

Dallas Morning News

Editorial: Ned Fritz was a green pioneer

03:44 PM CST on Monday, December 22, 2008

Edward C. "Ned" Fritz was a crime fighter.

For decades, he battled what he called crimes against nature. Mr. Fritz became a tree hugger when going green was decidedly unfashionable. And through sheer force of will, he made a difference.

Mr. Fritz, a patriarch of environmentalism in Texas, died Friday. He was 92.

He brought the same passion and persistence to every fight, whether working to block construction of a single sidewalk or urging Congress to end clear-cutting in national forests. A trial lawyer by trade, Mr. Fritz frequently took his challenges to court, notching plenty of important victories along the way.

He founded several conservation and environmental groups and helped establish the Big Thicket National Preserve. And while he sometimes argued against needed development, Mr. Fritz's motives were pure: to leave Texas a better place.

No doubt his many disciples will honor his memory by continuing that crusade.