



Lester A. Mauk passed away at age 86 on June 5, 2014. Interment will be in Oklahoma City, OK. He joins his first wife, Dorothy Verlee White, deceased; and his second wife, Kathaleen Elaine Lee, deceased. Lester is survived by sons Ron Mauk (Mentor OH) and Tim Mauk (Seattle WA), granddaughters Rachel Mauk-Johnson (Columbus OH) and Catherine Alice Mauk (Tucson AZ) and loving family Jackie Kern (Tucson AZ), Candice Berthold (Mentor OH), Noble Golden (Seattle WA), Eric Johnson (Columbus OH), Tammy Lee McGee (Oceanport, NJ) and Vernon Lee (Prescott Valley, AZ).

His families celebrate his life and marvel at a good life well lived. Lester was a friendly man with an open heart, joyful laugh, and willing to have a chat with anyone he would meet along the way. He had an ethic strongly rooted in the spirit of giving, caring, and sharing that carried him well through his 86 years walking this earth. And walk this earth he did! He loved nature and was an avid hiker. The mountain trails were woven throughout the fabric of his life. Perhaps it was a passion that was planted as a farm boy in Wisconsin, grew exponentially with his desire to discover the world, created connection with his budding family, or simply filled him up so completely. When he was not at work he was hiking. Lester was a worker with a fine work ethic. He was in the Army from 1946-1949 and then served in the Army Reserves retiring as a 1LT. He retired from civil service in 1983 and credited with over 36 years of government service. He spent his early years in Falls Church, VA and finally put down permanent roots when he moved to Sierra Vista, AZ in 1967. Anyone, who knew Lester, knew that; as his license plate so proudly proclaimed "AZ 67". He worked at the Communications Security Logistics Agency (CSLA) at Fort Huachuca up until his retirement as the Director of the National Maintenance Point (NMP). However, retirement did not slow him down one bit. He served for most of his remaining years on several projects that touch each of us in some way today.

A vital force in the Arizona credit union movement, he received the State of Arizona Rose Mofford Credit Union Volunteer Award for 1991. He was on the board of the HFCU for 26 years, an Executive Board member of the Arizona Credit Union League for 13 years, and a Credit Union National Association (CUNA) Director for 10 years.

For more than 10 years, he performed volunteer trail work all over the west (primarily in US Forest Service /Wilderness Areas, but in some national parks or monuments, including Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Shasta) for the American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacation program, often serving as volunteer coordinator. It was considered “vacation” for him. He relished the opportunity to witness nature in a variety of settings not just his locally loved “dusty” desert environs.

He started hiking with some like-minded individuals every other Sunday in 1973 which evolved into the Huachuca Hiking Club that just celebrated its 40 year anniversary. The club became responsible for trail maintenance through the Adopt-a-Trail program. He was a member for 30 years and named for his contribution of volunteer hours. He diligently supported the efforts to blaze the Arizona National Scenic Trail, which included clear cutting a new trail to link the border of Mexico into the Coronado National Forest trail. His years of local trail knowledge and experience led to the mapping and development of the Arizona segment to the treasured National Scenic Trail from Mexico to Utah that will traverse the whole north-south length of the United States.

In 1987, he became a founding member for his most beloved project, the Friends of the San Pedro River (FSPR), a volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of the San Pedro River via advocacy, education, and interpretation. His desire for the conservation of this area brought about the coordination of activities to the BLM which eventually became the current land manager of the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA) and the National Conservation Lands. With over 4000 hours of volunteer time at the Friends, he could be found at the San Pedro House most days with tools in hand clearing the trails, chatting with visitors, or manning the onsite book store. He particularly loved it when a visitor to the SPNRA would be of German heritage, and even better if they spoke some German so he could practice his German.

Lester was a good hearted and cheerful man merely willing to lend a hand and serve in any capacity. He was a caregiver to his families, his community, our country and the nature preserved in our public lands and wild places. Fiercely loyal to his causes for long years, he was a “giver” who well understood a pure partnership of man with nature. He departs this earth with a legacy that defines a true sense of the word *community*.

Nothing in Nature lives for itself. Rivers don't drink their own water. Trees don't eat their own fruit. The Sun doesn't shine for itself. A Flower's fragrance is not for itself. Living for each other is the Rule of Nature. And Lester lived and breathed these simple rules.

In his memory, if you can, just take a hike today. You will feel his spirit there.

In lieu of flowers, the families wish donations be made to: The Friends of the San Pedro River, Inc, 4070 S Avenida Saracino, Hereford, AZ 85615. You may call (520) 459-2555 or send an e-mail to fspr@sanpedroriver.org should you require additional information.

Those wishing to send fond memories, please contact Tim Mauk, 3437 13th Ave W, Seattle, WA 98119 or timmauk@yahoo.com. He will gladly share these with the families.