



Dr. Rudolf Gerhard Ernst Arndt

September 29, 2019

On September 29, 2019, Dr. Rudolf Gerhard Ernst Arndt passed away quietly after a long battle with bone cancer. Rudy was 77 years old. He passed as he was visited by family and many long-time friends. Rudy was a resident of Galloway, New Jersey and an Emeritus Professor of Stockton University.

Rudy Arndt was born in Berlin, Germany on October 28th, 1941. His family immigrated to the United States in 1950. He attended Newtown Agricultural High School and graduated in 1959. In 1963, He began his undergraduate studies at Cornell University earning a BS. He continued his graduate studies at Queens College and Cornell University earning a MS and PhD in Animal Biology and Vertebrate Zoology in 1971.

Dr. Arndt joined the Stockton faculty in 1974 after working for three years for Ichthyological Associates in Delaware, and retired from the University in 2007. His quiet demeanor and strength of scholarship earned him the admiration and respect of many. His love of Stockton was evident to the very end, and the frequent visits of colleagues and former students affirm the genuine love and esteem held for this son of Stockton.

Unlike many biologists today who focus on a narrow field of study, Rudy was a Renaissance biologist interested in everything in the natural world. His foremost passion was herpetology, especially pine snakes and bog turtles, but he developed a strong ichthyological interest which directed both his personal and student focused research. Rudy was a prolific writer. He published over 60 scientific articles and co-authored two books on the fishes of North and South Carolina which co-describe two new species of pygmy sunfish.

His greatest legacy is the many students he educated who now work throughout the state and region protecting and conserving the natural resources and endangered species that he so loved. Rudy was an accomplished scientist who remained a kid at heart. He was never happier than when he was wet, muddy and had captured something wriggly or slimy.

Rudy will be remembered as a gentle giant whose warm smile and caring affect will be missed by family, friends, colleagues, and students alike.

Rudy is survived by his loving sister, Judy (Arndt) Oppedyk, and brother-in-law, Alex Oppedyk, who are very proud of his many accomplishments.

All are invited to attend the memorial service to honor Dr. Arndt at Stockton University at the Student Center on Sunday, October 27th beginning at 2:00 PM.

Arrangements have been provided by Wimberg Funeral Home, 211 E. Great Creek Rd., Galloway, NJ 609-641-0001. For condolences, please visit wimbergfuneralhome.com.

The family requests that donations in lieu of flowers be made to the Meta Arndt Scholarship fund care of Stockton University.

Comments



“ An external video has been added.



Wimberg Funeral Home - August 25 at 08:43 AM



“ I made friends with a little girl across the street in Flushing, NY. We became fast friends as we both spoke German ! One day Judy took me to her house and I noticed her cute big brother Rudy. He was playing at his terrarium and of course I wanted to see. But, he wanted us to get out of his room, typical boy of 9 around 8 and 7 year old girls. Sweet memories of Judy and Rudy and we are still friends and in touch after all these years. So happy Rudy got to live his dream!:)

Barbara Mahnke



Barbara Mahnke - October 19 at 06:11 PM



“ Rudy was my mentor in undergrad. He was one of the few professors who held us to a higher standard, one that would prepare us for graduate school. He was brilliant, kind and funny. I will always treasure the memories of him and our adventures: building a pyramid out of beer cans in Costa Rica, trying to draw a map of the rivers for his book on the fishes of South Carolina, how his office literally had no space for one more book or paper and how his deep voice made my ear drums vibrate...I could go on! He was a great friend and an incredible mentor. My only regret is that we never had the chance to meet at the Reptile Expo in Hershey so he and my children could meet. You will be missed Rudy!

Lynne Neveu - February 29 at 11:05 AM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



judy Arndt - December 07, 2019 at 03:07 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



judy Arndt - December 07, 2019 at 03:03 PM



“ Liebe Judy, in Gedanken an Rudi umarme ich Dich herzlich. Ich lernte ihn über meine Schwester Annette in München kennen und seinen Humor, seine Klugheit und Einfühlsamkeit schätzen. Bis zuletzt war ich mit ihm in Kontakt, wusste von seiner Krankheit. Als jetzt meine Geburtstagsglückwünsche nicht beantwortet wurden, ahnte ich Schlimmes. Dich lernte ich 1974 kennen, als ich in eurem Wasserbett in Californien übernachten durfte. In stillem Gedenken, Helga v. Richthofen

Helga v. Richthofen - November 01, 2019 at 03:07 PM



“ So sad to hear Rudy passed away end of September. As "the german part " of his family we did not meet him very often, but stayed in contact exchanging news via written letters and postcards he sent us from his trips all around the world. When we think of Rudy we have strong memories of his visit in summer 2004 in Freiburg / Germany when he also visited Switzerland. (see attached photo: Rudy in Zermatt Switzerland) He was very interested in the nature and wildlife of the Black Forest. Our son, at that time 8 years old, was very proud about the visit of "his uncle from America". We will always keep Rudy in our best memories and are happy to have met him. Beate, Markus and Marcel , Freiburg Germany



Beate - November 01, 2019 at 09:49 AM



“ Just read Rudy's many tributes. I was very touched to know he was loved and admired by so many. As i said before he had this great terrarium, even then, at aged ten and yes, he did have snakes...already the.n :):):)

Barbara



Barbara Rauh Mahnke - October 27, 2019 at 06:39 PM



“ Dr. Rudy was my Marine biology Advisor @Stockton State College (Now Stockton University- thank you very much!) back in the 1990's. He was a great source of knowledge and encouragement and I will always appreciate his many kind words as I struggled to find my way. He gave so much of himself and will be sorely missed.

Dr. Thomas Armbruster

thomas Armbruster - October 27, 2019 at 12:56 PM



“ Rudy Arndt’s inspirational presence entered my life the day before we began our formal training as biologists at Cornell University in 1959. We spotted each other, each carrying sleeping bags, climbing “Library Hill” for a new-student campout of the Conservation Department where we would be vertebrate zoology majors for four years. Through those years we bonded through many common natural history interests and I began receiving the unspoken guidance and mentorship that flowed from Rudy throughout his life. Rudy’s radiating enthusiasm extended beyond our wonderful courses and field trips to “spring vacation” collecting trips to North and South Carolina. Here we captured poisonous water-moccasins and rattlesnakes, and at night we slowly drove low-traffic rural roads for snakes, frogs and other creatures. The method involved spotters sitting on the front of the car above the headlights, each side of the car’s hood. When an animal was spotted they shouted, the driver slowed abruptly, and grabbers jumped down for the capture. I was driving when Rudy yelled “Stop,” I braked as he began to jump but then caught his heel on the bumper and fell flat in front of the car. The car stopped just before hitting his limp body as he lay with a minor concussion (handled at a local hospital; he recovered by the next day). By final semester senior year we were deeply planning, often as a diversion in our boring embryology class labs, a significant reptile, amphibian, and fish collecting trip throughout much of Mexico for the summer of 1963.

We left for about two months in June in Rudy’s Chevy from our homes in NYC with zero abilities in Spanish, lots of preservation and collecting equipment, make-shift camping equipment and about \$200 each. We proceed with overflowing enthusiasm and excitement in spite of warnings of machete-wielding bandits. Mexico was a different country then, a much smaller population of mostly rural farmers with little exposure to other cultures. The arrival of two tall white guys running around chasing lizards, frogs, and snakes and seining for small fish in streams was a magnet for children on summer vacation whom we assumed immediately that we were brothers. After we captured a few words of local lingo we found ourselves being pulled to their homes for display, mom’s offerings of food, and campsites near the home. On a less fortunate night we tried sleeping at a town park in the car in tropical Ciudad del Carmen, off the Yucatan peninsula. Closing windows to keep out super-abundant mosquitoes quickly led to sweating-overheated bodies for us. A policeman arrived to say we could not sleep here, but he said to follow him. We went to the jail where he provided the only cell, empty of occupants, with two beds. We slept well in jail. When his shift ended in the morning we follow him to his home where his wife prepared a delightful breakfast. These were the people we began to know throughout that summer from the northern frontiers to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Rudy handled locating that summer’s collections that were determined by Hobart M. Smith to include a new species of snake. Smith included us as junior authors: *Enulius oligostichus* Smith, Arndt and Sherbrooke 1967. Those years with Rudy molded my life as a field biologist and led to many paths of thrills with the natural world.

Wade C. Sherbrooke



“ I was in the Stay Focused Photo Club with Rudy, and he always made you feel that whatever photo you took it was 'great'. He is dearly missed.

Lynn white

Marylyn White - October 20, 2019 at 05:12 PM



“ The Boice family in Walton truly enjoyed the time they spent with “Rudy” and their adventures. Herman also had bone cancer.

Erric Boice - October 19, 2019 at 09:12 AM



“ Judy & Alex:
Our condolences to you and your family. Rudy will surely be missed by us, he was like a brother to me in all the things we shared in life, having known each other since the 5th grade in school, all through High School at Newtown, snake hunting trips to the Pine Barrens of NJ, walking across the GW bridge to look for copperheads along the Palisade Cliffs before graduating HS, even trips to Mexico in the 1970's. His visits to our home in Las Vegas about every other year were welcome and he would spend a few days here on his way to or from CA. Many of us have lost this dear friend that we all admired and loved very much.

Philip & Gloria Medica

Philip A. Medica - October 13, 2019 at 03:33 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Rudy's passing.

He was a professor for some of my courses at Stockton State College in the late 1970s. I learned a lot from him and had a lot of fun at the same time! He had a great passion for life and the natural world. He inspired me to learn and be curious and to achieve. Very friendly and generous.

Condolences to his family; may he rest in peace.

Joe Garcia

Joseph Garcia - October 10, 2019 at 02:12 PM



“ Dear Judy, Alex, Frank, & Ned,
I'm very sorry for the loss of Rudy. He was such a great person. I love getting to know him and being his occupational therapist. He was one of my favorite patients. He was a fighter until the end. I will miss him very much. I'm praying for all of you.
Love,
Stephanie (OT from Royal Suites)

Stephanie Vanfossen - October 07, 2019 at 08:46 PM



“ So sorry to hear of Rudy's passing. We met Rudy while selling rocks and minerals and jewelry at Stockton in the "d" wing of the the College. He would sit with us a for a while., then he would go to his office to check e-mail & edit papers. He joined the Cape Atlantic Rock & Mineral Club, a few years ago, and was very active in the club. He will be missed by all of our members.R.I.P. RUDY. Condolences to the family & friends of Rudy.

Harriet & Glenn Browne - October 25, 2019 at 02:23 PM



“ I met Rudy through the Stay Focused Photo Club. He was a great person and I consider it an honor to have known him. He was truly "one of a kind" and he will be missed by all who were fortunate to have known Rudy.

Dave Blood

Dave Blood - October 07, 2019 at 10:12 AM