



Dennis Loy Syvertson

January 21, 1939 - February 25, 2021

Dennis Loy Syvertson, 82, of Bozeman, Montana passed peacefully in his sleep on Thursday, February 25, 2021, at Lake Manassas Health & Rehabilitation Center. Cremation has taken place at Pierce Funeral Home in Manassas, Virginia. A private family gathering will be held at a later date in Livingston, Montana. Interment will follow at Mountain View Cemetery in Livingston, where Denny will be laid to rest next to the love of his life Dolly, his wife.

Denny was born on January 21, 1939 in Alexandria, Minnesota, the son of Thomas and Ruth Syvertson.

Denny's earliest memory that he liked to tell was about the cold nights at his Norwegian Grandma Syvertson's farmhouse in Minnesota. When spending the night at the farm Denny and his 2 sisters Marlys and LuVerne slept in feather beds warmed by coals in warming pans. He said it was a bit chilly; but, never unbearable as their bellies were full of Grandma's "Stuff in the Sacks" that they had eaten for dinner. Denny continued the "Stuff in the Sacks" tradition with his own children and grandchildren. Their beds were warmer than the ones at Grandma Syvertson's farmhouse, but their bellies were always full of the same tradition that had been carried down for generations.

Denny's favorite stories to tell his children and grandchildren were about his teacher in kindergarten tying him to his desk because he wouldn't sit still and about all the times he had to sit on the front steps of his parent's home for misbehaving in church. Probably the funniest story he ever told was about his Red "A" on his 2nd grade report card. He was very proud of that Red "A" and he said he thought he was pretty clever and creative at the ripe-old age of 7. In fact, the Red "A" was an "F" that he managed to edit and pass along to his parents.

In 1951, when Denny was 12 his family moved to Livingston, Montana. His mom and dad owned the Yellowstone Dry Cleaners and the Dry Kiln Lumber Yard east of Livingston. Denny was quite the athlete in Junior High and High School. He was a baseball pitcher

and a basketball star. Denny' basketball talent was known throughout the state of Montana, he was mentioned often in the state's newspapers and he captured the headlines a time or two. His athletic ability manifested in each one of his grandchildren and he was always so proud of their athletic achievements, but he stressed that academics should always be first.

In the summer of 1956 before he headed off to the University of Montana to play basketball Denny met the love of his life Darlene Jonasen (Dolly). They were married in 1958 and were married for 51 years before Dolly passed in 2009. After meeting each other they were never apart more than a couple of weeks. A beautiful love story not heard about often these days.

After graduating with honors, he earned his master's in applied science in 1969 from Montana State University. Soon after Denny accepted a position with the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington DC., and his career began at the National Photographic Interpretation Center. It was a very exciting place to work. The analysts from NPIC were the ones that were solely responsible for detecting the Soviet missiles in Cuba in 1962, so Denny was indeed thrilled about becoming part of an elite team of intelligence professionals. I don't think his family realized what an adventure his career would be.

From 1969 to the late 1980s he was both an analyst and a manager specializing in Soviet ballistic missile issues. He and his colleagues tracked the development and deployment of silo-based and road mobile nuclear capable missiles that targeted the US mainland.

In the late 1980s, Denny led a group of analysts who were responsible for assessing ballistic missile, and chemical/nuclear weapons development in the rest of the world (ROW). Notable among many accomplishments by the ROW group was the discovery and analysis of Iraq's SCUD ballistic missiles forces that lead up to and existed during the prosecution of the first Gulf War.

A colleague commented that Denny was always in his element when he was solving tough intelligence problems. In the early 1990's he went back to being an analyst because he loved the element of discovery and the work was exciting. He instilled a passion for the mission and the idea that they needed to work with a sense of urgency, as if lives are at stake – because they were. He worked in this capacity until he retired in 1996.

Although Denny was highly respected for his expertise and accomplishments during his career he never failed to recognize the people around him. He may have briefed presidents and took numerous awards for his work; but he never forgot to recognize

others and their contribution to his success.

Denny took notice of people and saw those that had promise, regardless of their rank or position within the Agency and he mentored them. He was the coach/father figure that everyone wanted to have. His legacy and Dolly's (she too worked at the Photographic Interpretation Center before retiring) legacy lives on in the current generation of intelligence officers and they are loved dearly.

After retirement Denny and Dolly moved back to Paradise Valley, Montana and built their dream house in God's country. They spent 10 years on their beautiful ranch. Denny hiked and farmed. He also spent time hiking and cross country skiing with his best friend, his sister LuVerne. Denny and Dolly hosted their friends and family at the ranch often and they opened their home to everyone. They rekindled friendships that they had started in high school and the 10 years in the Valley were indeed special.

Denny lived his life to the fullest; he played ball, he hiked and climbed mountains, he traveled to Europe, he briefed Presidents, he was a great neighbor and friend, he cooked great wings his buddy Charlie, he challenged his children and grandchildren constantly and he loved his best friend and wife Dolly. He did not miss a moment of the time he had on this earth. He instilled in his grandchildren the passion to be the best they could be, and he made them laugh with his silly stories and sayings that made him a powerful influencer even when he was being serious. He will be missed so much but his legacy to be a good person will live on in every family member and friend he influenced.

Denny was preceded in death by his parents; his darling wife, Dolly; and his sister Marlys. He is survived by his sister LuVerne of Livingston, Montana, numerous nieces and nephews, his daughter Tammara Hoover and her husband Mike of Gainesville Va, his son Mark Syvertson and his wife Suzanne of Billings Montana, 9 successful grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren and another great grandchild on the way.

Because Denny loved to hike and he loved Montana, the family has requested in lieu of flowers and cards that donations of memorial be directed in his name to the Gallatin Valley Land Trust in Bozeman, Montana, PO Box 7021 Bozeman, MT 59771, 406-587-8404, a not-for-profit trail preservation and management organization.