



## Paul S. Bernsen

September 8, 1931 - November 11, 2010

The Columbia Basin lost a favorite son on November 11, 2010. Despite being born in Boston, Mass., Paul S. Bernsen (aka "The Silver Fox") spent the majority of his life here in eastern Washington, raising his family, growing his business, and becoming a household name among hunting aficionados in this area and beyond.

He was a beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and a dear friend to many.

Born on September 8, 1931 to Margaret Anne McNeill and James Sydney Bernsen, Paul was the oldest of six. He moved to Washington in the early 1950s and served his country on Moses Lake's Larson Air Force Base. In 1953 he married Judith Lee Hargraves, with whom he had four children. Over the next several decades, he distinguished himself as a top salesman for Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance, earning membership at the Million Dollar Round Table for 25 consecutive years. Also a charter member of the Moses Lake Businessman's Association, he was instrumental in bringing the Hallmark Inn to the town.

Besides also functioning as the occasional record producer, Bernsen was a prolific author. His books include *The Bugle of the Elk*, *The Goose That Went to Hollywood*, and, his best-known work and genre bestseller, *The North American Waterfowler*.

He will be forever remembered for his generosity. Whether surprising his grown children and their families with fresh salmon dinners or hiring crews

from Pasco's Union Gospel Mission, Bernsen was always willing to share what he had. He was even known to use his expertise to help local farmers recover lost water rights from the government.

Bernsen was an avid sports fan, particularly the Boston Red Sox. He also had a near-perfect attendance record at the games of his grandchildren.

Sometimes this meant spending the first quarter cheering on a grandson, driving fifty miles, then arriving in time for the last quarter of a granddaughter's game.

He is perhaps most famous for his work as a land developer and pioneer in waterfowl clubs. Bernsen developed thousands of acres of land throughout the Columbia Basin, from cherry and apple orchards and thousands of acres of farm ground to Moses Lake's Sand Castle Estates. He started Snake River Goose Camps in Walla Walla County, which was eventually sold to Ralph Broetje to become Jubilee Christian School. He developed thousands of acres of pristine wetlands throughout Washington state. The Basin Goose and Duck Club he founded over sixty years ago has become Eagle Lakes Ranch, which is still operated by his sons and grandsons. His unique waterfowl style is still evident everywhere.

Bernsen was preceded in death by Judy in 2002. He is survived by his siblings James Bernsen, Anne Musmeci, Peggy Jacques, Besty Galeota, and John Bernsen; his four children, Debbie Walker and husband Ric, Tony Bernsen and wife Tina, Tammy Newman, and Mike Bernsen and his wife Debi; his twelve grandchildren, Lindsay Stabler Poteet, Kaci Hobart and husband Keith, Amanda Walker, Ryan Bernsen and wife Jessica, Tyler Bernsen, Caz Newman, Brock Newman, Kayla Bernsen, Beau Bernsen, Bailey Newman, Jake Bernsen, and Samantha Newman; and four great-grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements will be handled by Kayser's Chapel of Memories in Moses Lake, with a private service for family. Please sign the book or leave a note for the family at [www.kayserschapel.com](http://www.kayserschapel.com) An open house celebrating Paul's life will be held at Eagle Lakes Lodge, 903 Eagle Rd, Othello, Wash. on

Saturday, November 20th from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. for all wishing to attend. In lieu of flowers, please feel free to make a donation in Paul's name to Ducks Unlimited's Greenwing Program supporting youth waterfowling.

# Previous Events

## Service

NOV **20**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Eagle Lakes Ranch Lodge  
903 Eagle Road  
Othello, WA

# Tribute Wall

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“ Please accept my sincere condolences. Mr Bernsen sounds like the perfect gentleman. I believe that I am now the owner of a DeLorean that Mr Bernsen once owned. If anyone from your family would like to confirm that, I would love to speak to you  
davylah@googlemail.com  
Thank you for your time

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David Fox - May 28, 2021 at 12:42 PM



“ I love you Paul, you will never be forgotton, and can never be replaced.  
My heart and prayers go out to the Bernsen extended family, who had the honer to call him Dad, Grandpa and father in law.  
He was a very special man to many, and boy did he love his family.  
Love, Tim##imported-begin##Tim Stabler##imported-end##

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December 21, 2010 at 07:42 PM



“ Debbie, I knew you when your family lived in Warden, just down the street from my house. And I remember when your sister (Tammy) was hit by a car.  
Just wanted to say how sorry I am to hear of your dad's passing away. I have lost both of my parents also. Keep the memories close to your heart. Prayers, along with time will help lessen the sorrow you are now feeling.  
With Sympathy,  
Audrey Gardner Entzel##imported-begin##Audrey (Gardner) Entzel##imported-end##

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December 03, 2010 at 12:16 AM



“ Chapin Henry and Phil Koon became followers of Paul in 1967-68 as 1st members of the new China Bar Goose Ranch on the Columbia below Wanapaum. The next year we became members of The Paul Bernsen Public Relation Co. with Pauls lease of all the Othello South property. Hunting with my kids was spectacular and the company grew to something amazing under Mike at Eagle Lake. Such was the super creative mind of my friend "Potholes Paul Grand Mogul of the Big Bend Country". It was a privledge knowing Paul and his very special family - my best to all!##imported-begin##Phil Koon, Todd, Ann and Steve##imported-end##

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November 30, 2010 at 02:34 PM

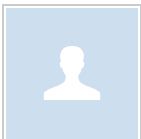


“ Your father touched the lives of many that he did not even know. I gave my son his North American Waterfowl Book some 20 years ago. Mark still reads it every year before the season starts and he plans to pass it on to his future children.  
"little Ducks and Little Boys"

What a great life##imported-begin##Arlan Hackett##imported-end##

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November 20, 2010 at 06:20 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Pauls passing. Rhonda and I always enjoyed his visits. We were surprised many times by visits from Paul with boxes of cherries and fresh salmon. He was always going four different directions and always full speed. We will miss him.

Terry and Rhonda Melbye##imported-begin##Terry Melbye##imported-end##

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November 20, 2010 at 03:36 PM



“ i'm so sorry to hear about paul. i was just thinking about him the other day after bumping into him at the volleyball game in richland recently.i thought, doesn't this guy miss any games???? i guess not because thu out the years, i've seen him at dozens of games while his kids and grand kids played in moses lake, tri-cites,yakima wenatchee, connell and even in arizona. a dedicated father and grandfather.##imported-begin##tom davenport##imported-end##

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November 20, 2010 at 02:12 PM



“ Sorry to hear about your loss. Thank you very much for your hard work in these sad times and hope every one is doing well.

Craig##imported-begin##Craig Vollert##imported-end##

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November 19, 2010 at 11:39 PM



“ After hearing that Paul had passed away I closed my eyes and the first thing I saw was his "smile" while he was watching Ryan and Kaci play basketball or baseball. If they were playing he was there. Always dressed in a suit, cowboy boots and ready to watch the game. He was very proud of his grandchildren and family.##imported-begin##Kathy Berg##imported-end##

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November 19, 2010 at 09:26 PM



“ Dear Tony & Tina,  
My prayers will be with you,praying that God will help you with the pain in your hearts that comes with the passing of the people we Love so much. I am sending a Big Hug.  
Shari Hubbard Salinas###imported-begin##Shari Salinas###imported-end##

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November 19, 2010 at 02:57 PM



“ Tony and Mike, we are never ready to accept the loss of a parent. You will have many memories for sharing and laughing. Prayers for the all of the family.###imported-begin##Bob Trask Jr.###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 08:45 PM



“ Deb, Ric, Amanda and family...my heart goes out to you in the loss of your father, grandfather, uncle, and brother. Paul was an unique individual with a giving and generous spirit. May the memories that you have of Paul put a smile on your face and a lightness in your heart...He lived life to the fullest and he did it, "his way"...just like my mom...You are in my thoughts and prayers... Love, Evie###imported-begin##Evelyn Gray###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 05:45 PM



“ God Bless and keep you.###imported-begin##Darren and Cindy Fricke###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 04:58 PM





“ Dear family and friends:  
It has been my pleasure knowing Paul for the past 20 years. Paul and I teased each other that we aged like wine "mighty fine". he will be missed as he was a familiar face here at Broetje Orchards. May he be in God's loving arms. Please accept my heart felt condolences for your loss.  
Eva Madrigal###imported-begin###Eva Madrigal###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 11:16 AM



“ Mike and Family,  
Sorry for your loss. I always enjoyed talking to Paul during the "Cherry Patch" days.  
  
Best Wishes,  
  
Dan###imported-begin###Dan Rothrock###imported-end##

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November 17, 2010 at 10:59 AM



“ Paul is as free as the Spirit of Susy and Tatonka. Ye Olde Friend of the Marshey Glen... When the Winds of Fall Begin to call... Think of Me.  
  
I think of you today, Debbie, Tony, Tammy and Mike.###imported-begin###Judy (McNabb) Martin###imported-end##

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November 16, 2010 at 10:28 PM



“ Mike, Tony & Family

*I was sorry to read about Paul today!*

*He was one of a kind!! I have many good memories with my father Roy Nordby, friend Bruce Pickering and Paul hunting throughout the eastside for many years. Very few people find the passion for anything in life to match Paul's passion for hunting and sharing that passion with others. Mike & Tony, you've got some big shoes to fill! Thanks for the memories Paul! Take care!##imported-begin##Steve Nordby##imported-end##*

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November 16, 2010 at 08:58 PM



“ *Best wishes to Paul's family. When Debbie worked with my husband at Juvenile, many years ago, Paul's generosity was extended to us with tickets to much enjoyed Mariner games. Know that his life was filled with generousities and many friends over the years. Enjoy your memories.##imported-begin##Barbara Cornwell##imported-end##*

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November 16, 2010 at 08:58 PM



“ *I am sorry to hear of Paul's passing. Many hours were spent with him watching kids baseball games,he always had an interesting story or two or three or four to tell.Take care Mike and Ryan.##imported-begin##Mike Fish##imported-end##*

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November 16, 2010 at 01:44 PM



“ I have two main passions in life, family & hunting. Your father is one of the main reasons for the latter. Talking about a person with passion and energy. My imprinted mimories as an 8 year old newbie hunter of your dad with his gift of gab and limericks just made it exciting. Meeting at your house in Moses Lake early-early to gear up, to your dad shooting off cracker shells at Black Rock as we all lined up for the pass over shots, dinners at the Porterhouse, discussions of his beloved Bruins, the smell of cigars, cooking for him and the group at the Snake River Ranch one weekend and watching him eat bacon, toast and coke for breakfast. Ah, yes those were the days. I may forget what I did last week but those memories I can still see. You've heard the saying "the guy could sell ice to an Eskimo", well Paul had many Eskimos turning to their buddy and saying" Nakuta wihat the hell did I just buy!"

*My condolences to the entire extended family. Take care, hug your kids today and tell them you love'em.*

*Thanks Paul.*

*Michael Dierdorff*

*Mercer Island WA###imported-begin##Michael Dierdorff###imported-end##*

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November 16, 2010 at 12:42 PM



“ A legend is gone, I will miss him.###imported-begin##Dan Dierdorff###imported-end##

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November 16, 2010 at 11:49 AM