



## Judson R. Finley

July 13, 1931 - May 8, 2012

“Such a beautiful dream, I hate to think it all over”

-Hank Williams (Lovesick Blues)

On May 08, 2012, Judson Robert Finley, tireless advocate for the underdog, steadfast friend, warmhearted family man, and musician extraordinaire, quietly left the party he'd loved so well. It will not be the same without his bright, occasionally mischievous smile; his sudden, infectious laughter; his unreserved hugs and reassuring pats on the back.

For the past fifteen years, Parkinson's Disease had been an unwelcome, increasingly difficult guest at his party, and Jud fought long and hard to hold on to the abilities and activities he enjoyed: photography, homebrewing (“Judweiser”), geology (aka “rock collection”), back roads travel, and above all, music. His last days included plenty of the latter, from the out-of-practice sounds of his daughter's violin to a private barbershop quartet performance (as arranged, with his family's heartfelt gratitude, by Sarah House and the Dream Foundation).

Jud was born on July 13, 1931 in Los Angeles, but soon moved with his parents George and Wilberta (“Billie”) Finley and sister June to Santa Barbara. There, at play school, he met [name redacted; you know who you are], his eventual cohort in the Hope Ranch Lemon Pickers and assorted good-natured mischief (trips to Rosarito Beach in 1948-49 to sing western songs on XERB...really?). This was the first of a wide variety of friendships he would make and enthusiastically maintain throughout his life.

What he valued, whether it was an object a job or a relationship, he tried to give it attention and care. He enjoyed fixing things, figuring out how they worked, and devising systems. And, while it might be said he was too reliant upon popsicle sticks and glue when it came to home repairs, when it came to his work on behalf of the disabled, he was brilliant. After his 1949 graduation from Santa Barbara High School, he briefly attended the University of Redlands, then joined the U.S. Navy in time for the Korean War and, thanks to their refusal to accept the use of his middle name, Robert/Bob became Jud. His favorite postings were in Arizona and Guam; and after his 1954 honorable discharge (Aerographer's Mate, Second Class) he returned to Arizona, making his home with his first wife and son in the Phoenix area and attending ASU.

He received his Ph.D. in Psychology in 1965, but had already begun work at the Arizona Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, a place he would see through many changes. He was, variously and often simultaneously, Chief Psychologist of the Vocational Evaluation Unit, member of numerous task forces and committees (including the State Board of Psychologist Examiners), Acting Manager of the Rehabilitation Facilities and Resource Development Section, and ultimately, Coordinator of Grants and Contracts. His efforts during these formative years were mighty; his achievements and influence, beyond measure.

Upon his retirement in 1989, he moved with his second wife and daughter to Ashland, Oregon--a place they'd found on one of their quirky, often comical road trips--and turned his photography hobby into a full-fledged business, J.R. Finley Photographics. He also joined the Rogue Valley Harmonizers barbershop chorus, played "gut bucket" in a cowboy band, and fulfilled an unacknowledged life-long dream of performing in a stage production of *The Music Man*. When photography went digital, he shifted all his attention to "barbershopping," and so became a vital member of the Harmonizers and at least two active quartets. Even when his vocal chords weakened to the point where he felt he shouldn't perform, he remained active, giving advice with the

help of his perfect pitch and enviable ability to identify any note by ear, while passionately arranging music.

His 2005 decision to “move home to Santa Barbara” with his wife didn’t stop his work with his Oregon friends; it merely slowed it to the speed of the mail. He leaves behind two large binders packed with original four-part-harmony versions of songs such as “Hit the Road, Jack” and “Sentimental Journey” to name but a few.

Wherever Jud went, he made friends--and this includes the last weeks of his life, when he moved into Alexander Court, spent time at Cottage Hospital, and lastly when he was cared for so graciously at Sarah House. His time there--peaceful and loving--was a gift for which his family will be forever grateful. To have known him is to miss him terribly, but he wouldn’t welcome much sorrow. In his own words:

"Please tell folks I loved them but didn't know much how to show it. Tell 'em I believed in helping other people at all times, like the Scout Oath says, but didn't always do it. Tell 'em I tried to be a good Dad, Husband, Employee, and Person, and hope that it showed. Then, there ought to be a party with plenty of music, eats (including beef enchiladas and hot sauce!), and then everyone ought to get on with livin'."

Jud is survived by his wife of nearly 40 years, Alice; his son, Jon, with children Krista and Tim; his daughter, Rebecca; his brother-in-law Bill Lipe with children Carrie, Jessie, and David, and their families; and his many dear friends.

Should it be desired, memorial contributions may be made to Sarah House (PO Box 20031, Santa Barbara, CA 93120; [www.sarahhousesb.org](http://www.sarahhousesb.org)) and/or Visiting Nurse and Hospice Care Foundation (805-965-5555 or [www.vnhcsb.org](http://www.vnhcsb.org)).

Arrangements by Welch-Ryce-Haider Funeral Chapels. To leave online condolences, please visit

# Tribute Wall

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“ Alice, I always enjoyed when I was around Jud, his smile and joy for life were infectious. My warmest regards, Sarah Spring  
Ashland, Oregon

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**sarah spring** - July 29, 2012 at 11:43 AM

LS

“ Jud and Robert had a lot of great memories together, now they can reminisce together. He will be missed. Love Gussie Linebarger.

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**Lori Savage** - June 09, 2012 at 11:24 AM