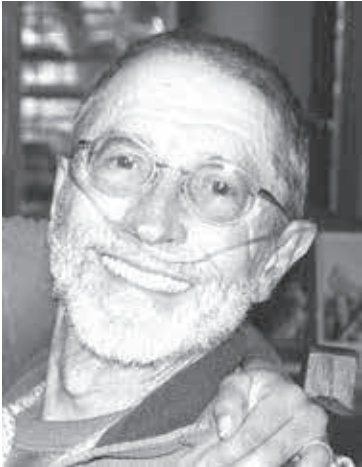


Robert Leo Cooper

July 1, 1944 – June 6, 2017



Robert Leo Cooper was born in Inglewood, California, on July 1, 1944, to parents Dale Bruce Cooper and Katherine Duffy Cooper. He passed away at home on June 6, 2017, in Bend, Oregon, from lung failure due to severe emphysema from combat-related chemical exposures in the Vietnam War.

Bob spent his childhood summers with family in the forests of California and visiting national parks on car camping vacations, which cultivated his lifelong love of nature. Later in life, he was able to combine this passion with teaching. He graduated from Aviation High School in Redondo Beach, California, in 1962 and from Oregon State University in 1966 with a bachelor's degree in forest management.

Knowing he was going to be drafted, Bob enlisted in the Army in October 1966. Bob arrived in Vietnam in July, 1968, and became a 1st Lieutenant and an infantry platoon leader with the 1st/16th of the 1st Infantry Division. Bob was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge and four Bronze Star medals, two for heroism (valor) in ground combat and two for meritorious

achievement in ground operations. The most significant event of the war was the Band of Brothers he was honored to serve with.

Bob completed a master's degree in forest resources at University of Washington in 1971. He taught forest technology at Southwestern Oregon Community College in Coos Bay, Oregon, for 15 years and then at Central Oregon Community College in Bend for 11 years. He applied his teaching and leadership skills in such a way as to skillfully and successfully demand student effort and learning, while still being respected, admired and appreciated.

In 1997, Bob was diagnosed with Alpha 1 Antitrypsin Deficiency, a genetic predisposition to liver and lung disease. The diagnosis explained the years of upper respiratory struggles that he had endured. Bob retired as Professor Emeritus in 1997.

After his retirement, Bob and his wife, Beverly, spent a lot of quality time with their family and traveled extensively in pursuit of nature and bird watching. Planning and taking trips to seek new bird sightings was one of Bob's favorite activities, and they made a total of about 60 journeys in 18 years. Bob's North American bird-count life list number was 675.

Bob had a good life, a full life and a lucky life. He was grateful to have significant gifts of time and friendship. Bob was appreciated by his loved ones for his passion, his determination, and his incredible love of life.

Bob is survived by his wife, Beverly Cooper; his daughters, Kimberly (and Todd) Griffith; and Katherine Cooper; his son-in-law, Karl (and Renee) Findling; his son-in-law, Brad Karl; his sister, Christine Dinnel; his beloved grandchildren, his Vietnam brothers and many close friends.

A celebration of life will be held at the family home on August 2. His family will also gather at a later date in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming, where Bob worked as a ranger-naturalist for five summers in the 1980s.

