

MARK CONRAD ZELLER OCTOBER 24, 1967-NOVEMBER 25, 2004



This gentle man and loving father passed suddenly from this life, and will be sorely missed by his family, friends, and co-workers. We will remember his generous nature, his willingness to share his time, his quiet but keen sense of humor, and his warm sincere smile.

Mark Zeller truly loved the outdoors and was an extremely dedicated biologist and avid woodworker. He loved killing weeds, and relished his role in enabling conservation land managers to remove invasive plants from their properties. Despite his youth, Mark had a world of experiences and adventures. He had lived all over the United States, attended college in Alaska (drove there on a motorcycle with his girlfriend and eventual wife, Lisa), and volunteered on two separate occasions with animal rescue related to oil spills while there. He also spent six months in Antarctica studying seal behavior. When crisis occurred after the first hurricane hit Florida last year, he was one of the first department employees to leave his family to help with relief efforts.

Our office at DEP is a small close-knit group—a family. Mark, known as “Z” by coworkers and contractors alike, was with us for some ten years. He was our friend and able co-conspirator. He would bring little tokens of friendship back from vacation trips. For example, he brought Drew a Willie Nelson CD entitled “Old And In The Way” after one trip. A quart bottle of “Arrogant Bastard” ale showed up after a particular California trip. Then there were the numerous field trips when things would go particularly “well”; we’d just sit in the truck and Mark would finally break the silence and say, “OK, word of this doesn’t leave this truck!” He was the best and we will sorely miss him.

– Greg Jubinsky and Drew Leslie, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Invasive Plant Management

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