

## In Memoriam—Larry Mitich

We are sad to report the death of Larry Mitich on August 16, 2000 in Davis, CA. Larry was a true Cooperative Extension Specialist. He believed that Extension was a fulfilling career path and a way to have a positive affect on the efficiency of our agricultural production system. He was a dedicated weed scientist. He firmly believed that the role the WSSA and the regional and state weed science societies play in weed science is critical to our discipline. Evidence of Larry's commitment to weed science societies can be seen in his active membership in numerous committees and leadership positions. Larry was President of the WSSA in 1990–1991 and President of the WSSA in 1987–1988.

He was reared on a ranch in northeastern Wyoming near the town of Newcastle. The bright flowers of *Opuntia polycantha*, *O. fragilis*, and *O. neobesseya* near his father's ranch sparked Larry's lifelong relationship with succulent plants. Larry attended the University of Wyoming where he received BS, MS and Ph.D. degrees. His graduate degrees were earned under the direction of Dr. Harold Alley. Larry served 4 yr as an Assistant Professor of Agronomy at the University of Kabul in Afghanistan in the mid-1950s, in a project sponsored by the University of Wyoming. He joined North Dakota State University as an Extension Agronomist in 1963 and served as the first extension weed scientist in North Dakota. At NDSU Larry's research program focused on the control of leafy spurge, field bindweed, and wild oats. He was a pioneer in the use of television to bring home weed control recommendations in North Dakota. His use of TV was considered a great leap in communication with rural areas. Call-in radio programs were part of his outreach program as well, and with this tool he reached out to both rural and urban listeners. In 1980 Larry joined the University of California, Davis as an Extension Specialist. At UC Davis, Larry's research program focused on weed control in field corn, dry beans, and small grains.

In his career he has written over 370 extension, applied research publications, and research reports. He was a major contributor to the 1985 and 1989 editions of *Principles of Weed Control in California*.

Larry was actively involved in the North Central Weed Science Society where he served on many committees and as a member of the Board of Directors. He was editor of the *NCWSS Research Report* and *NCWSS Proceedings* for many years. For his years of service with the NCWSS Larry received the Distinguished Service Award in 1978 and was named an Honorary Member in 1981.

In the Western Society of Weed Science, he served on several committees and on the Board of Directors. Larry was WSSA program chair and society president during 1986–1988. He was named a WSSA Fellow in 1991, and Outstanding Weed Scientist in 1995.

Larry had been an active member of WSSA since 1963. He served as chairman of several committees, and as editor of the *WSSA Newsletter* and *Weeds Today*. He served as an associate editor for *Weed Technology* and until the time of his death he was a regular contributor to the feature article "Intriguing World of Weeds". Dr. Mitich received the WSSA Extension Worker Award in 1978 and was named a WSSA Fellow in 1983. He served as WSSA vice president, program chair, and president between 1988 and 1991.

Larry met his wife Charlotte in Laramie, Wyoming in 1951. It seems that Charlotte's brother knew Larry and introduced them. They were married in Cody, Wyoming in January of 1955 and two months later moved to Afghanistan for 4 yr. Charlotte remains in Davis.

Larry's pleasant demeanor and jokes were widely appreciated. Long trips to meetings and field sites were made shorter by his stories. He was a colleague, a collaborator, and a friend. Larry will be sorely missed.

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