

CPRS District II
Recreation, Park and Leisure

2007 Hall of Honor

Legacy Category

Donald W. McMurchie

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW



- Retired as Attorney-at-Law, 1992.
- Assisted in the formation of Fulton – El Camino Recreation and Park District, 1956.
- Acting Director, Fulton – El Camino Recreation and Park District, 1956–1958.
- Advisor and Legal Counsel, Fulton – El Camino, Cordova, North Highlands, and Southgate Recreation and Park Districts, 1956–1992.
- Guided these agencies through many projects of master planning, land acquisition, development of major facilities, and bond issues, 1956–1992.
- Assisted in the formation of the Save the American River Association, 1963.
- Legal Counsel, California Association of Recreation and Park Districts (CARPD) 1965–1975.
- Active in the design created to form PARDEC (Park and Recreation District Employees Compensation) 1978.
- Administrator, PARDEC, 1978–2008.
- Active in the design and creation of CAPRI (California Association Park and Recreation Insurance) 1986–1990.

Award Applying For: Legacy Category

Name: Donald W. McMurchie

Agency: Retired Attorney at Law

Don McMurchie has indeed made a significant contribution toward the formation of historical benchmark projects and agencies within CPRS District Two. There is no question of the significance that his involvement has had to the leisure lifestyle of the region.

For over Fifty years Don has been a major player in the formation of Recreation and Park Districts in the Sacramento Area. Starting as a resident in what is now known as the Fulton El Camino Recreation/Park District, Don, as a local attorney agreed to assist with the formation of the District in 1956.(note: FEC celebrating its 50 years of leisure services this past year). After the successful election to form the district, it was clear that it would be some time before they would have funding or staffing. So Don served as the acting administrator for the District until funding became available and the Board was able to hire a full time manager.

Shortly after the area now known as the Rancho Cordova Recreation/Park District, went through the same process of an election to form a special district, and retained the services of Don McMurchie as advisor and legal council. Don provided legal counsel services for both FEC and RC and as the years of progressive service in the area of leisure expanded, he also provided the same services for the North Highlands Recreation District and for Southgate Recreation District. Don guided these agencies through many projects of master planning , land acquisition and development of major facilities.

In the 1980's a major issue of funding impact on districts for workman's compensation and for all insurance needs became a significant issue for all districts in California, after study, a design was created to form two agencies for self insurance, PARDEC and CAPRI. (Park and Recreation District Employees Compensation, and California Association Park and Recreation Insurance) Both of these agencies are still in existence today, and Don remains as Administrator for PARDEC. These two agencies saved the financial life of park and

recreation agencies throughout all of California. These two programs were allowed to be created by the California Association of Recreation and Park Districts. (CARPD). Don has served as legal counsel to the Association since its formation.

Even in retirement Don has continued to serve as the Administrator for the PARDEC program.

Don's prestigious law firm continued for many years to provide legal services for several R&P Districts as well as other community associations throughout California.

He has received numerous honors from agencies through out California for his dedication and commitment to leisure time services for all.

It is with great pride and pleasure that I submit the name of Donald W. McMachie for the honor of being placed in the true Legacy Category For his many significant contributions to the lifestyles of the Sacramento region.

Richard T. Conzelmann
Retired CPRS past president
Former FEC General Manger

McMurchie, Donald W.

Donald W. McMurchie joined his wife Doris Irene in glory on September 9, 2019. Born in Manitoba, Canada, Don was the oldest child of Charles, a traveling salesman, and Norma Melville McMurchie. Don met Doris while attending Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA. After Pearl Harbor, Don took a leave of absence from Whitman and joined the Army Air Corps, proudly serving his country in the Pacific until the end of WW2. He returned to complete his degree at Whitman, attend law school at Stanford University, marry his bride in August 1948, and graduate with a law degree from Stanford in 1949. Don and Doris moved to Sacramento in 1950, and Don commenced work as a young attorney in the established law firm of the then-renowned Judge Busick for the eye-popping sum of \$200 per month. In 1952, he and his Stanford classmate Tom Files opened the law firm of Files and McMurchie, which they built and expanded over the years and which continues to thrive under the name Lenahan, Lee, Slater, Pearce and Majernik 67 years later. Don counseled and advocated for local government agencies throughout his career and was responsible for the creation and administration of many of Sacramento's recreation and park districts, including Fulton-El Camino Recreation and Park District, Southgate Recreation and Park District, and Cordova Recreation and Park District. Don retired from the practice of law in 1992 after 40 years of practice. He continued to provide consulting services to recreation and park districts throughout the state until age 86 in 2008.

Don's crowning achievement in life was his loving marriage and his family of "McMurchie Boys." If you lived in Sacramento in the 60's and 70's you knew sons David, Paul, and Stephen. Don's family expanded to include his 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren, in whose lives he was always interested and active, and a large clan of McMurchie siblings, nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and -nephews, whom he loved to see at family reunions in Black Butte, Oregon every three years. The McMurchie Family reunions have continued to bind the clan for 44 years from 1975 to the most recent in July 2019, which Don was also excited to attend and



enjoy with his usual *jolie de vivre*. This clan of "Macs" is one of his greatest legacies, one which he shares with his surviving sister, Eileen (MacBeth) and sister-in-law, Carolyn, as well as deceased siblings Marion (Beckenhauer) and Jack McMurchie.

A man with an infectious zest for life and deep and abundant knowledge, Don had a passion for history, travel, classical music, fine wine, and scotch. He and Doris traveled the world with friends who dubbed themselves the "OohAhs" and made lasting memories wherever they went. Closer to home, he was well-known for taking any friend he could coax into his car on long drives on obscure backroads in the foothills, where he was certain to stop at every "hysterical" landmark he could find and provide an unsolicited history lesson.

Don was preceded in death by his parents, wife Doris, brother Jack and sister Marian. He is survived by his sons Dave (Ginger), Paul (Nancy) and Steve (Nancy) and his much beloved grandchildren Megan (Matt), Kaitlin (Josh), Marlena (Jeff), Erin, and Joe. Rounding out the family are great grandchildren Charlotte, Abigail, and Franklin.

The family would like to thank Prairie City Landing for giving Don a fabulous new home for the past 3 years and would also like to thank Carole Henderson for her loving care and devotion to Don.

Donations in memory of Don can be sent to the Special Districts Leadership Foundation, Attn: Educational Allowance Fund-Don McMurchie; 1121 I St., Sacramento, CA, or a charity of your choice. Memorial Services will be private.