

Larry Pratt's 85th birthday

Born April 21, 1931 in Escanaba, Michigan, he grew up there in the family's apt. above his dad's barbershop. He graduated from Escanaba High School in 1950, and from Michigan State College (now University) in 1954 with a Journalism degree.

After his first 2 years of college, Larry spent a summer as a crewman on a Great Lakes iron ore carrier, the Louis W. Hill, later known as the Valley Camp and moored as a museum at Sault Ste. Marie, MI.

He was in Air Force ROTC during college and enlisted in the USAF upon graduation. He earned lieutenant's bars and commanded enlistment barracks at Lackland AFB.

While at Lackland, he married Lorraine "Lorrie" (LeDuc), also from Escanaba, in 1955.

After military service, he began his newspaper career as wire editor of the Sturgis Daily Journal in Lower Michigan in 1956, and went on to begin his 34-year career with the Kalamazoo Gazette in 1959. There, he was a reporter, feature writer, award-winning aviation columnist and wire editor.

As a private pilot, he logged 2,000-plus hours in two decades of flying.

After retiring to New Braunfels (and later Canyon Lake) with Lorrie in 1996, he founded the New Braunfels Astronomy Club, and in 2008 began contributing a weekly astronomy column to the New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung, which he continues to this day!