

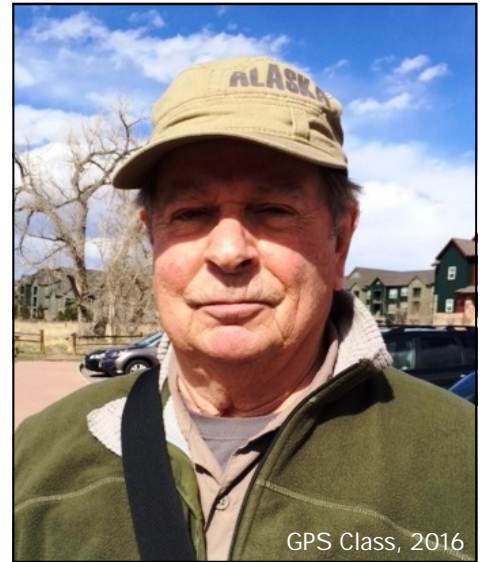
# VON FRANSEN

Rocky Mountain Sea Kayak Club members were shocked and saddened to learn that Von Fransen died in early August while fishing with friends in Iceland. He joined RMSKC in 2015, practiced in the pool with us, and had been a frequent participant on outings and trips in the last couple of years. We were looking forward to paddling with him on the Green River this summer and on the Hudson Valley trip in the fall, and he will be missed.

Brian Hunter wrote, "Von and I spent lots of time kayaking and working on his equipment. He enjoyed the outdoors and he was at home in the wilderness. Von was an avid fly fisherman and traveled to far-flung places in pursuit of wild fish. Von was fishing in Iceland when he slipped, fell and was swept downstream. Every effort was made to revive him in the hospital but he could not be saved.

"We often went to lunch so we could talk kayaks and camping; since he hailed from New Orleans, we went to NoNo's Cajun Cafe. He took great delight in showing me authentic Cajun food.

"Von was the kind of friend who could be called on any time by someone who was in need. He was warm-hearted, generous and put the needs of others ahead of his own. His passing will leave a void in the lives of all who knew him."



GPS Class, 2016



PaddleFest, 2018



Pool Practice,  
April 2016

Sue Hughes, who was on the Lewis and Shoshone trip with Von in 2018 said, "On the first leg of the paddle we had more challenging winds than Von had experienced before, and maybe he wasn't in as good a shape as he thought.

"Von was troubled by that difficult crossing, but he didn't let it get him down. Something else that

impressed me is that he DID something about it. As soon as he got home he started walking regularly and working with a trainer several times a week. He also upgraded his kayak to one that was better suited to paddling in wind and waves. He was looking forward to having a new boat and doing lots of kayaking this summer, and we were, too. We will really miss him."



#### COMMENTS FROM VON, ABOUT THE 2017 COLORADO RIVER TRIP:

"This was my rookie river trip with the RMSKC. My goal from the start was to go on multi-day trips on some of our western rivers. Since buying my kayak two years ago I've been learning the ropes and getting outfitted for the sport.

"From practicing recovery procedures at Meyers Pool during the winter months to group paddles at area reservoirs, the club has been invaluable in my learning the techniques necessary for safe kayaking.

"The six-day Moab to Spanish Bottom paddle on the Colorado was the perfect kickoff trip for a newbie. Lucky for me it was with a group of the most seasoned kayak campers in the club. The company was enjoyable, the pace relaxed and the scenery spectacular."







On the Colorado River, 2017



At a Chatfield AfterWork Paddle, June 2018



George Ottenhoff, Von and Brian during Brian's GPS Class, which was held at Von's home

#### **SOME PERSONAL BACKGROUND:**

Von was raised in New Orleans and Mobile in a family comfortable around the world: his paternal grandfather was from Belgium and spoke several languages, his grandmother was from Nicaragua, and his father spent most of his teenage years in living in Europe with his family.

Von served in the US Air Force from 1966 to 1971, after which he moved to Denver and worked in banking. In 1994, Von founded Fransen Pittman General Contracting, whose signs we've all seen on large construction projects everywhere around Colorado.

**BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FROM VON:** *How To Read Water* and *How To Read Nature*, by Tristan Gooley. Two other books he enjoyed were: *Your Inner Fish*, by Neil Shubin and *The Hidden Life of Trees*, by Peter Wohlleben.

**A LINK TO HIS FULL OBITUARY:** <https://www.allveterans.com/obituaries/vondel-remy-fransen/>