



# IDAHO FOUNDATION *for* PARKS AND LANDS

**Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands is Idaho's oldest land trust. We protect lands for the people of Idaho.**

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## Tribute to Don Weilmunster

Don Weilmunster joined the board of the Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands in 1977; under the tutelage of its president Hope Kading he demonstrated loyalty to the cause and upfront leadership that earned the respect of his colleagues. He was elected its president in 1993 and served in that capacity until January 2020.

What would a cattleman, ranching and ag person do for a statewide land trust formed in December 1972? It was never a problem for Don to identify with holding and conserving land and being a spokesperson relating to various properties around the state of Idaho. He had contacts, he had charisma and he was never afraid to ask for financial help.

Don made me part of the team when I was the Foundation Executive Director. His style of leadership with the Board of Directors was to say little during the meeting, let everyone have his/her say but at the same time he had talked in advance of the meeting to board members, enough to provide direction to decisions. Some might say by devious means Don brought financial integrity during some pretty lean times to the Foundation to the extent that his cattle sales had a per capita earmarked for the Foundation.

Even though Don's origins were humble, he had no problem with knowing and circulating with people and places of high standing. These would include the Bishop Estate of Hawai'i, Charlie Mapes, Barbara and George H.W. Bush, Winthrop Rockefeller, Jr. and his Petit Jean Conference Center in Arkansas, The Boswell Foundation and Sun Valley Corporation to name some. Another favorite was "Slim" Pickens whom he met when Slim filmed a video for the Foundation sale of "Buy an Inch, Save an Acre" on top of Dollar Mountain. His famous cowboy hat was extolled in the context of these contacts. He displayed the ring of authenticity to which others could relate.

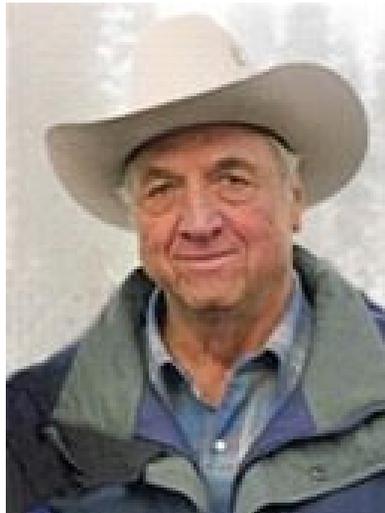
His word was bond. Granted many of the Foundation papers rode around in the back of his pick-up or his hip pocket but he always could read a contract and devise a strategy by which the Foundation became the grantee of someone's largesse. When the Foundation needed planks for the Plantation Island bridges Don knew someone who would custom cut the planks, saving money on a project that had no other funding but the Foundation's.

That was Don's modus operandi, saving money because the Foundation was stand-alone and independent and derived its revenue from private donations and some grants. However, its best endeavor was in the joint partnerships it formed with other organizations and the generosity of in-kind expertise from lawyers and scientists. Speaking of which the partnership with Idaho Shakespeare Festival has been a real winner. Shakespeare needed a venue and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation wanted a headquarters building and all three became fused for the public benefit. I know Don would like to add R.B. Kading, Jr. and Jerry Wray to the mix of individuals who helped make the Shakespeare project possible.

As a matter of courtesy, Don was never late to meetings and that often involved a drive down from Garden Valley to Boise. Don was used to driving because of the distance to and from various ranches. He never complained.

In closing, we should laud both Don and Linda Weilmunster for making the meetings, driving the distance and ensuring that meeting times were fun as well as work-related. His legacy will reach out to us all for many more decades.

Sharon Hubler  
President



Donald K. Weilmunster  
June 25, 1930 ~ March 29, 2020

Don, 89, of Garden Valley, Idaho passed away peacefully at home of natural causes. Due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak, the family has decided to have his service at a later date. Don was born in Cedarville, California and was raised in Massacre, Nevada in the Blackrock Desert. He completed High School and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. He set out to find his way at 16 and discovered he had a head for business. Don began trucking goods in the west and eventually started the Ore-Ida Lumber Company, coming up with the catchy slogan "Ship it Ore-Ida." The company ran lumber, produce and frozen foods and from Salt Lake City to California, Nevada, and Oregon. He was proud to be awarded the State of Oregon 's Young Businessman of the Year.

Don sold the business and the trade name in 1964 transitioning to full-time farming and ranching. He purchased land in Boise, Canyon, Gem, and Valley Counties moving the cattle as the seasons changed. He had extensive operational and technical experience in road building, construction, development and timber, and land appraisal.

He lived mainly in Garden Valley on the old Schilling ranch for 60 years. Don loved being on the ranch and developing new business ventures. He was proudest of his involvement on the many boards on which he served. He was the long-serving president of The Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands, "We need a system to preserve for the people what has been my fortune to find in Idaho---land which supports wildlife habitat, cultural and historic resources." He was passionate about being a custodian of the land "there is no maternity ward for terra firma."

He was instrumental in the Harriman East Project, The Barber Pool Conservation Area, The Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Weilmunster Park and the Garden Valley Recreation District. Don was actively involved in the formation of Tamarack Resort and part of his Donnelly ranch is now the golf course. He was a Boise County Commissioner from 1991-93 and also served on the President's Council for Rural America under President H.W. Bush from 1990-92.

Don always had stories he loved to share, he was very clever with his one-liners and quick wit. He spent many hours behind the wheel of his pickup and Jeep running his trap line. He loved hunting and fishing. Don is survived by his wife, Linda, of 30 years. His children and their spouses, Jon Weilmunster (Dewey), Jamie (Craig Paulsen), and Wendy (Jeff Watkins), and close cousin, Jim Johnstone (wife Louise); 7 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren, and Linda's three children. And faithful friend and ranch manager, Cesar Buenrostro (wife Sarah).

The family would like to thank all those who helped with Don's care. Fire Chief John Delvalle and the Garden Valley Fire Department, Horizon Home Health Care & Hospice of Emmett, and Garden Valley Family Medicine. Don will be missed by many, he had a larger than life personality. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations be made to the Garden Valley Fire District and Emergency Medical Division, mail to: GVFD, P.O. Box 530, Garden Valley, ID 83622. Services in the care of the Potter Funeral Chapel Emmett.

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## The Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands

### Mission Statement

The Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands is a statewide public benefit privately-funded organization whose mission is to preserve and protect open space lands and unique natural, scenic settings for public benefit through various flexible conservation methods.

We are working to protect the beautiful lands of Idaho. [Make a gift to IFPL today](#) and help us continue to care for many of the places you love!

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