

Mike Moses, Eulogy by Greg Pfeifer

"When we think about our friend Mike Moses the first thing that comes to a lot our minds is: "He was just a great guy." It is cliché, but true. What was it about Mike that made him such a great guy? Well, he was friendly, kind, generous, compassionate, intelligent and funny. He also had the gift of equanimity. He had the uncanny ability to remain cool, calm and graceful, even in the most stressful, challenging situations.

You can say Mike was cool, but "cool" often has the connotation of false ego and cockiness and Mike was as devoid of that as anybody I have ever known. In an age dominated by insecure, egotistical narcissists Mike was an anomaly; he was so secure in who he was that he was able to be sincerely humble. He was who he was and that was that. This attitude allowed him to take his work seriously when he had to, but not to take himself too seriously. Even when he knew he was not long for this world Mike was able to maintain his sense of humor and was a joy to be around.

It was an honor and a privilege to be Mike's friend. It was always a pleasure to work with him, surf with him and just hang out with him. He was kind, generous, stoked and funny right up to the end of his life.

Mike was a great all around waterman and lifeguard. He was also intelligent enough to "play the game" and get promoted in the Fire Department without badmouthing and backstabbing others. He loved the ocean and the beach. He loved to surf but he just loved getting in the water. If the waves were not good he was happy just to go for a swim or a paddle or a bodysurf.

When I was living on the North Shore in the early 1990's Mike came to visit. I took him out to Backyards on a Hawaiian 8-10' day. I had been living there and surfing it everyday so I was right at home at that time but, looking back at it now it was kind of gnarly--especially for someone just off the jet from Santa Barbara who had never surfed that spot in those conditions before. It was triple overhead and breaking in about 2' of water over a sharp reef known as "The Boneyard." Mike followed me out, I showed him the lineup and picked off a few. I could see he was a little intimidated but, as usual, he stayed cool and he ended up picking off some good ones. He was totally stoked!

Years later I was working as the lead permanent lifeguard in charge of Malibu Surfrider Beach and Mike had risen to the rank of Captain in the Santa Barbara City Fire Department. Fire fighting was a good career but his real love was the ocean and surfing--so lifeguarding still called him in the summer. For a couple of summers Mike was able to work his schedule with the Fire Department to be able to work an opening 4/40 schedule at Malibu with me. Those were some of the best days of my lifeguarding career! Mike always showed up with copious offerings of organic avocados from his ranch overlooking Rincon. When you

worked with Mike you knew you were going to have a good day. We would do our job very well and have a great time doing it. We would get our workouts in and laugh--a lot!

The last summer Mike worked with me at Malibu he was having issues with pain in his back and ribs. Eventually he got the diagnosis. Through his long battle Mike faced his mortality with grace and dignity and he somehow managed to maintain his sense of humor. Between rounds of chemo, sometimes with the help of some medicinal herbal cookies he was stoked just to be able to get in the ocean when he could.

The last time I saw Mike was at my retirement party last summer at the Reel Inn. I am so grateful he made that drive down to Malibu because I know he was hurting more than he let on. He said they had run out of drugs and options for him so he was just gonna go surfing. He had made peace with his mortality. A Jewish Rabbi in the Middle East a couple of thousand years ago reportedly said something in Aramaic that has been translated into English as "Blessed are the peace makers." Mike was always a peace maker and now he is at peace.

Thank you Mike. Thank you for being a great friend, thank you for your kindness and generosity, thank you for the love and the aloha spirit and thank you for the laughter. Oh yeah, I almost forgot, thanks for the avocados!

Santa Barbara Fire Department

The [Santa Barbara City Fire Department](#) and the [Santa Barbara City Firefighters Association, Local 525](#) are saddened to announce the loss of retired Captain Mike Moses.

Moses succumbed to job-related cancer on Tuesday at home with his family after a long and courageous battle starting in 2010.

Moses began his career with the SBFDF in 1984 bringing the experience of a Los Angeles County lifeguard. He continued to work both as a firefighter and lifeguard for the next 27 years, dedicating his life to a career in public safety. Moses promoted to captain in 1996 and was assigned to the truck company. His career was cut short when diagnosed with cancer in 2010 and retired to focus on his health and family.

A mentor and friend, he will be missed.

Moses is survived by his wife Patricia, daughters Katie and Shauna, and three grandchildren.