

In Memoriam

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which he continued his education at Iowa State University, earning his Ph.D. at Purdue University in 1964. He worked in agricultural research and higher education in Ames, IA; Alemaya, Ethiopia; Lafayette, IN; Tucson, AZ; and Wooster, OH. He served as head of the Department of Agronomy and then as director of the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces from 1978–1984. Niehaus served as dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Colorado State University in Fort Collins from 1984–1991 and later interim executive director in the Office of International Programs. During his career, he travelled and worked in the United States, Ethiopia, Egypt, China, Swaziland, Honduras, Yemen, Mexico, India, Uzbekistan, Kyrgistan, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Indonesia, Guyana, and Armenia.

Niehaus was an accomplished academic and natural leader who published many scientific articles and received many awards and recognitions, including member and Fellow of AAAS, CSSA, and ASA and was part of the 1976 Bicentennial Memorial Edition of Notable Americans of the Bicentennial Era. He was also named to Who's Who in the West 19th Edition.

Niehaus always maintained the friendly unassuming ways of an Oklahoma boy, bringing him many friendships. His kindness and good humor will keep him with us forever. He is survived by his wife Allene Niehaus of Seattle, WA and Albuquerque, NM; daughter Lisa Niehaus and grandsons Evan Douglass and Sean Douglass of Seattle, WA; son Mark Niehaus of Seattle, WA; sister-in-law Elenka Niehaus of Napa, CA; and many nieces and nephews throughout the country. He was preceded in death by his parents Roy and Hazel Niehaus; brother LeRoy Niehaus; sister Nelda Niehaus; a niece, Melanie DoRemus; and a brother-in-law, Dwayne Rollier.

Agronomic Science Foundation

Earn, Give, Exercise, Relax

When people ponder the quality of their lives and its value both to themselves and those around them, this often involves a lot of questions. The process can be frustrating but is still important. In fact, we should probably begin asking ourselves these questions at a young age while there is still time to make any necessary changes.



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At the end of my grandfather's life, I sat in the hospital listening to him speak about the experiences and relationships that he cherished during his 80 years. As he thought about the value of his life, he narrowed it down pretty simply.

To my surprise, he didn't talk about all the lives he saved while serving in the Navy during World War II. This would have been reason enough considering he was stationed at Pearl Harbor when the United States was attacked. He also didn't mention having to quit high school to work on a farm because his family needed money to stay alive. The hard labor in the hot Kentucky sun would have dried up most kids his age, but that just made him stronger. He also failed to brag about becoming the superintendent of electricians at McCormick Place during the expansion era of the 1970s. This was something he attained independent of any formal education and solely through his extensive experience and relentless attitude of never giving up. He knew there were people much smarter than he, but none willing to work harder.

I have thought about what he said many times since that day and would like to pass along the knowledge he shared. He told me, "I am not sure what life is all about, but one thing I can hold on to is that I reproduced and continued a legacy." At the time, I thought that comment was a little rudimentary, but I now consider it rather insightful. From a purely scientific perspective, the fundamental value of an organism can often be defined by how well it reproduces itself. Each individual species can only continue to exist as a result of reproduction since all biological life forms eventually die.

So even though my grandfather never finished high school, I believe he understood the basic premise of biology just fine. He also knew that in order for a species to evolve, the next generation needed to be an improvement from the last.

There are many different ways to begin, continue, or leave a legacy, and since that time, I have often wondered about my own legacy. Life is short, and we must constantly challenge ourselves to seek value during the short time we are alive. My grandfather continued a legacy which was based on a very simple set of rules on how to live. It can be defined in four words: earn, give, exercise, and relax. These simple words can be defined in many different ways by many different people, but the premise is basically the same.

So what will your legacy be? Organizations such as the Agronomic Science Foundation provide many different ways to begin, continue, or leave a legacy. If you need some guidance on getting started, please contact me today at 608-273-8095 or abarton@sciencesocieties.org.

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