



#### IN MEMORIAM

**Albert W. Franzmann**

D.V.M., PH.D, Dipl.A.C.Z.M.

July 1930 – February 2009

Dr. Albert W. (Al) Franzmann, age 78, of Soldotna, Alaska, died unexpectedly at his winter home in Green Valley, Arizona on February 13, 2009. Everyone who ever knew Al feels a deep sense of loss, but we are extremely grateful for having known him. Al was a pioneer in wildlife management, particularly in moose management, and cared deeply about our wildlife resources, hunting and trapping, and future wildlife management. Al was a mentor and friend to many and words alone cannot express how he affected our lives, careers, and just how much he meant to us. What follows is Dr. Franzmann's obituary, which he wrote. His accomplishments and life are well represented.

Albert Wilhelm (Al) Franzmann was born in Hamilton, Ohio, the son of William and Louise (Schlichter) Franzmann who both preceded him in death.

Al graduated in 1948 from Ross Township high school in Butler County, Ohio. He then entered the Ohio State University and was awarded membership in Phi Zeta national veterinary medicine honorary fraternity and was awarded the Gamma

Plaque as outstanding senior veterinary medical student. He was a member of Alpha Gamma Rho (agriculture) and Alpha Psi (veterinary) fraternities.

Al married Donna Grueser on December 13, 1953. They were a devoted couple in marriage for 55 years. Their son Karl was born in 1955 and daughter Louise in 1959.

Following graduation, he served for two years as Captain in the United States Air Force Veterinary Corps stationed at McConnell Air force Base in Wichita Kansas. From 1956 until 1959, he was in a partnership veterinary practice in Tiffin, Ohio. From 1959 until 1968 he operated a farm animal practice near Hamilton, Ohio. He was active in the Butler County, Cincinnati, Ohio and American Veterinary Medical Associations.

The era of the family farm was coming to a close during the 1960's in the Hamilton area and this was the aspect of veterinary medicine that Al loved. He had to make a choice whether to practice on companion animals, move to where family farms were still viable, or diversify. Al chose to diversify and to pioneer the field of wildlife

veterinary medicine.

In 1968, he entered the University of Idaho and in 1971 graduated with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Forestry Science based on his research on Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep physiology. There he was awarded National Defense and Education Act and a National Wildlife Federation fellowship. He was elected to the Xi Sigma Pi national forestry and Phi Sigma national biological sciences honorary fraternities.

In 1972, the Franzmann family moved to Soldotna, Alaska, where Al became a research biologist with the Alaska department of Fish and Game and director of the Moose Research Center. His research produced over 250 publications. He was appointed affiliate associate professor of wildlife biology at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and the Institute of Arctic Biology.

Dr. Franzmann was active in professional wildlife organizations such as the Wildlife Society (Certified Wildlife Biologist); Wildlife Disease Association (Council and Emeritus Member); American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians (Founder President, Council Member); World Association of Wildlife Veterinarians (Organizer); and the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians. Al was selected by the I.U.C.N. Species Survival Commission to their deer, bear and veterinary specialty groups.

Al and Donna formed Great North Enterprises, Inc., in 1978 and were the sole distributors of MUSKOL products in Alaska until 1983. In 1986, Al was elected to the board of directors of the Hamilton Tool Co, in Hamilton, Ohio.

Al received recognition for his accomplishments as recipient in 1983 of the Distinguished Moose Biologist award "in recognition for outstanding contributions to the field of moose management" and the Einarson Award "in recognition of long-standing unselfish dedication and professionalism to wildlife resources." He was awarded the first Honorary Diplomat in the American College of Zoological Medicine in 1990 "in recognition as a specialist with extensive experience who has provided important service to and achieved eminence in the field of zoological medicine." The Alaska Bow hunters presented him an award in 1993 "in recognition and appreciation for many years of work in wildlife research and management." In 1996 he received an Emeritus Award from the Wildlife Disease Association "in

recognition for meritorious contributions to the study and understanding of disease of wildlife." The Moose Research Center, that Al directed from 1972 until 1987, was awarded the Group Achievement Award in 1992 "for outstanding achievements benefiting wildlife and objectives of the Wildlife Society." In 1997, he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine "in recognition of his eminence as a veterinarian who has achieved a record of outstanding contributions in the advancement of veterinary medicine." In 2001 Al became an Honor Roll member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and was given the Lifetime Conservation award by the Kenai Chapter of the Safari Club International.

Upon Al's retirement in 1987, he pursued international wildlife veterinary consulting as a Director of the International Wildlife Veterinary Service, Inc. He worked on projects in India, Nepal, China, Indonesia (Irian Jaya), Argentina, Sweden, Poland, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia and several provinces in Canada and states in the United States. He compiled and edited the book entitled ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT OF THE NORTH AMERICAN MOOSE that was published in 1998. Al was appointed by Governor Wally Hickel to the Alaska Board of Game (1992-1995). He was elected to the board of directors of the Alaska Outdoor Council and the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Conservation fund. In 1999 he was elected to the Board of Directors of the Alaska Challenger Center for Space Science Technology.

Al's avocations included hunting, fishing, gardening, golf, travel and photography. He had over 100 photographs published and received several photographic awards. He was a life member of the Issac Walton League, the Nature Conservancy, the National Rifle Association, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Alaska Outdoor Council. He was a regular member of many other conservation, wildlife, veterinary and civic organizations. He was politically and socially conservative and supported those efforts.

His family, friends and co-workers knew him as a dedicated professional who loved his work; he would comment that "he could not believe that he was getting paid for doing such neat things." He was recognized world-wide as a pioneer in bridging the veterinary and wildlife professions. In recognition of this, he was inducted in 2004

into the University of Idaho Hall of Fame “for his leadership and contributions in the field of wildlife veterinary research.”

Al was a dedicated and loving husband, father and grandfather who valued his family above all else. Al is survived by his wife Donna, his son Karl and wife Lisa and their children Jessica and her husband Brian Walsh of Arizona, Katherine and Jacob Franzmann of Sterling, Alaska; and his daughter Louise Billaud and husband Jean-Paul and their son Keran of Dublin, Virginia; his sister Elizabeth Harding and brother Fredrick preceded him in death.

Albert W. (Al) Franzmann