

Obituary published in the Bluefield Daily Telegraph, Bluefield, West Virginia

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## Frank M. Soos, Jr.

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Frank Soos, of Fairbanks, Alaska, creative writing professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and former Alaska State Writer Laureate, died in a solo bicycle accident on August 20. The accident occurred in Maine, where he and his wife Margo Klass spend a portion of each summer. He was 70 years old.

Frank was raised in Pocahontas, Virginia. His southern voice comes through in essays and stories that often refer to his hometown. There his parents, Frank and Genevieve Soos, ran a grocery store where Frank and his brother Tom learned the value of community and hard work.

After graduating from Davidson College in 1972, Frank taught at Mooresville Senior High. In 1981 he graduated from University of Arkansas with an MFA before teaching for five years at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. In 1986 he moved to Alaska to teach creative writing at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He retired as professor emeritus in 2004.

Frank was a consummate educator and mentored a generation of students. Among his greatest joys was seeing their work published. As Alaska State Writer, 2014-2016, Frank promoted these richly talented Alaskan writers.

Frank published two volumes of short stories, *Early Yet* (1998) and *Unified Field Theory* (recipient of the Flannery O'Connor Award, 1998), as well as two collections of essays, *Bamboo Fly Rod Suite* (1999), and *Unpleasantries* (2016). With Kes Woodward he co-edited *Under Northern Lights: Writers and Artists View the Alaskan Landscape* (2000). A collaborative work, *Double Moon*, combines mini-essays with the work of his wife, artist Margo Klass. *The Team We Got*, an unpublished work, features the 1962-63 Pocahontas High School basketball team. A new collection of stories, *The Getting Place*, will soon be published.

Frank was close to his brother Tom Soos and his wife Anna Rice of Cornelius, North Carolina, and to Margo's children and their families, Wil Klass and his son Quinlan of Amherst, Massachusetts, and Dan and Ingrid Torinus and their daughter Molly of Middleton, Wisconsin.

Memorials will take place in Fairbanks, Alaska, and Corea, Maine.

Contributions in Frank's honor may be made to Davidson College: Box 7170, Davidson, NC 28035 or [davidson.edu/makeagift](http://davidson.edu/makeagift)

The Frank Soos Creative Writing Scholarship has also been established at the University of Alaska Fairbanks: Box 755080, Fairbanks, AK 99775 or <http://engage.alaska.edu>