

SUPPORTING THE MISSION

CHUCK RAFFETY'S GENEROUS DONATION

Charles “Chuck” Raffety was a low-key duck hunter. He enjoyed spending time at Salinas Gun Club and appreciated time in the blind even if the birds weren't flying.

“He was a committed hunter early on, but in recent years he just liked the experience of the marsh,” said Eric Parish, who hunted with him often in the Stockton area. “When his eyes started to fail him and he couldn't shoot as well, he took genuine joy in seeing others' success. He was sincerely happy to watch them enjoy the marsh.”

So it was with surprise that when he passed a few years ago, this gregarious man had not told anyone about his plans to bequeath a large gift to several nonprofits. The executor of his estate earlier this year told California Waterfowl that he left approximately \$1 million to the group. The contribution will go a long way to fund projects and help California Waterfowl ensure a future for waterfowl, wetlands and hunting in California, said Michael Friedenber, vice president of development for CWA.

“We're pleased Mr. Raffety was so generous to the mission,” said Friedenber. “We only wish we knew sooner to honor his thoughtfulness. At the very least, we would have wanted to say, “Thank you.””

California Waterfowl's Pintail Legacy Society honors those people who've decided to leave gifts through their estate. The Society members are recognized and appreciated for their generosity at an annual President's Dinner.

Raffety was a major benefactor to California Waterfowl before his death in 2018. He often spoke of the mission of California Waterfowl, said longtime friends.



Chuck Raffety was a member of the Salinas Gun Club and a successful businessman. Friends say he enjoyed the camaraderie of duck hunting as much as getting a limit.
PHOTO BY JOE PAPER

Raffety was born in Sacramento, where his family owned a successful electric wholesale business called Valley Electric Supply. They opened a second store in Stockton when Raffety was a young boy and moved the family there. Raffety graduated from Stanford University, served in the military and lived many years in the Stockton area with his wife and two children. He was a longtime member of the Stockton Rotary Club.

Later in life, he pulled stakes and resettled in Nevada, where he opened his own electric business called Carson Valley Electric.

Duck hunting was a thread that ran through his years in California and Nevada. Raffety was known to always have his black Lab and his favorite shotgun, a Browning A5, with him during hunts.

Bill Hosie knew Raffety from his Stockton days. Later they happened to join the same duck club. “He loved fishing and hunting, but he wasn't very good at either,” said Hosie, with a laugh. “But he made up for that with a determination to do his best and enjoy the time on the water or in the marsh.”

Hosie and Raffety spent 19 days together traveling New Zealand on a quest for big trout. Fly-fishing there takes a good amount of skill for success, said Hosie, a walnut grower who now lives in Lodi. Casting wasn't Raffety's strong point. But maybe luck was.

“He actually ended up catching a 10-pound, 1-ounce German brown trout,” said Hosie with a laugh. “He was a sharp man, and he sure picked up on things quickly.” 🦆

For information about ways to include California Waterfowl in your estate planning, please go to calwaterfowl.org/donate/planned-giving/#estate.

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