

BELGRADE, Mont. – Cecil "Pete" Kading Taylor, 104, of Bakersfield, California, and formerly of Belgrade, Montana, passed away Sunday, April 6, 2025, at Solstice Senior Living in Bakersfield.

Pete was born Oct. 24, 1920, in a log cabin 6 miles north of Belgrade, the youngest son of Benjamin Franklin Taylor and Mary Minerva Harmon. Pete's parents had moved their family from their longtime home in Knox County, Tennessee, less than two years before his birth.

In 1925, the Taylors moved to a dryland farm where Pete and his sister, Maribelle, walked, rode horses or skied some two miles one way to a one-room country schoolhouse at Foster Creek.

In 1932, several years into the Great Depression, a hailstorm wiped out their wheat crop and the Taylors moved their family — which, by then, consisted of only Pete and Maribelle — to Kirkland, Washington. They moved back to Belgrade two years later, where Ben and Mary operated a gas station and tourist cabins, and Pete helped out wherever he could.

Pete graduated from Belgrade High School in 1938. He moved to Seattle in 1940 to work for Boeing then enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1942. He served for nearly four years.

Pete went to college on the GI Bill and graduated in 1952 from the University of Washington in Seattle with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

Pete married Gloria Christine Beesley in 1948 in Santa Monica, California. The couple had no children.

In the early 1970s, Pete left California for Alabama when he accepted an assignment to Army Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal as an electrical engineer. Pete served as a production engineer for the development, production, and fielding of the Patriot Missile System, the premier mid-range Army Air Defense artillery system. In his role with the missile program, Pete was instrumental in the analysis of system production Engineering Change Proposals and a valuable member of the Patriot System "Should-Cost" Team.

While living in Huntsville, Alabama, Pete met Margaret Myers while square dancing, one of his favorite hobbies. Pete and Margaret married in Huntsville in 1973. He not only gained a wife but a daughter, Helen, whom he adopted.

Pete's job required frequent travel and this allowed Margaret and Helen to see much of the U.S. as they traveled with him.

Margaret's adult children and grandchildren all lovingly referred to Pete as "Pop" and would frequently visit during holidays.

Pete was very involved in his church, Valley Fellowship, where he served as an usher and greeter.

Margaret died on their 21st anniversary, Dec. 7, 1994. Pete retired from the federal government and stayed in Huntsville until he returned to California in the spring of 1996.

Pete was preceded in death by his parents, Ben and Mary Taylor; siblings, Aseal Shelburne Taylor, James Clayton Taylor, Sheldon Alexander Taylor, Benjamin Merrill Taylor, and Maribelle Taylor Matthews; wives, Christine Taylor and Margaret Taylor; niece, Norma Jean Taylor, and nephew, Jack Yasaitis.

He is survived by his daughter, Helen Taylor Purcell (Jeffrey) of Meridianville, Alabama; nephews, Robert Taylor of Billings, Montana, Bruce Taylor of Belgrade, Montana, and Rocky Matthews of Murtaugh, Idaho; nieces, Franci Taylor of Salt Lake City, Victoria Yasaitis Brady of Redmond, Oregon, Stephanie Matthews Epes of Little Rock, Arkansas, Mychel Matthews of Murtaugh, Idaho, and Lisa Matthews of Murtaugh, Idaho; granddaughter, Lydia Margaret Fanning of Chattanooga, Tennessee; and grandson Nicholas Kading Purcell and two great-granddaughters of Tucker, Georgia.

In Loving Memory

Cecil "Pete" Kading Taylor



BORN

October 24, 1920
Belgrade, Montana

DIED

April 6, 2025
Bakersfield, California

CASKET BEARERS

Bruce Taylor, Rocky Matthews, Jeff Purcell, Nicholas Purcell

HONORARY BEARER

Robert Taylor, Mark Evans, Travis Levesque, Mike Levesque

GRAVESIDE SERVICE

11:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Gem Memorial Gardens

2435 Overland Ave. ~ Burley, Idaho



Officiating..... Reverend Alexander G. Lissow

Welcome & Opening Prayer

Eulogy.....Helen Purcell, *daughter*

Message of HopeReverend Alexander G. Lissow

Closing Song..... *How Great Thou Art*

Recording of Alan Jackson

Committal Prayer..... Reverend Alexander G. Lissow

Military Rites..... Mini-Cassia Veterans Group

