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In Memoriam

David K. Leff

David K. Leff, a poet, essayist, and novelist who wrote essays, reviews, and poetry for *Appalachia*, died on May 29, 2022, in Collinsville, Connecticut, where he had lived for 38 years. He was 67.

Leff was born in Albany, New York, on April 9, 1955, and grew up in Fairfield, Connecticut. He earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where his papers and journals are being archived. After receiving his law degree from the University of Connecticut in 1978, he worked as a researcher and legal advisor for the Connecticut General Assembly's Environmental Committee. In 1994 he became deputy commissioner of the state's environmental agency, which was then called the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. He was the primary writer of the state's first green space plan and negotiator of Connecticut's largest land acquisition, more than 15,000 acres known as Centennial Watershed State Forest.

He retired from his state job early in 2006 because of the debilitating effects of spinal stenosis. He then turned his efforts to writing and volunteer work. For the town of Canton, Connecticut, he was historian, town meeting moderator, and poet laureate. He served as a volunteer firefighter for 26 years. He was also poet in residence for the New England Trail. His family and friends remembered him for his intelligence and generous heart, quick wit, infectious laugh, and endless puns. Shortly before his death, he and I met for lunch, when he outlined his research on a former Episcopal bishop who had studied birds in Connecticut's Great Mountain Forest. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends. He leaves behind his beloved wife Mary C. Fletcher, his daughter Tiki Leff Diliberto, his son Joshua F. Leff, his stepdaughter Ariel Precht, and his sisters Elizabeth Leff and Suzanne Ordesky.

—Christine Woodside

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