

HERVEY CHAPMAN'S GIFT TO THE TRAIL

By **Mark Larabee**, Communicator Managing Editor

He was a hiker and enjoyed the Pacific Crest Trail, so his cousin gave him a Pacific Crest Trail Association membership as a gift and he kept it up year after year.

Hervey Chapman of Sherman Oaks, Calif., loved to hike when he was a younger man. And in his later years he was a runner of marathons and cross-country races. He loved the PCT and often climbed into the Sierra Nevada looking for peace and solace.

But most people involved in the Pacific Crest Trail Association never knew Hervey Chapman or even heard of him. His quiet dedication to our cause was typical for him. After all, Hervey was a kind, gentle and thoughtful man, said his brother, **Wayne Chapman** of Carlsbad, Calif.

"He had a pure heart," Wayne said. "The place where he found great solace was in the mountains. It was an equal playing field. It was where he found acceptance. It's where he found himself."

When Hervey died at 73 from leukemia in January 2011, he named the PCTA in his will. The association will receive a third of Hervey's estate. The gift, valued at \$400,000 to \$700,000, is the largest single contribution this nonprofit has ever received. He dedicated the money to the PCTA's endowment fund, and annual distributions from the investment will be used in perpetuity to support ongoing programs that protect, preserve and promote the PCT.

"Because of his thoughtful planning, Hervey's gift will benefit the PCT for generations to come and will likely inspire others to do the same," said **Liz Bergeron**, PCTA executive director. "We are grateful that Hervey had enough confidence in the PCTA to be so generous. I'm sorry that I never had the opportunity to meet Hervey



Left to right: Hervey during a rainy marathon; as a young man in the U.S. Army; in the pet shop that he loved so much.

in person and appreciate the opportunity to learn more about his life through his family members."

Born on New Year's Day in 1938 in Los Angeles, Hervey had a natural kinship with animals since he was a young man, family members said.

For more than four decades, Hervey owned and operated the Verdugo Pet Shop. He originally operated on Verdugo Road in Eagle Rock before he moved to the Highland Park neighborhood on York Boulevard. It was more than a pet store. It was also a feed store. It had a warehouse in the back and a large wall of fish tanks. Hervey sold rabbits, chickens and birds and catered to a loyal client base.

To Hervey, the pet shop wasn't just a job, it was a calling, said his cousin, **Jean Lambert**. "The shop was basically the anchor of Hervey's life," she said. "Retirement was not in sight."

Hervey was the friendly man behind the counter. He worked there every day except Mondays. At night, he often would deliver 50-pound bags of feed to customers who needed a hand. He went home when the day's work was done.

"That's what Hervey was all about," Wayne said. "He helped people because they needed help. It was that simple."

That's one of the things Wayne admires about his younger brother – he was a giver and a doer for others.

Customers and neighboring business owners once gave Hervey a two-week trip to Hawaii, Wayne recalled. It says a lot about the man and the admiration his friends had for him.

He rarely closed his store. When he did, Jean said it was because he had a race to run. But he always made sure to let his customers know.

In the last 12 years of his life, Hervey was an avid runner. He ran the last 10 Los Angeles Marathons and was registered for the one in March 2011, two months after he died. He often would place in his age group, and his brother said he framed his numbers from his races and hung them on his bedroom and office walls.

He ran countless marathons and half-marathons and also ran cross-country races in the mountains, traveling to Catalina, Calif., and Colorado to run the same races each year. He recently ran the BolderBOULDER, an annual 10-kilometer race in Boulder, Colo., with his niece, **Becky**.

He also loved clogging, a form of dance, and was serious about it, Jean said. Every Thursday, he'd close the store a little early and go to clogging class, where he danced with the same instructor and dance

partners for 25 years. He'd installed a clogging floor in his home where he would practice.

"His hobbies enlarged his world considerably," Jean said.

It was Jean's sister, **Barbara Anderson**, who gave Hervey the PCTA membership. Jean, who spent most Mondays with Hervey for the last dozen years, said Hervey loved the trail and swore he wanted to walk the whole thing some year.

"He would have done it, he definitely would have if retirement came on his horizon," she said. "Getting outside enlarged his life and gave him a tremendous sense of freedom."

But two days after Christmas 2010, Hervey was admitted to the hospital after a coughing fit, and he was quickly transferred to UCLA Medical Center. He was diagnosed with leukemia and died a few weeks later. He was active to the end.

"He ended up with a life that was very good for him," Wayne said. "Look what he did. It's fabulous. He had so many friends. Hervey was deeply loved. He really was something."

"It was a real honor to have him as a brother."

