

In Memory of Larry Perlin

Long-time board member Larry Perlin passed on February 1st. Staff and Board share memories...

I wish I could remember what Larry and I were laughing at, but we were indeed. To me the picture portrays Larry as I knew him and want to remember him. He was jovial, fun and could cheer one up easily. Serving with Larry on the Land Trust Board was a pleasure. He was smart, did the homework, and always had a view. I loved that guy.

Katherine Beiers

My special memory of Larry dates back to about 13 years ago. The LT Board majority felt that a new direction and a change in Ex. Dir. was needed. Larry was chair of the Board at that time. Several of us met with him to develop a 'game plan' that would be fair to all concerned. However, with his administrative background, Larry had the clear understanding about how the changes could be made, and then carried it out. He asked for assistance when needed but it was largely his effort. This took a considerable amount of his time (and he was working full time in Silicon Valley), but it resulted in the beginning of an enormous opportunity for the LT, employment a new ED with a new vision, and led to the organization we are today.

I also found Larry's organization and explanation of the financial report and yearly budget particularly helpful to understanding an aspect of the organization that I find somewhat complex.

Lastly, outside of the LT, I happened to work with Larry years ago when he was with the Saratoga Public Works Dept. As a consultant I prepared a revegetation and erosion control plan for a hilltop winery/ vineyard that had contributed some downstream erosion and channel incision in a streamcourse. This was a longstanding problem and the city's constructed diversion structures were in jeopardy. Larry had an innate understanding of what the city and property owner could accomplish and directed the City Council accordingly. The plan was implemented and new structures constructed, and the issue was solved to everyone's satisfaction. Larry was the consummate professional.

He has a long history with the LT, and I think it will be difficult to replace him.

John Gilchrist

I first met Larry when we each joined the board of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County around 2001. It didn't take us long to find common cause in our vision and desire to see the Land Trust realize its full potential as a strong force for conservation in the county that we both loved dearly. Larry played a key role in navigating the organization in a process that resulted in my assuming the staff leadership role in 2005 – a position I held for 11 years. The Land Trust's accomplishments during my tenure were due to the incredible support of people like Larry.

During that arc of time, Larry was steadfast and passionate in his belief in the mission of the Land Trust, always carrying that mantle above all else. You could count on Larry to be the independent thinker, asking the question that stopped group-think in its tracks. He always acted from a place of integrity and applied his engineer's mind to any challenge that presented itself. Larry was warm, caring, intelligent, unpredictable. I enjoyed every conversation I ever had with him!

I'm sorry for the loss of Larry - for his family (that he was deeply devoted to), for the Land Trust (who benefited greatly from his stewardship), and for myself (I already miss him as a friend and colleague.) We all lost a very special human being who will, I hope, continue to be an inspiration for service and for the importance of the voice of the person in the room who thinks for himself and has the courage to speak up. It's people like Larry that change the world for the better – and he did.

Terry Corwin

Larry was everywhere. At the time of his death he was on four board committees, which made him a regular at our office. He served as our Treasurer for many years. He served as Board Chair multiple times. He dazzled the board twice a year with his presentations on the budget and our annual audit. And he kept on giving by including the Land Trust in his estate plans. His gift will go into a board reserve, one of his many ideas, this one built on his understanding of the forever nature of land protection.

Larry had strong opinions and he expressed them forcefully. We didn't always agree, and sometimes disagreed strongly, but there was never any residue from our disagreements. He was a straight-up guy and he loved this county and the Land Trust right up until the end. He is already missed.

Stephen Slade

One of the things about Larry that I enjoyed the most was the fact that he had "total recall." He remembered everything, including the most arcane elements of county government or obscure paragraphs from a 10-year-old document that was still in his big brain. Even the most minute details never escaped him.

Melody Sharp

I worked side by side with Larry on some challenging projects over the nine years we served together on the Land Trust Board. While we often diverged in our opinions, I always came away with a better understanding of the issues base on Larry's sharp mind and often pointed dialogue. It was always a pleasure to work with Larry and I am very sad he's not with us.

Val Cole