

# Boyd Wilson

## August 9, 2021



**Olympia, Washington**  
- Boyd Chester Wilson, a father and a forester whose upbeat personality won him a wide and diverse circle of friends, died August 9, 2021 at age 88 in Olympia.

Boyd was born in 1932 to Chester Wilson and Blanche Sundholm Wilson. He grew up in Bothell, Wash., often sharing a room and adventures with his younger brother, Gordon. As a hard-to-tackle halfback on the football teams at Bothell High School and Everett Community College, Boyd earned all-star honors and the nickname "Hula Hips Wilson."

In the 1950s, Boyd served in the Army and later parachuted out of airplanes to fight fires in Montana and Idaho as a member of the legendary Smokejumpers. In 1955, he married his first wife, Betty.

After earning forestry degrees at the University of

Washington, Boyd joined the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. In the mid-1960s, he organized the DNR's tree seed collection operation, which included planning the design and construction of processing and storage facilities. Soon after, he created the DNR's Tree Improvement Program — aimed at breeding larger and healthier trees — and was responsible for its direction until his retirement.

Boyd loved being in a forest, especially alongside his favorite tree, the Douglas fir. He also enjoyed raising garden vegetables, growing apple trees, doing crossword puzzles, reading, and following Husky football. He was fond of making — and eating — almost any kind of pie.

Boyd had a playful sense of humor. When his young children wanted a pet dog, Boyd agreed on the condition that he get to name it. That's how the family ended up with a dog named Kitty.

A generation later, when his small grandchildren asked to cut his hair, Boyd happily agreed. Sure, the kids were less-than-stellar barbers, but it was an exuberant experience no one would forget.

Boyd was a longtime runner, and once hiked the Grand Canyon rim-to-rim twice within three days.

He loved to travel, visiting historical sites and natural wonders across the United States and Canada, often

with his second wife, Wendy, who he married in 2000. With friends, Boyd and Wendy enjoyed the surprises of "mystery trips" where only half of the group knew the destination. He also traveled to China, Argentina, Chile, and Australia to study their forestry practices.

Mostly, Boyd loved people. He made friends easily with his consistently positive attitude, inviting approach, and the fact that he genuinely enjoyed talking to others and hearing what they had to say.

Boyd regarded family as more important than anything. He is survived by his daughter and her husband, Cindy Wilson and William Graeber, and his son and his wife, Scott Wilson and Barbara Kingsley-Wilson. He is also survived by his brother Gordon Wilson; grandchildren Jessica A. Graeber (Steve Rodriguez), Zachary Graeber (Jessica B. Graeber), Forrest Graeber (Maggie Smith), Eleanor Wilson and Drew Wilson; and great-grandsons Liam and Emmett; along with many treasured extended family and friends. He was preceded in death by his wife, Wendy Wilson.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, September 11th at Noon in the Main Shelter at Burfoot Park in Olympia. For more information visit, [www.FuneralAlternatives.org](http://www.FuneralAlternatives.org)