langroise Trio, in collaboration with the College of Idaho. He also represented the orchestra on the board of the Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy. In 1993, in recognition of some of these accomplishments, the Idaho Statesman painted Dick as a "Portrait of a Distinguished Citizen," an honor also bestowed on his father in the 1970s. Dick came from a family of educators and was passionate about education. He volunteered for the Learning Lab, Inc. (an adult and family literacy program), first as a tutor, later as its president, and then as a member of the advisory board, which spear-headed efforts to develop a state-of-the-art facility in Garden City. He and Shirley were the initial donors to the Anna Margaret Jones Legacy Society and he was proud that his daughter-in-law, Mary Jane Fields, became an adult educator there after having been

a long-time volunteer tutor. In February, 2014, Dick was awarded the second, annual Anna Margaret Jones Legacy Award for demonstrating extraordinary leadership and philanthropy in his dedication and passion for Learning Lab. For years, Dick also helped many local high school graduates obtain admission and financial aid scholarships by interviewing student applicants to Harvard. During the last several years, Dick's main endeavor was helping to bring a law school to the Boise community. He was the initial chair for the Dean's Advisory Council for the Concordia University School of Law and was instrumental in locating, developing, and promoting Boise's first law school. He also served ex officio to the Council of Trustees of Concordia University, in Portland, Oregon. The law school honored Dick's contributions by presenting to him the inaugural "Leaders in Action Award" in April, 2013. Everywhere they lived or went, Dick and Shirley made friends for a lifetime. They used many of Dick's professional trips as an excuse to reconnect with good friends or visit family. Including several trips to see relatives in Japan, Dick and Shirley traveled to over 35 countries on 5 different continents, attending 17 Rotary International conventions. Despite his worldly travels, Dick loved Idaho best. When he wasn't watching BSU Broncos football or basketball (or the multitude of other sports he followed), his favorite past-time was sitting on his back porch taking in the views of the Boise foothills or on the deck of his mountain cabin watching the sun set on Payette Lake in McCall. He tried to find the time to enjoy outdoor pursuits, like camping and fishing, and few knew that he also was an accomplished skier who cut graceful slalom ski turns on any groomed slope and was a runner both in his early years (running an unofficial Olympic-qualifying time in the 800 at Harvard) and later in his 50s and early 60s, winning age group awards in local races. Dick was a devoted family man who miraculously never missed his children's school and extra-curricular activities, serving as the PTO president at their schools, and coaching YMCA basketball. When his daughter, Debbie Fields Rowan, was killed in 1998, the dignity and compassion he and Shirley showed in the face of tragedy was an inspiration to all. Perhaps Dick's most lasting legacy is his role as "Oji" (a nickname derived from grandpa in Japanese) to his four grandchildren, Diana's daughters (Anika and Allison), and Steve's sons (Oscar and Koji), who Dick was proud will carry on the Fields name. He and Shirley spent countless hours babysitting, with "Oji" never saying "no" to just one more game of Uno, Scattergories, Apples to Apples or Scrabble. Dick will always be remembered as a gentleman and for his kind-hearted nature, great humility, decency of character and affect that inspired those around him to make the world a better place. He was a man that made others smile and feel comfortable in his presence, an affable and gentle father and grandfather, and a loyal, loving, and dutiful husband. The community lost a leader and our family lost its hero. We miss him, but we are all better for having known him. Dick is survived by his loving wife of 57 years, Shirley Fields, his daughter, Stephanie Bentley (Boise), his daughter, Diana Fields and her husband, Todd Fisher (Boulder, CO), and their children, Anika and Allison, his son, Steve Fields and his wife, Mary Jane Fields (Boise), and their children, Oscar and Koji, his sister, Ann Kaufman (Vancouver, WA), a nephew, David Kaufman and his wife, Elizabeth, and their children, Drew and Danna, and a niece, Cheryl McAiley and her husband Richard, and their daughter, Emily. He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Emily Fields, his brother-in-law, John Kaufman, and his daughter, Debbie Fields Rowan. In lieu of flowers, the family invites you to make donations to Dick's favorite causes: The Boise Rotary Club, the Learning Lab, Inc., the Idaho Youth Ranch, the Boise Philharmonic Association, Concordia University School of Law, the Salvation Army or [a charity of your choice](#). A memorial service will be held on Saturday, May 3, 2014, at 10 a.m., in the Simplot Ballroom, BSU Student Union Building, second floor, 1700 University Dr., Boise, Idaho, with complimentary parking in the Lincoln Garage, corner of University Dr. and Lincoln Avenue. A reception will follow at noon at the Arid Club, 1137 River Street.