

Remembering Steve Harris

(March 28, 1945 – May 26, 2018)

President of Friends of Oakridge 2014 – 2018

Member of the Oakridge Estate Park Advisory Board (PAB) 2011 - 2014

Near the end of May, Friends of Oakridge lost a leader, a gentleman and a friend. Many of you may recall meeting Steve Harris on an Oakridge tour or at an event. He frequently spoke to tour guests about the site plans for the public park to be completed by the end of 2018. The Oakridge Estate Park project was especially dear to his heart. He loved speaking about it to whoever would listen! Steve envisioned a park filled with native plants and butterfly habitats.

Steve Harris's dedication and commitment to the Oakridge Estate resulted in the creation of a 501 (c) 3 Public Benefit Corporation, Friends of Oakridge, in 2014. His enthusiastic vision for the uses of the residence and adjacent public park will be his legacy for the Northridge community. Steve had a voracious passion for this diverse, multi-faceted historic property. He worked tirelessly on evenings and weekends meeting multitudes of deadlines while conducting/attending many meetings. His organizational and computer skills, guidance and direction motivated all who worked with him. Steve recruited, facilitated, coordinated and directed a dedicated group of volunteers who will miss him.

Here is a bit more about Steve's background that provides insight into his value as the President of Friends of Oakridge.

As a real estate entrepreneur, Steve was well known for his innovative combination of for-profit real estate experience to create supporting non-profit and public service initiatives, causes and organizations. Steve's career in real estate and environmental non-profits spanned decades, starting with attending Santa Monica City College and California State University, Northridge. He served as a reservist in the Marine Corps from 1965 -1971. Steve's career in real estate spanned commercial projects in downtown Los Angeles to residential projects across the Los Angeles basin. For decades his career focused on residential housing including custom homes, affordable housing communities, and large-scale residential community developments.

Most notable in Steve's life was his service to his community. For over four decades, Steve served multiple community and non-profit organizations including the California Council of Land Trusts (founder), Mountains Restoration Trust, City of Calabasas, Northridge Chamber of Commerce, the California Mountain Lion Foundation and Friends of Oakridge. He helped preserve thousands of acres of land in the Santa Monica Mountains and consulted on the authoring of numerous California laws and grants to support the preservation of open space in California including state parks and recreation areas. Steve also served as an advisor to California State Senators, Assemblymembers, and Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. He will be

remembered by his peers as a great mentor and a teacher of civic service. Steve is survived by his wife, two children and two grandchildren.

All who worked with him will sorely miss Stephen Albert Harris. His dedication and service to the community was both commendable and inspirational.