



Eli "Bud" Ponack, 93

August 6, 1920 - March 20, 2014

Beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Eli "Bud" Ponack of Lewiston, Idaho, passed away peacefully at age 93 on March 20, 2014, at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center. Bud will be remembered not only for his outstanding achievements, but for his quick wit and the twinkle in his eye.

Bud was a native of Idaho, born August 6, 1920, in Sandpoint, and grew up and graduated from high school in Hope, Idaho. He started college at the University of Idaho, married Lois Conn in 1942, and then joined the U.S. Army for six years, serving as a pilot in the Army Air Corp in the South Pacific during World War II. Bud attained the rank of Major during his service, and flew troops and supplies from the United States to Australia.

After the war, Bud returned to college, earned his bachelor's degree, and in 1950 obtained his law degree from Gonzaga University School of Law. He started his law practice in Sandpoint and was elected as prosecutor. Bud also owned numerous businesses in Sandpoint, including a car dealership and a lumber mill.

In 1967, Bud married Patricia Strohmaier and moved to Lewiston to open Nez Perce County Title Insurance Company. Bud and Pat also owned title companies in Clarkston, Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint.

Bud was appointed as a magistrate judge in Nez Perce County in 1970, and served in that position for six years.

As a magistrate, the majority of Bud's cases were with

juveniles, where he found meaningful ways to sentence them in the hope that the sentences would teach, rather than punish. In 1976, Bud retired from the magistrate position to spend more time with his family. But retirement was short-lived. Bud was recruited to run in a "hotly-contested" race for 2nd District Court Judge in 1986. He won the election and served in that position for five years, retiring for a second time in 1991.

Bud was an active member of St. James Catholic Church in Lewiston, the Elks Club, Lewiston Rotary, and Knights of Columbus. Bud and Pat also did philanthropic work in San Carlos, Mexico, where they had a second home. One of his greatest contributions was purchasing and delivering the first ambulance to the San Carlos community.

Bud is survived by his wife of 47 years, Patricia; his four children: Peg Ponack, of Everett, Wash., Patty (Stan) Medlen, of Post Falls, Marilee (David) Garinger, of Manhattan Beach, Calif., and Ted (Denice) Strohmaier, of Lewiston; six grandchildren and one great-granddaughter: Joe Strohmaier, of Lewiston, Brad Ponack, of Lewiston, Katherine Strohmaier, of Seattle, Wash., Casey Bell, of San Diego, Calif., Ryan Bell, of Manhattan Beach, Calif., Tiffany Arrington, of Beaverton, Ore., and Sophia Ponack, of Anchorage, Alaska. Bud is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Viewing will be from noon to 5 p.m., Thursday, at Vassar-Rawls Funeral Home in Lewiston. A rosary will be recited at 7 p.m., Thursday, at St. James Catholic Church in Lewiston, and a funeral mass will be celebrated at noon, Friday, at St. James. Burial will follow at Normal Hill Cemetery in Lewiston.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Northwest Children's Home in Lewiston, or a charity of your choice. Online condolences may be sent to www.vassar-rawls.com.