



Science
Societies

In memoriam

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In Memoriam



Cynthia A. Cambardella



Cynthia A. Cambardella, Ames, IA, passed away on 21 Sept. 2020, following a difficult walk with lung cancer. She was born 8 Mar. 1953, in Old Forge, PA. The oldest of four siblings, she was preceded in death by her parents, Joseph Anthony and Eleanor (Mazeleski) Cambardella, and her brother, Louis. She is survived by her loving spouse, Janet Hartman; a brother, Bill (Michele) of Reading, PA; sister, Mary (John) Kamberger of Clear Lake, IA; and their families.

Cambardella earned a B.S. in Microbiology and Chemistry from the University of Maryland and a Ph.D. in Soil Ecology and Ecosystem Science from Colorado State University. She moved to Ames in 1991 to work as a research soil scientist for the USDA-ARS at the National Soil Tilth Laboratory (present day NLAE). Her dedication to environmentalism inspired her ground-breaking research, which focused on how land use and agricultural management practices impact soil health and water quality and the benefits of organic farming. She believed in teamwork and collaborated widely with agricultural scientists across the country and beyond as an investigator, consultant, adviser, and reviewer.

Cambardella was a 30-year member of ASA and SSSA and was a founding member and leader of ASA's Sustainable Agriculture Community. She was held in high regard as a teacher and a mentor by numerous undergraduate and graduate students and was an excellent speaker and writer, a challenging colleague, and dedicated supervisor. She retired in 2019 from the USDA-ARS after 27 years of distinguished service during which

she also served as an affiliate associate professor of soil science in the Department of Agronomy at Iowa State University.

Cambardella strove to be genuine, honest, loving, and kind. She was devoted to AA recovery and the friends she had in the program. She had a rich spiritual life and loved nature, both plants and animals. She was a loyal, loving friend and cared deeply for the people in her life. Her smile, authenticity, and bright spirit will be missed.

Dallas Oswalt

Dr. Dallas Oswalt, former Head of International Training at ICRISAT and member of ASA and CSSA for more than 50 years, passed away on 14 Aug. 2020. He was 92.

Colleagues remember him as a born educator, a strict disciplinarian, a devout man, and a fair-minded leader.

Born in Ohio in 1927, his humanitarian streak was evident from a very young age. In 1945, on graduating from high school, he volunteered in the merchant marines under the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to deliver livestock from the U.S. to Italy. Upon reaching the capital city of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, the appalling scenes of devastation and ruin left an indelible mark on him, shaping the foundation of his lifelong endeavor for international peace and justice.

Oswalt started his career as a teacher of applied agricultural sciences in 1950 in the U.S. In 1953, he set out to establish a secondary school and teacher's training college in northeast Nigeria and served as principal of the school. After 11 years in Africa, he went to Purdue University to conduct research on sorghum, earning a Ph.D. in Agronomy in 1973. In 1975, he joined ICRISAT as a training officer and retired as Program Leader of the Human Resources Development Program in 1992.

At ICRISAT, he was responsible for developing comprehensive training schedules and assignments for all levels of trainees. He saw to it that trainees not only gained necessary experimental design and statistical analysis skills to support scientists but also ensured they were hands-on in sowing plots, managing them, and harvesting the produce at the end of the season.

By the time he retired, around 2,267 trainees representing 87 countries were trained by ICRISAT. He was a staunch Christian and held prayer services at his house every Sunday for residents who were religiously inclined.

Oswalt served on committees related to training, workshops, principal staff housing, staff council, computer management, editing of scientific publications, air-pollution control, transport management, cost management, regional technology-exchange systems, and staff policy.

He is survived by his daughter Karen Sue, son Kris Sydney, grandchildren, and great-grand children.

—Source ICRISAT

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