

Herbert Auten Probasco Dec. 4, 1939 — Oct. 16, 2011



Herbert Auten Probasco, who started the Montrose Community Band a year after retiring to Montrose, Colo., died unexpectedly on Oct. 16, 2011. Herb was 71. He was born and grew up in Lincoln, Neb., the son of Herbert and Carol Probasco. He attended the University of Nebraska, majoring in journalism. He was the editor of the Daily Nebraskan, and under his leadership the newspaper endorsed a presidential candidate for the first time. The candidate was JFK. Herb subsequently served in the Peace Corps in the Philippines and worked for the Peace Corps, training a group headed for Korea. He received his master's degree in Southeast Asian History from the University of Hawaii and served as the first director of Asia House at Oberlin College. There, in 1969, he met and married Elaine Kissinger after the manner of the Society of Friends in Finney Chapel.

In 1971, Herb joined the Omaha World-Herald as a reporter and then copy editor, making use of what he modestly called his grease-trap mind. In Omaha, he and his wife raised two children, Benjamin and Angela.

Shortly before retiring, Herb took up his clarinet after many years of its lying idle, playing in the Intergenerational Orchestra in Omaha. Herb and his wife moved to Montrose in 2001. With the support of many community members, he was able to organize, enjoy and play in the Montrose Community Band, now in its ninth year. He used his newspaper skills in Montrose as Chipeta Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society newsletter editor for six years; Montrose Community Band newsletter editor from inception; and Black Canyon Audubon Society newsletter editor for four years. In 2010, Herb initiated the first Montrose C.R.O.P. Walk, a walk to raise funds for the poor of the world and which also benefited Sharing Ministries.

Herb is survived by his wife, Elaine; son Benjamin, wife Lorna, and children Blake and Lorin, all of Kauai; daughter Angela, husband Charles Graham, and children Morgan and Theodore, all of Omaha; sister Jean and husband Roger Fenner of Casper, Wyo; sister Nancy Kay of Carlsbad, Calif; and cherished nieces, nephews, cousins and in-laws. Herb's niece, Jennifer honored him Sunday with these words: "My uncle who lived his life to make the world a better place passed away today – too young and unexpected. I appreciate the life lessons he taught me. I have never met anyone so selfless."

No service is planned at this time. Donations in his memory may be made to the charity of choice or Montrose Community Bank, P.O. Box 3383, Montrose, CO 81402. Arrangements are under the direction of Crippin Funeral Home & Crematory of Montrose.