

Richard Soares 1954 -- 2013

Rich Soares passed away on January 4, 2013, after a long and courageous battle with leiomyosarcoma, a rare and extremely serious cancer of the soft tissue. He was 58 years old. He had been receiving alternative treatments domestically and abroad. His illness led to his retirement from California State University, Chico, on September 24, 2012. He is survived by his wife, Gail Beterbide; parents, George and Laurette; children, Heidi Waugh, Holly Soares, David Soares and Leslie Detro; granddaughter, Imari Waugh; three brothers and one sister; and many extended family members. Rich had served for 11 years as the biology, chemistry, agriculture, nutrition and food science and nursing librarian. Rich received his B.A. in geology from CSU, Chico in 1985, followed by an M.L.S. from San Jose State University in 1986.

I will always harbor a special fondness for Rich because he began his library career with me. I hired him as a student assistant in the CSU, Chico library map collection in 1983. He served in the map collection until he graduated in 1985. At one point, when he needed a place to stay in Chico and avoid the 40 mile commute from his home in Red Bluff, I ensconced him in my tiny pool house in my backyard. He was fascinated with maps, and he and I had many good conversations about maps and map finding tools. He became very interested in the *Geologic Map Index to U.S.G.S. 7.5' and 15' Quadrangles of California* that I had begun and was frequently working on. Rich was married at the time and his wife had just given birth to their first child, and he was a bit uncomfortable of the prospects of becoming a field geologist and the frequent separations from his family that would be required. I suggested that he think about doing like I did, and combine his geology with library science and seek a career in earth science librarianship. He took me up on this, and immediately after receiving his degree in geology he ventured to the Bay Area and studied library science at San Jose State University.

After receiving his MLS in 1986, Rich headed to nearby Stanford University and got his taste of the real world, serving in the Branner Earth Science Library to late 1987. He was a senior library assistant, focusing on science and maps, including map cataloging and collection development. From there Rich ventured eastward to Brigham Young University and stepped up to the professional ranks. At BYU's Harold B. Lee Library, Rich served as a reference specialist in the sciences, with emphasis on reference and collection development in geology, geography, and maps. He took on the duties of map cataloging and preservation. It was here that Rich whet his interest in cartobibliography and first put his skills to test with *Early Soil Maps of California, 1900-1940: A Bibliography With Indexes*. This initial foray into library literature was well received and appeared in the *WAML Information Bulletin*, volume 32, July 2001.

Rich couldn't resist the opportunity to return to his home state and alma mater, CSU, Chico, and on August 1, 2001, he was appointed as an assistant librarian at Chico's Meriam Library. I had the pleasure of serving on the hiring committee that selected him for the position. Four years later, I had the pleasure of chairing the personnel committee that promoted him to Associate Librarian and granting him tenure in 2005. Rich served at Chico for 11 years as the biology, chemistry, agriculture, nutrition and food science and nursing librarian. He brought his interest in cartobibliography with him and in the succeeding years nurtured it into major contributions to the literature. He began in the field of biology and made a major contribution to the bibliography of ornithology with his online *Index to Current Ornithology* in 2002. "I found that a valuable periodical for which we have a standing order, *Current Ornithology*, was poorly covered by our databases or indexes and consequently little used. I created an online, searchable listing of

Current Ornithology's contents, displayable in title, author, or chronologic order" (Soares, 2005).

Rich quickly earned a respected position among faculty. He belonged to numerous listservs, including ChemInfo, STS, AgNet, AnimalNet, and FoodNetl, and he valued their importance to himself as well as to science faculty. Listservs "keep me informed of current issues in science as well as library related issues. Not only do I learn from these sources, but I often share any news worthy of note with my faculty" (Soares, 2005). "Mr. Soares has, with these efforts, communicated that he is an essential component of our academic efforts and very supportive of our professional activities" (Jim Postma, chemistry professor, CSU, Chico, 2005).

Rich gave numerous presentations to faculty and staff on the use of databases and "alert" services. "Alert services are important to research and teaching faculty because they allow faculty to know what is being published on subjects of interest. Unlike publisher alerts, database alerts cast a much wider net when fishing for those gems in the sea of seemingly endless publications" (Soares, 2005). And that was what Rich was all about. He never left a stone unturned when searching for some elusive bit of information.

Rich published prolifically during 2004 and 2005. Recognizing a serious omission in natural resource literature, he authored several indexes of soil and geologic maps appearing in print and online on the World Wide Web. Bibliographies of early soil maps of California and the Pacific Northwest issued by the United States Department of Agriculture and geologic maps of Utah issued by the United States Geological Survey have appeared in print in four issues of the *WAML Information Bulletin*. "I know that many of our readers, especially those from California, will find the information in your bibliography useful in their work" (Linda Zellmer, WAML Editor, Arizona State University, 2005). The soil maps are unique and differ from earlier soil indexes in that "These cartobibliographies ... focus on the maps rather than the reports" (Soares, 2005). "The Utah geologic map index, 1883-1980, is invaluable for its detail and comprehensiveness" (Linda Newman, University of Nevada, Reno, 2005). An online version of the Utah geologic map index was expanded to include publications issued by the Utah Geological Survey. "I have found your list to be very handy to use" (Mary Larsgaard, UC Santa Barbara, 2005). "Mr. Soares has made "a significant contribution to the geologic literature" (Richard Flory, geology professor, CSU, Chico, 2005). A bibliography of Department of Agriculture soil maps of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Hawaii appears on the World Wide Web, and, through the Western Association of Map Libraries "Tool Box," has been linked to over 260 websites world-wide. "It's awesome! Congrats for generating a really useful tool" (Janet Collins, Western Washington University, 2005). Rich's final publication was an investigation into citation analysis, *The Most Often Cited Chemistry Books in 1981: Twenty Years Later*, appearing in *Science & Technology in Libraries*, volume 27, 2007.

"Rich was an excellent librarian who was always looking for new and innovative ways to reach students and faculty" (Sarah Blakeslee, CSU, Chico, Dean of Libraries, 2013).

Rich joined WAML in 1986. He was very active in the Association through the early 2000s. He served as Business Manager from 1988 to 2002 and Publications Manager from 1992 to 2002. Rich co-hosted two WAML conferences. In spring 2001, Rich and Riley Moffat hosted the conference at BYU in Provo. Rich gave a workshop on map preservation. The conference included a tour of the U.S.G.S. Western Distribution Center in Salt Lake City. The conference

will forever be imprinted in my memory. The banquet was held at Robert Redford's Snowbird resort in nearby Park City, and when I was walking down the hall toward the banquet room, the movie legend himself stepped out of a side room and smacked right into me—my one and only physical contact with a movie star. In spring 2004, Rich joined me in hosting WAML at CSU, Chico. Rich had become well-grounded in HTML, and he provided the first online registration for a WAML conference. "Dreamweaver has helped me prepare web pages for publication, collection development, reference, and instruction" (Soares, 2005). "Some 50 participants, representing educational institutions, government agencies and public libraries, journeyed from Texas, Alaska and Hawaii and most states therein to hear lectures and discuss any and all matters of interest relating to maps and geography. Topics ranged far and wide, with an eclectic blend of historical presentations peppered with a healthy dose of more contemporary high technology" (Joe Crotts, CSU, Chico, 2005).

"Rich came from a family of organizers. You would go into his office and he would have pictures of his father with Caesar Chavez up on the wall" (Vince Ornelas, CFA Chico Chapter President). Rich became very active in the faculty union, CFA (California Faculty Association), in 2003, continuing until forced to curtail union activities due to his deteriorating health in 2011. In 2004 he began serving as CFA's Probationary Faculty Representative and member of the Librarian's Caucus. In 2008, he was appointed to the all-important position of CSU, Chico Chapter Faculty Rights Chair. He played a major role in providing representation to all faculty, CFA members and non-members alike, protecting rights guaranteed by the collective bargaining agreement. "As Faculty Rights Chair, I have played an important role in creating or changing university policies on nepotism, smoking, lecturer range elevation, and teaching evaluations and visitations" (Soares, 2011). In 2009 he assumed the role of CFA Web Master.

Rich proudly championed the rights of the individual. He was oft times called an activist, and the label was bestowed out of respect and admiration for his inscrutable pursuit of ensuring fairness in questions of compliance. Rich called himself an advocate: a supporter of the rights of an individual to be heard and his side of the story considered. But, above all, Rich was fair, to the individual and to the institution, and for this he was highly respected by both faculty and administrators. He stood up for the little guy; but he never shafted the institution. "He provided a great deal of service to the university and faculty" (Vince Ornelas, CFA Chico Chapter President).

In his memorial, January 18, 2013, in Chico, Rich was characterized as a "caring, decent and understanding" person who had ascended to become a man but never left the boy behind. He could be funny; he could be serious; but he left no doubt to friend or foe that what concerned them equally mattered to him. His ever present sense of humor belied an innate sense of stoic determination to see that, in the end, the job got done; the issue got resolved, in the manner that was right, whether it favored one side or the other. His presence was sought after in times of joy and times of stress. He could be depended upon. He would listen. Time spent with Rich was time to remember. We now have this link with Rich to all the wonderful memories of his presence during the all too brief time we had to spend with him.

(by Joe Crotts & Kathy Rankin, Feb.2013)