

AL CRISE

It is with a deep sense of loss and gratitude for having been counted among his friends that I mourn the passing of one of the country's great fly fishing instructors today, Allen Crise of Glen Rose, Texas.



Al was one of only a few Certified Master Casting Instructors in the state of Texas and by far the most active teacher of them. In fact, there are very few fly anglers under the age of forty in the state of Texas and not a whole bunch across the midsection of the United States who are more than a couple degrees of separation away from having been taught to cast or fly fish by Al Crise. In his role as Vice President of Education for the Southern Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers, Al was tireless and heroic in his volunteer work teaching people of all ages across Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas to fly fish or to fly fish better. But Al had no greater passion than for the youth programs. He poured his soul into teaching children to fly fish.

My dear friend Al Crise was also a leading force in the emerging field of therapeutic and adaptive fly fishing, which is my passion and area of expertise. Al was one of my early mentors in the specific discipline of adaptive fly casting instruction. Al Crise played a very formative and motivational role in, Project Healing Waters, and programs across the region. And he founded the very first website dedicated to adaptive fly casting. Al invited me to team teach with him the first-ever adaptive fly casting seminar at a Federation of Fly Fishers Conclave. And it is safe to say that his contributions to the use of fly fishing in medicine, psychology, social work, and adapted physical education will be felt for many years to come.

But Al Crise was a gentle and humble man who was always more interested in talking about you than about himself. He was always eager to listen and more often asked questions than gave answers. Al was an unassuming man who always put others first and was happy to take the leftovers for himself. And it was these sorts of character traits combined with his Herculean accomplishments that led the Southern Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers to name Al Crise a Legend of the Southern Council last year when he stepped down as VP of Education after many years of faithful service.

Al Crise was indeed a great man, a fantastic fly fisherman, a tremendous fly fishing instructor, a good friend, and a true gem of a human being. I feel very fortunate that our lives crossed paths. And I know beyond a doubt that the world is a little worse off without him here.