

From Caveman (Greg)

I've been thinking lately about the first time I ever laid eyes on David. It was September of 1981. A friend and I were heading up East Harbor Road. We had just come from Bush Point where we caught three 7-9 pound Silvers. We were pretty happy about the catch and didn't think to check the gas as we came through Freeland. The van sputtered and died, so we coasted through the complete lack of traffic in those days to the far left side of the road, as there was no suitable shoulder on the right. We were about to flip a coin to see who would walk back to Freeland when a flat-bed truck pulled over in front of us, also heading the wrong way, and out stepped a complete stranger wearing a straw cowboy hat. After finding out that we needed gas, Dave went back to his truck to bring us some. I quickly asked my friend if I could offer him one of our fish; he said OK. But Dave wouldn't accept it or any money for the gas. It was ten years later that we became friends, but I never forgot that cowboy hat and his unselfish kindness.

Dave was always trying to feed everyone. He would routinely ask, "Did you eat up?" and assure you that there was "tons", even when it wasn't necessarily so. He seemed to enjoy sharing the moose, shrimp, fish and crab as much as he did the hunting and fishing, and would always spread it around to friends and family.

One year he caught, cooked, cleaned, and, with the help of Louie and Grandma, shucked a good 80% of an entire crab season's worth of crab, then made them into crab cakes and donated them all to the Eagles for a fund-raising dinner.

Many of us here today are from somewhere else. To leave friends, family and jobs behind as Dave and Louie did so many years ago takes a combination of adventure, courage and faith, because you never know what you'll find around the bend. I found a friendship with Dave Shellenberger that has enriched my life - he will be missed.

by Caveman, Greg Steen