Ole A. Mathisen

Obituary

Former Juneau resident Ole A. Mathisen died of kidney failure on March 12, 2007, in Friday Harbor, Wash. He was 88.

He was born Feb. 9, 1919, in Oslo, Norway, where he attended public school and graduated with a math/science degree from the University of Oslo, prior to World War II.

During the war and while the Germans occupied Norway, he belonged to the XU organization, a secret intelligence organization that operated within Norway. They were given pills to take that would kill them instantly in the event they were captured.

In 1946, he earned his Masters of Science in zoology from the University of Oslo and won a scholarship to the United States, where he ended up in Seattle because of its large Norwegian community.

In 1948, he returned to Norway to marry his school sweetheart, Randi Dingstad, on April 3. They returned to Seattle, and he got a job working on the staff of Dr. W.F. Thompson, who headed the Department of Fisheries at the University of Washington, where he received his doctorate degree in fisheries in 1955.

He taught in the Department of Fisheries at the University of Washington and also at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau. While in Juneau, he was a member of Svalbard Lodge No. 33 and Sweetheart of Svalbard in 1997, along with Dr. Norma Jean Sands.

In 1994, he received the Wallace H. Noerenberg Award for Fisheries Excellence from the Alaska chapter of the American Fisheries Society. In 1995, he received the King Neptune Award from The Norwegian Commercial Club in Seattle and was also professor emeritus of the University of Alaska.

Family and friends said he was a friend, mentor and scholar who influenced the lives of many people in our community.

He is survived by his wife; two children; and four grandchildren.
Two memorial services will be held, one at 1:30 p.m. on March 31 at the Friday Harbor Presbyterian Church in Friday Harbor and one at 2 p.m. on April 3 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Seattle, Wash., with a reception following at Lake Union Crew. His ashes will be interred in Norway later this year.

Remembrances may be sent to the Nordic Heritage Museum, 3014 NW 67th St., Seattle, WA, 98117.
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