



Russell D Burchard

June 6, 1964 - February 21, 2023

Russell D. Burchard, a longtime community college professor, mentor, friend and beloved husband and brother, passed away on Feb. 21. He was 58 years old.

Russ was born in 1964 to Duncan and Elinor Burchard in Maryland. Because Duncan was a career National Park ranger, the family lived in various national parks. Both Russ and his older brother developed a lifelong love for the outdoors. As a child, Russ explored forests, canyons and mesas, built forts and rode bikes and then spent much of his later years in the mountains, rivers and deserts of the West. His love for the outdoors brought him another love; he met his longtime partner and future wife, Fran, while both were serving as seasonal rangers for the National Park Service.

Besides his appreciation of the natural environment, Russ loved books and education, which eventually led him to a career as a professor at Linn-Benton Community College. He first taught a GED preparation course, where he helped hundreds of young adults to not only get ready for their GED exams but also to thrive in other areas of their lives. He touched many people's lives through his work, understanding and gentle approach to the needs of others. Numerous students expressed profuse thanks to him throughout his career and told him stories of the immense and positive difference he had made in their lives. Because of his strong commitment to his students and work, he

earned the college's 2006 Pastega Excellence Award, a prestigious honor that recognizes faculty and staff members for their outstanding contributions to the college.

In addition to teaching, Russ was active as an involved member of the faculty. After course changes, he wasn't able to continue his passion of teaching GED students and then began teaching mathematics courses at the college. He retired from his work there in 2022.

Away from work, Russ continued to enjoy traveling and exploring the outdoors in Oregon and Utah and also enjoyed motorcycles. He was an avid reader and lifelong learner, with interest in a wide range of subjects, and always retained a deep curiosity about the world around him.

Russ is survived by his wife, Fran of Albany; his brother, Ashby of Montana; his Aunt Polly of Virginia; and numerous sisters-in-law; cousins and nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents.

Family and friends are invited to his Memorial Service, 1:00 pm, Thursday, March 2, 2023 at McHenry Funeral home Chapel, 206 NW 5th Street, Corvallis. Please check back for information regarding an additional remembrance of Russ

Please share your thoughts and memories for the family at www.mchenryfuneralhome.com.


Previous Events

Family and Friends

MAR 2. 1:00 PM (PT)

McHenry Funeral Home
206 NW 5th St.
Corvallis, OR

Tribute Wall

 Felicia
Guest

“ Russ was a light of reason, kindness, and wry humor. I met him in a grueling teaching program and we had so many meaningful conversations during our teaching years. We talked about so many aspects of life, not just teaching. Russ gave his full attention to whatever I had to share. I will always treasure the time I spent with Russ.

Felicia Guest - March 10, 2023 at 12:35 AM

DC

“ Russ and I spent many hours discussing whatever topic came up while we ate our lunches by the side of whatever trail we'd been riding. While I feasted on a meat and cheese sandwich with fruit and soda, Russ ate peanut butter spread on bread with his finger, he always was a classy guy. Riding up the logging trails on our dirt bikes will always be a favorite memory for me. I am so surprised and sorry to hear of Russ's death at such a young age. I will miss him. Ridding buddy Dave Cutting

dave cutting - March 09, 2023 at 02:04 PM

SR

“ I have many happy memories of times with my cousin Russ. From the early days, playing with Russ and Ashby catching crawfish in the stream behind their home in Catoctin, to times when all of us cousins gathered in Crozet at our grandparent's home for family picnics, to a visit with Fran and Russ when we were visiting family in Portland, to times when he would stay with us during visits on our side of the country. I will always remember the glimmer in his eye when he talked of the freedom he felt when getting on his bike and riding in the wind. I will hold on to these memories as we say goodbye and honor Russ today. Fran - you were the missing piece to Russ. I loved having a chance to get to know you when you came out our way. I wish you comfort at this difficult time. Ashby - you were the best brother Russ could ever have wished for and he knew how lucky he was to have your love. To the students who meant so much to Russ - know that he TRULY cared for you. Rest in Peace my sweet cousin - we will miss your presence in our lives.

With much love,

Susan

Susan Russo - March 02, 2023 at 01:03 PM

PB

“ It is so difficult to find the right words to say. Russ would have known the perfect thing to say.

I was blessed to have shared a long friendship with Russ. The cherished memories will not be forgotten.

Until we meet again, my friend. Rest easy.

Paula Bernatis - March 02, 2023 at 12:04 PM



“ I will never forget the first time I met Russ. I had recently started a summer volunteer ranger position at the Black Canyon, and my boss Grant or Lizzie told me I should meet this guy who is a bit like me and loves to talk the details on things that don't interest the average person and so we might hit it off. We did. Russ said it was one of the rare initial conversations he had with someone where we cut right to the bone on several issues. I still recall going into details on whether consistency was a fundamental virtue in one's personal philosophy, and if it was, would it be best to try to stay consistent as you evolve your philosophy or to not worry so much about being inconsistent as you approached your ideal philosophy which would be consistent. We did many more outings together over the years, and I met several friends through Russ I still know and value today – his brother Ashby, and his friends Jim and Ralph. Russ, Fran, and I lived together in Boulder when I first started graduate school there, and I often tell the story of how we were such environmentalists (or maybe just cheap skates) that we kept the thermostat in the 50s somewhere – just warm enough to function if you wore your hat and pile gloves when not under a bunch of covers.

Russ and I used to exchange a few cassette tapes which I hope I still have. I can hear him say “Allriiight” in a somewhat stern but still playful way when someone was ribbing him a bit too hard. We exchanged a few emails in 2021 and last year when I lost my sister to cancer - he told me he couldn't imagine the difficulty. I'm so sorry that Fran and Ashby are now in this grief. It was clear to me how Fran made Russ into a different and better person. Russ and I talked about the concept of love and how strange it is to use a word that everyone seems to have a different definition of. He was as reluctant as I was, but could tell Fran that he loved her after agreeing upon what it meant to them. I know Fran loved Russ and I could see him be more relaxed to know that he had a partner who loved him.

Ashby and Russ had a fight or two which I'm guessing many brothers do. My sister and I certainly fought. But Russ clearly cared

for Ashby and I think that's why he pushed me a bit in going up to Frisco to hang out with him as we both loved to hike and cross country ski. I think he thought Ashby was a little too isolated up there. Ashby told me how close he and Russ were these last few years. I know this is incredibly hard on Fran and Ashby, but I hope they can find peace and remember fondly the ways that Russ affected them while he was with us.

I don't know if his students know his passing, but I'm sure Russ affected many of them a great deal. I know from my short experience volunteer teaching, that talking to Russ and comparing him to my favorite teachers growing up, he was quite an influence.

So I'm very sad that Russ is gone and I can't write him or start exchanging recorded voice files as we discussed doing. But I will celebrate that he lived and affected so many and that I was one of them.

Dara Parsavand

Dara Parsavand - March 02, 2023 at 12:23 AM

AB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



ASHBY BURCHARD - February 28, 2023 at 08:47 PM

VM

“ We will always miss Russ in the math department at LBCC. He was always the voice of reason and offered new ways to think about issues.



Vikki Maurer - February 28, 2023 at 01:31 PM

GH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Grant Hokit - February 26, 2023 at 10:47 PM

AB

What a great photo

Ashby Burchard - February 27, 2023 at 08:11 PM

JH

“ Russ was our adopted son! We loved him very much and I believe he knew it. He was probably in the 4th grade when we met him and from then on he spent a lot of time with us. His mom was a good friend and let him. He truly was like another one of our kids. Going to miss him terribly

Jim & Betty Hokit - February 25, 2023 at 11:17 AM