



In Memorium - Dave Weaver

Los Padres lost a special friend April 9 when longtime Forest volunteer and wilderness ranger Dave Weaver passed away. Dave touched the lives of everyone he met.

Dave Weaver was born June 28, 1938, in Santa Barbara. After graduating from UCSB in 1961, Dave served in the U.S. Army. Following his discharge, Dave earned his Masters degree in Psychology in 1967 from Cal Poly. For more than 30 years, Dave worked as a counselor in the Santa Barbara High School system.

From the beginning, Dave cultivated a love of the outdoors. In the early 1950s Dave camped with his Boy Scout troop at 19 Oaks and other local areas. During breaks in college in the late '50s, Dave and his friends backpacked to Lower and Upper Manzanita and Manzanita Narrows.

On a trip to Lone Pine, Dave described his experience: "On thin tired, three-speed bikes we attempted to ride up the Buckhorn Road. Two-thirds of the way up there, when we were starting to see the stupidity of the idea, a ranger came by and gave us and our bikes a ride to Little Pine...on our way back down the Buckhorn on our bikes, my front hand brake came flying off and, realizing that all I had left was a rear hand brake, I went the rest of the way at a creep. We never tried that again."

Dave was among the first Volunteer Wilderness Rangers when that group was organized in 1996. Dave maintained high standards, and never missed an opportunity to convey his wilderness ethos to all who would listen. He was proud of his volunteer work, and he had the privilege of seeing his efforts pay dividends.

"These volunteers are self-starters," he said recently. "Many started when I started or were already doing projects before we organized. They have arrived at a level where they need only marginal supervision while safely taking out downed and hazard trees, repairing trails, and other related projects. They have attained the point where the Forest Service needs to spend only minimal time supervising and projects are getting done, costing the Forest Service next to nothing."

In 2001, Dave fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a Los Padres backcountry forest ranger. While Dave's many friends struggle to come to terms with his passing, Santa Lucia District Ranger Kathleen Phelps summed it up best.

"Dave was an inspiration and touched so many lives with his support of the wilderness and dedication to young lives and trail work," Phelps said. "Dave told me recently that he was thankful that he had the opportunity to fulfill one of his life goals - to be a Ranger. I am thankful that we had the opportunity to share that with him and learn from him."

"Dave's passing leaves a big hole, but many fuller hearts. Let's all go spend time in the wilderness and appreciate it and Dave's spirit."

Dave is survived by his wife of 51 years, Barbara, their three children and six grandchildren.