

## Jeffrey Harold Strickler

October 14, 1943 - September 23, 2025

St. George, UT – Jeffrey Harold Strickler, 81, passed away on September 23, 2025. He was born on October 14, 1943, in Minneapolis, MN., and grew up on the shore of Lake Minnetonka. He attended Carleton College, where he met his wife, Karen Stewart. They married in 1966 and were happily married for 59 years.

Jeff attended medical school at the University of Minnesota and completed his residency in Pediatrics at Stanford, where he became Chief Resident. He then served as a Major in the United States Air Force at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska.

Following his military service, Jeff and Karen settled in Helena, Montana. Known to everyone as “Dr Jeff”, he was a founder of the Helena Pediatric Clinic. He spent 30 years taking care of the children of Montana and advocating for children’s healthcare.

Jeff loved the mountains and the outdoors. He and his family spent their summers hiking, camping and canoeing, and their winters skiing at Big Sky, Montana, where Jeff and Karen retired in in 2005. He was an expert skier who loved to get together with buddies and tackle the “steep and deep”. He aimed to spend 100 days skiing and descend a million vertical feet each year. He delighted in continuing to race slalom throughout his 70’s and won his age

group competition several years running. He also cross-country skied with the Big Sky Snow Striders, and in the summer was an active member of the Big Sky Hikers. Jeff was an expert on wildflowers and led popular wildflower identification hikes each summer. He was an avid golfer who loved playing the Reserve at Moonlight Basin.

Jeff was very active in Rotary International, first in Helena, then becoming one of the founders of the Big Sky Rotary Club. He served as the Rotary District Governor for Montana in 2006-07.

Jeff's curiosity about the origins of local place names turned into several published books about the nomenclature of Western Montana, including: Big Sky Names, The Skier's Guide to Big Sky and Lone Mountain Ranch, Names in Bozeman's Backyard, and Meanings in the Mountains.

In 2022, Jeff and Karen relocated to St George, UT, where they embraced their new desert lifestyle. He particularly enjoyed Snow Canyon State Park and taking walks around the many trails throughout the city.

Jeff is survived by his wife Karen; children Hans Strickler of Monument, Colorado and Liesl Elder (Ed Nash) of Oxford, England; grandchildren Tyler and Jenna Kelsey and Brooks and Ashton Elder; and brother John Strickler (Sue).

# Tribute Wall

MM

“ I will always remember the first time we met Dr. Jeff. It was the week of Thanksgiving 2017 and my wife and I were about to snowshoe around Ulery's Lake in Moonlight. He mentioned that he had just finished a trek around the lake and although had not seen any bear tracks suggested we borrow his bear spray just in case. Then said to just drop it off at the Moonlight Lodge and tell them it was his. We have since always offered bear spray for others without it on remote hikes around Montana. Thank you for your kindness and thoughtfulness Dr. Jeff!

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**Mark Maschoff** - October 17, 2025 at 02:26 PM

MC

“ Jeff was an anchor of the Big Sky community and a good neighbor. His influence on our Rotary club continues and allows us to carry on his tradition of making Big Sky a great place to live. We miss him.

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**Mel Crichton** - October 17, 2025 at 09:04 AM

TK

“ Condolences to Karen and the entire family. Jeff was one of the most open and friendly people I have ever met. Whether at Rotary, the bank, or the post office, seeing Jeff was always a bright spot in the day. Interesting, fun, polite, and friendly. He will be sorely missed and Big Sky is poorer with his absence

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**Tim Kent** - October 16, 2025 at 09:24 PM

AN

“ Oh my. He definitely lead the way for our extended family. Truly someone I admired and respected. He was the oldest Mitchell family cousin and I am the youngest. He was my favorite even though, oh so many times, he lifted me high over his head, and ran with me down all of those stairs at the Lake Minnetonka house and out to the end of the dock and threw me in! Not to mention those complex Hide and Seek games over the entire property. And no, I never found Jeff nor John. So much laughter in our family. Almost always spearheaded by Cousin Jeff. He is certainly missed.

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Anne - October 06, 2025 at 04:29 PM



“ Fall Fantasia was purchased for the family of Jeffrey Harold Strickler.



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October 06, 2025 at 12:04 PM

AL

“ I was very sorry to hear of Jeff’s passing. My sincere condolences to the Strickler family. I knew Jeff in Big Sky when I was on the board of the conservancy group for the Historic Crail Ranch there. We used Jeff’s place-name books for reference, and we sold them to visitors to raise money. When I was contacted by Arcadia Publications wanting a book about Big Sky for their regional history series, I thought right away of Jeff. He took on the task willingly, with expert help on the history part from Anne Marie Mistretta, and the result was “Images of America: Big Sky,” still one of the most comprehensive and readable books on the subject. And Jeff generously re-directed all of his royalties from the book to the preservation of Crail Ranch. Whenever we had an event at the ranch, I was happy to see Jeff making his way across the fields to join us. Nobody looked better in western duds than Jeff Strickler, at least not since Gary Cooper left these parts. Jeff was an intelligent, witty fellow, lean and lanky, friendly and approachable, a “tall drink of water,” as the Montanans might say... He will be missed.

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**AL Lockwood** - October 04, 2025 at 09:54 AM

JE

“ Mary and I are deeply saddened to hear of Jeff’s passing. We have known him as a friend and colleague for almost 50 years. Please accept our condolences and know how much we miss him.  
Jerry Eichner and Mary Hutchison

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**Jerrold Eichner** - October 03, 2025 at 07:11 PM

MF

“ I am very sorry to hear about Jeff. He was a great friend and mentor to me throughout my Montana Rotary experience. He knew how to do it (everything Rotary) and was happy to guide and help.  
Mark Frisby  
Rotary PDG, 2008-2009

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**Mark Frisby** - October 03, 2025 at 11:47 AM

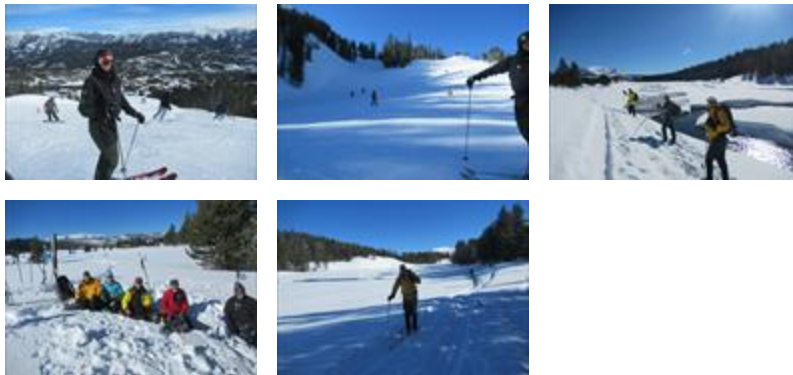
JR

“ So sorry to hear about this. He was a great doctor, a great boss, and I was so thankful to have his support during my delivery. Thinking of you all during this difficult time. Jana

Jana Radke - October 03, 2025 at 11:07 AM

GM

“ Thank you so much for letting us know about the passing of your father. We first met him in 2022 on a ISFR ski trip to Big Sky. He guided us all over the resort. One day he and his wife even took us for a day of backcountry XC skiing in Yellowstone National Park. He invited into his Big Sky home and even went with us for dinner at a local restaurant he recommended. Right from the very beginning, Jeff treated us like close friends. Our prayers go out to you during your time of grief. Prayerfully, Gary & Sue Moser



GARY WAYNE MOSER - October 02, 2025 at 09:49 PM

MB

Many thanks for sharing the sad news of Jeff's passing. I also met Jeff and Karen through ISFR. Jeff's enthusiasm for his adopted home of Big Sky and its skiing was so infectious and it was privilege to take part in ISFR's trip to Big Sky. All best thoughts and prayers to Karen and all the family. Rtn Margaret Hutchinson, Manchester UK

margaret Blowey - October 03, 2025 at 04:12 AM



“ *He was always there ready to lend a helping hand.* ”

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**Marilyn Alexander** - October 02, 2025 at 05:23 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album* ”



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**Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah** - October 02, 2025 at 02:54 PM