

Gordon Robert Spitzmiller

Gordon Spitzmiller was born in Fort Lyons, Colorado March 24, 1920 to Gustav and Anna Spitzmiller. He had an older brother Ervin. A year later he had a little sister Barbara Jane. The family then moved to Grand County in 1921. They first lived on a ranch in Stillwater where Gordon's grandparent's lived and his father tried growing lettuce. His little brother Gustave, Jr. (better known as Bud) was born in 1923 in the new home which Gus built for Anna in Grand Lake.



Gordon attended school in Grand Lake, as did all of the Spitzmiller children.

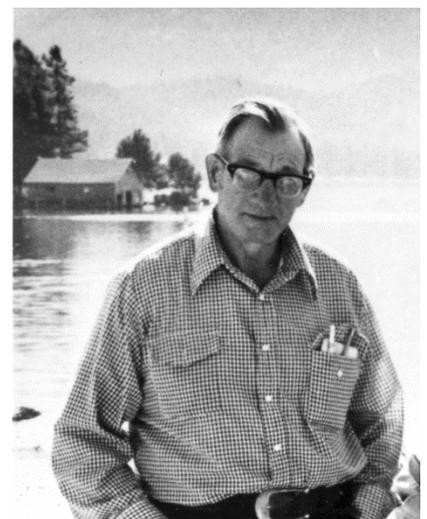


During World War II Gordon was a machinist's mate, 1st class in the Navy. He was aboard the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga for three years in the South Pacific. Gordon was in Hawaii visiting Colvin and Patience Kemp when the Saratoga was torpedoed in the harbor. He served for 44 months and was honorably discharged in October 1945.

Gordon married Barbara Fisher.

After the war Gordon took over his father's plumbing business and bought him out in 1949 and established Grand Lake Plumbing Co., in which he was active until 1988.

In an advertisement in the Winter Park Manifest November 26, 1981 for Jameson Chevrolet, there was a picture of Gordon "Spitz" Spitzmiller with the Grand Lake Plumbing Company truck. "When I got my first Chevy pickup 32 years ago, I was the only person in the business. Now I have 22 people on the payroll and 14 or 15 pickups. We are like any other business – when we go to buy something, we get bids. As far as we can tell, Alex Jameson has been as reasonable with his prices as anybody."



Gordon was a charter member of the Grand Lake Rotary. He was awarded a plaque for his many years of service to Rotary in 1989. Gordon was the last surviving charter member of the club that was chartered in 1951.

He served with the Grand Lake Fire Department since its inception. He was a lifetime member of the Grand Lake Historical Society and a member of the Trailblazers snowmobile club. He played Santa Claus to all the town children for nearly 35 years.

As an elder of Trinity Church in the Pines, he also gave generously of his time and money to Grand Lake live theatre, school projects and charities. He liked sports and had been active in golf, bowling, skiing, snowmobiling and basketball.

His wife Barbara died in July of 1987 after 36 years of marriage. Gordon died March 3, 1990, at his home in Grand Lake after a long illness. He was 69.