

Drennan & Ford Funeral Home and Crematory

Eldrige L. Waldron

(June 15, 1920 - November 22, 2002)

Eldrige L. 'Rige' Waldron

June 15, 1920 -- Nov. 22, 2002

Former Port Angeles resident Eldrige L. "Rige" Waldron died at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tacoma at the age of 82.

He was born in LaPorte, Minn., to John E. and Ruby Odessa (Mead) Waldron.



Mr. Waldron was raised in Port Angeles, and as a teenager joined the Civilian Conservation Corps and worked the logging camps in Clallam County. When he was not working he was lead guitarist for the Olympic Peninsula Wranglers, a small country and western band that performed around the area.

In September 1938, he joined the Marine Corps and was assigned to Company A Marine Barracks, Naval Shipyard, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as a military policeman. He was also a code runner with Naval intelligence at Pearl Harbor and was responsible for escorting intercepted Japanese codes to a secure area where they were being decoded prior to the infamous Dec. 7, 1941, attack.

He was stationed at the main gate as an MP during the attack and was credited with the downing of two Japanese aircraft during the Dec. 7 attack.

Mr. Waldron was honorably discharged as a gunnery sergeant in September 1945, as a result of wounds received in the battle of Tarawa. He was awarded the Purple Heart.

After serving in Pearl Harbor, he returned briefly to Port Angeles, began dating his childhood sweetheart, Trudy Kreher, and married her 10 days after their first date, on Oct. 7, 1942, in Yuma, Ariz.

After discharge from the Marines, the couple returned briefly to Port Angeles where Mr. Waldron worked as a Washington State Patrol officer and a Port Angeles police officer.

He then joined the Army serving as a Criminal Investigation Division agent with tours of duty in Japan, Korea, Arkansas, Fort Worden and eventually retiring at Fort Lewis as a Chief Warrant Officer II in

1961.

After leaving the Army, he worked in civilian law enforcement with the Burlington Northern Railroad as the regional vice president of security, retiring in 1984, after 20 years of service. He also spent seven years as a reserve detective for the Steilacoom Police Department from 1984 to 1991, resigning at the age of 71.

He was a member of Pearl Harbor Survivors, Retired Officers Association, Marine Corps Association and Sheriff & Police Chiefs Association.

Mr. Waldron enjoyed music, collecting cameras and taking pictures. He loved fishing on the Elwha and Michelle rivers, visiting pawn shops and taking long road trips. He had a special love for Port Angeles and always looked forward to returning for family picnics.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years and son John ``J.J." Waldron, both of University Place; daughters and sons-in-law Joanne ``Jody" and Lyle Barker of Toledo, and Dianne ``Dinny" and Al Kresse of Tacoma; brother and sister-in-law Don C. and Phanoy Waldron of Port Angeles; two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Services: Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. visitation at Drennan-Ford Funeral Home, 260 Monroe Road, Port Angeles, followed immediately by the funeral service at 1 p.m., also at Drennan-Ford. Burial, with full Marine color guard honors, will follow the service at Ocean View Cemetery, 3127 W. 18th St., Port Angeles.