



Science
Societies

In memoriam

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In Memoriam



Wilbur Frye



ASA and SSSA Fellow Dr. Wilbur W. Frye, a member of the Societies for 60 years and an emeritus professor of plant and soil science at the University of Kentucky, died on 27 Sept. 2020 in Lexington, KY at his home. He was 87.

Frye was born 6 Aug. 1933 and raised on a farm in western Tennessee. After serving in the U.S. Air Force and working as an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration, he attended the University of Tennessee, graduating in 1967 with a M.S. in

Agronomy. He then attended Virginia Tech, graduating with a Ph.D. in 1970. He taught at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville between 1970 and 1974 and then moved to Lexington, teaching at the University of Kentucky for 25 years. Retiring from education in 2000, Frye served four years as the executive director of the Office of Consumer and Environmental Protection with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture between 2004 and 2008.

During Frye's career in education, he taught and conducted extensive research in soil science and environmental management and proudly directed and co-directed 15 graduate students, four of whom received their Ph.D. While teaching at the University of Kentucky, Frye notably lectured at Shandong University in China in 1985.

Frye authored and co-authored close to 80 articles in scientific journals, as well as numerous symposium proceedings and book chapters in his area of expertise. He was the editor of one book and served as an associate editor for the *Soil Science Society of*

America Journal between 1990 and 1993.

Frey is a former president and member of the board of directors of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and the recipient of its 1980 Fellow Award. He is a former member of the board of directors of SSSA. He was a member of numerous other professional societies and received a number of awards throughout his career, including the Soil Science Education Award (SSSA), the Agronomic Resident Education Award (ASA), Science Faculty Fellowship Award (National Science Foundation), and was named Master Builder of Men (The International Farmhouse Fraternity).

Married in 1957, Frye is survived by his wife Martha (Hoskins) Frye and his two sons, Thomas and John Frye and five grandchildren.

Frank Whisler



ASA and SSSA Fellow Frank Duane Whisler, 86, a member of the Societies for more than 60 years, died on 22 Dec. 2020. He was born 20 Nov. 1934 in Burton, WV to Robert and Mildred Liming Whisler. He earned his B.S. and M.S. from West Virginia University and his Ph.D. in Soil Physics from the University of Illinois.

While at WVU, Whisler played in the marching band five years including the year they went to the Sugar Bowl. His career spanned work with USDA-ARS both in Illinois and

Arizona. He worked at the U.S. Water Laboratory, Phoenix, AZ for 15 years, where a

portion of his research included consulting on water reclamation with the Salt River Project. He concluded his 30-year career as a research scientist/professor in 2002 in the field of soil physics in the Plant and Soils Science Department of Mississippi State University in Starkville, MS.

Whisler focused on team research in crop modeling on cotton and soybeans, winning with two colleagues, the prestigious Mobay Cotton Research Award in 1988. His research led to more than 130 publications, including 72 journal articles. He was known internationally as a lecturer, teacher, consultant, and researcher.

Whisler loved his family, his work, and his Lord, being an active member and leader in churches West Virginia, Illinois, Arizona, Mississippi, and the Philippines. He was a loving and devoted husband and father. He is survived by his beloved wife of 64 years, Ethel A. Fairchild Whisler, Starkville, MS; five children; 13 grandchildren; and 19 great-grandchildren. He fostered four foster children, one of whom became part of his forever family. He leaves his younger brother, Robert (Janet), several nieces, nephews, and cousins as well.

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