Science Societies

In memoriam

August 25, 2021



Robert Lacey



ASA Fellow and member for more than 35 years, Robert M. Lacey, 68, of Champaign, IL passed away on 27 Jan. 2021 in Urbana, IL. He was born on 13 Aug. 1952 in Charleston, IL to parents Kenneth and Edith (Blue) Lacey. He achieved his bachelor's degree in Geography and a master's degree in City and Regional Planning at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. While in college, he spent many summers working for the railroad.

During his career, Lacey was employed for more than 35 years by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Construction Engineering Research Lab (CERL). While at CERL, he conducted environmental research for the U.S. Army.

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Lacey received the ASA Distinguished Service Award in 2011 and served on the ASA Board of Directors from 2005–2007 and as the ASA Program Planning Officer from 2011–2013.

He was also an active member of AMBUCS for more than 15 years, helping to build wheelchair ramps, AmTrykes, and write grant proposals. In his free time, he enjoyed softball, golf, traveling, history, and reading. Most of all, he loved his family and being a papa.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Marty Lacey. Survivors include his wife, Patricia; children Daniel Paul Lacey (Charlotte) and Donna Rae Cockburn (Steve); two grandchildren, Dylan and Lily Cockburn; an aunt, Joan Simpson; and several cousins. He also leaves behind a sister, Carol Gerl, and a half-brother, Terry Scott.

David Myrold



ASA and SSSA Fellow and SSSA Editor-in-Chief David Douglas Myrold, of Corvallis, OR, passed on 15 July 2021. He was born on 16 Oct. 1955, to Herman Myrold and Violet Tessmer in Milwaukee, WI.

Myrold became the first member of his family to attend and subsequently graduate from college. He began a long career in academia by first earning a B.S. in Forestry in 1977 from Michigan Technological University, an M.S. in Soil Science in 1979 from Washington State University, and a Ph.D. in Microbiology in 1984 from Michigan State University. After completing his Ph.D., he was hired to a teaching and research position at Oregon State University (OSU) where he remained until his retirement in 2021. He was twice Visiting Professor at Umeå, Sweden.

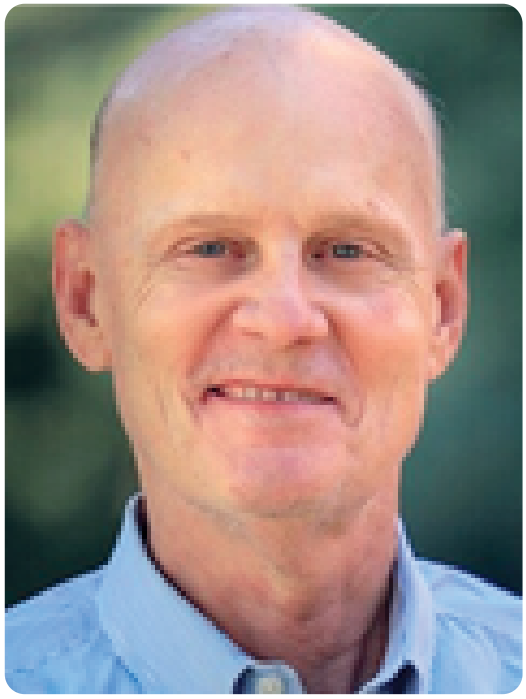
Throughout his career in soil science, Myrold became one of the preeminent researchers in the fields of soil biology and ecology. Among the principal topics he investigated were the autecology of Frankia in soil, including population dynamics and

biological diversity, nitrogen cycling in forest ecosystems and the linkages to plant productivity, and the role of microbial biomass as a sink and source of available nutrients. He worked on the development of molecular probes for detection of soil microorganisms and used isotopes to measure the dynamics of the nitrogen and carbon cycles.

He attended or presented at scientific conferences or universities on each of the continents. The 47 graduate students he mentored spanned all corners of the globe. He was active in many societies and organizations but was most strongly affiliated with SSSA, serving in many leadership roles. He was honored with SSSA's Soil Science Research Award in 2007, was elected AAAS Fellow in 2020, and received the OSU College of Agricultural Sciences' Agricultural Research Foundation Distinguished Faculty Award in 2021. His scientific publications numbered in the hundreds.

Though work was important to Myrold, his family came first. In 1979, he married his college sweetheart, Jackie Pyper, in Salt Lake City, UT. They had three children: Kirk, Alan, and Becky. He was a loving and knowledgeable father, husband, and friend. He was an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints where he served in a variety of callings. He was preceded in death by his parents and survived by his wife, sons, and daughter; grandchildren Violet and Thorger; and his beloved sister Karen.

William Raun



ASA and SSSA Fellow Dr. William (Bill) Robert Raun, 64, of Stillwater, OK, passed away on 25 July in Oklahoma City. He was a beloved father, husband, professor, and mentor, and an eminent soil scientist and member of the Oklahoma State University (OSU) community. Born in Minden, NE, on 21 June 1957, he grew up the youngest of six siblings. In his early years, his family moved to Mexico and then to Colombia, where he made dear friendships, discovered his love of golf, became fluent in Spanish, and developed his interest in international agriculture. He spent his school years in Colombia and his summers working at the family farm in Nebraska. He moved back to the United States to attend his senior year at Stillwater High School where he became the state golf champion and first met his future wife, Tanya Colclasure. Raun earned bachelor's and master's degrees in Plant and Soil Sciences from OSU in 1979 and 1982, respectively, and a Ph.D. in Agronomy from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 1985. From 1985 to 1991, he worked with CIMMYT in Guatemala and Mexico as a regional maize agronomist.

After six years with CIMMYT, Raun returned to the U.S. He was a Regents Professor and Sitlington Chair of Agriculture at OSU. His research focused primarily on improving nitrogen use efficiency in cereal crops working in tandem with mechanical and electrical engineers. The GreenSeeker sensor that is now sold commercially around the world is a product of his work along with Dr. John Solie, Dr. Marvin Stone, and Dr. Randy Taylor. During his career, Raun developed a hand planter that increases crop yield and reduces pesticide exposure. He sent 117 graduate students on short- and long-term

work-study projects with CIMMYT in Mexico, Kenya, Nigeria, China, and India and served as a major adviser for 103 graduate degrees conferred to 84 students. He authored more than 254 refereed journals, holds 13 U.S. patents, and was an active editor for the publications of the Societies, serving in numerous capacities, most recently as Senior Editor for *Agrosystems, Geosciences & Environment*.

Raun's love for his work was eclipsed only by his love for his family, and he was a passionate member of the Catholic Church. He is preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Larry; and his mother-in-law, Shirley Colclasure. He is survived by his wife; his four children (Anne, Kate, Chris, and Dana); his son-in-law, Paul; his granddaughter, Georgia; his siblings, Kathi Hromas Blazer, Barby Kroening, Rich Raun, and Ed Raun and their families; and his many students.

Veril 'Van' Volk



ASA Fellow and member of ASA and SSSA for more than 45 years, Veril "Van" Volk, 82, passed away on 19 May 2021 in Corvallis, OR. He was born 18 Nov. 1938 in Montgomery, AL and spent his childhood in both Alabama and Ohio. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Soil Science at Ohio State University in 1960 and 1961, respectively. He served in the Air National Guard and was activated to Germany in 1961–1962. He earned a doctorate in Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin in 1966 and soon after joined the faculty at Oregon State University where he taught

soil chemistry and continued as Associate Director of the Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station. He retired in 1998.

Volk married Doris (Mangum) on 7 Sept. 1968. They had three daughters, Gayle, Beverly, and Carol. His most treasured memories were of his daughters and their accomplishments. He and his wife enjoyed traveling in the Pacific Northwest and hiking and visiting with friends in Arizona.

Volk is preceded in death by his parents and daughter Beverly and survived by his wife, daughters Gayle and Carol (Adam Smolinski), and brother Bob (Shari) Volk.

In Memoriam Contributions

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