



Virginia Scientists

Volume XXII Issue 1

June, 2013

Ertle Thompson — 1929-2012

Dr. Ertle Thompson passed away on June 5, 2012 and was laid to rest in the Thompson Family Cemetery in Feds Creek, Kentucky, his birthplace. He was born on March 30, 1929 in a small farmhouse, the son of the late Benjamin Harrison Thompson and Bertha Rowe Thompson. Ertle grew up in the coal fields of Eastern Kentucky, where no one ever imagined his early hunger for knowledge would take him so far from home and grow into such a successful career. After graduating from the University of Kentucky, Ertle began his remarkable life in science education at the University of Virginia at Wise and then the Curry School at the home campus in Charlottesville.

Throughout his life, Ertle dedicated uncommon amounts of time, effort, and talent to the Virginia Academy of Science. He was elected a Fellow in 1979, elected President of the Academy 1982-83, and was honored with both the Ivey F. Lewis Distinguished Service Award (1989) and the Virginia Junior Academy of Science Distinguished Service Award (2000). For 28 years, Ertle was the Academy's Delegate to the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Association of Academies of Science, the sponsoring organization of the American Junior Academy of Science.

Ertle's passion was preparing the next generation of science educators to become leaders as passionate and capable as he was, and his influence and expertise were recognized throughout the U.S. and internationally. It is telling that Ertle would have friends and acquaintances he had worked with at almost every institution of higher education in the country. Over the years, this vast network of people would call Ertle to leadership in a variety of organizations in addition to VAS, AAAS and NAAS – including



(Continued, See "Ertle, Thompson" page 2)

Congratulations! A New Flora of Virginia!

Because of Virginia's unique geography and climate, the Commonwealth's botanical heritage is one of the most varietous in the continental United States. Its economic significance was so clear to early colonists that John Clayton authored *Flora Virginica* in the mid-17th century, and it was last updated in 1739!

Beginning more than 80 years ago, the Virginia Academy of Science has worked to compile a modern *Flora* to serve botanists, ecologists, foresters, naturalists, environmental planning agencies, herbalists, and developers. Now, all who seek to comprehend the diversity of Virginia's plant life will no longer have to rely on the modern *Florae* of surrounding states and the District of Columbia.

The Foundation for the *Flora of Virginia* Project (FFVP) published the modern *Flora of Virginia* in December 2012. In early December, three premieres were held to recognize and thank major supporters of this project. Copies of the *Flora* were presented to the Academy and to the Fellows in recognition of our major support of this historic project. Chris Ludwig, a co-author of the *Flora*, director of the FFVP, and Acade-

my member was recognized at the 2013 Academy Annual Meeting and expressed gratitude to the Academy and Fellows for our essential support of this project.

Efforts of the FFVP are continuing in the future (summary from www.floraofvirginia.org). Creation of teaching and learning modules using the *Flora* will teach students the value of the book and how to use it, improve plant-identification skills, and allow contact with educators regarding these activities.

Additional line drawings of Virginia plants will be published on the *Flora* Project website. The *Flora* Project will continue its effort to illustrate the species pages of the *Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora*.

Eventually this website will have an area for registered members that will allow *Flora* users to interact with *Flora* experts, ask questions, make suggestions, and point out prob-

(Continued, See "New Flora," page 2)

Remember ... See page 5
Our 90th Anniversary Year is
Your Opportunity to Recognize the
People Who Have Made
a Difference in Your Life.

Ertle Thompson (Continued from page 1)

the National Association of Science Teachers, the Association for the Education of Science Teachers, the Appalachian Mathematical Sciences Partnership, and the AAAS Sections on Education and General Interest in Science and Technology.

Perhaps Ertle's greatest joy was working on the Virginia Junior Academy of Science Committee and judging science fairs and the VJAS annual research presentations. His achievements in official duties were secondary to the impact he had on people personally. Ertle was always encouraging young scientists to pursue their dreams. When he wasn't leading meetings with his colleagues at the annual meetings of AAAS/NAAS/AJAS, you would find Ertle with students in tow, watching over them. Ertle would escort our VJAS winners around exhibits, share meals with them, take them to AAAS sessions or lead them on tours of local science facilities and museums, and he'd be sure they could meet and talk with some of the world's preeminent scientists in the fields students were interested in. Ertle seldom missed the opportunity to go to an AJAS paper session or poster session where VJAS students were presenting. Ertle's attention to students, even at the middle and high school level, testified to his commitment to the future and the importance of scientific research and science education to the vitality of Virginia, the Nation, and the world.

For several years, Ertle hosted the Fall quarterly meetings of the Academy's Executive Committee and Council on Saturdays at the Curry School. Given the roles of so many University of Virginia's professors in the history of the Academy, these meetings -- resonant with that tradition and the mountains of Virginia full of autumn colors -- were inspirational. We could always count on Ertle to be the most well-informed resource on issues of national and international significance.

The Academy will miss Ertle Thompson. He was an able, bold, intrepid, far-sighted, and committed science educator. We will miss his wise counsel, his graciousness, and sense of humor. We will remember the standard of professional excellence he so consistently represented and the cordial regard he was so willing to share with all he met.

-- Compiled by James O'Brien with the assistance of Ertle's daughter, Harriett Mundell, and Don Jordan (South Carolina Academy of Science & National Association of Academies of Science).

Editor's Comment – Dr. Ertle Thompson was a great benefactor for the Academy and for science education in Virginia, as was Jessie Ball du Pont (page 6), another far-sighted benefactor of the Academy. I was struck by the fact that both Dr. Thompson and Jessie Ball du Pont shared an unwavering faith in the people and the youth of Virginia. They recognized early on that nurturing talented students in science was both a tremendous benefit to society in general, and to the Commonwealth of Virginia. I am so proud to be part of an organization that has been growing its own scientists from the ground up for such a very long time.

Debbie Neely-Fisher

New Flora (Continued from page 1)

lems or errors in the *Flora*.

To order your copy of *Flora of Virginia* from the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, visit www.floraofvirginia.org

Submitted by Marion Lobstein, Virginia Flora Committee Chair, VAS Fellow, and Foundation for the Flora of Virginia Project Board of Directors Member.



Marion Lobstein, enthusiastically displaying a copy of the Flora of Virginia at Flora of Virginia premiere held at Meadowlark Botanic Gardens on December 10, 2012

Academy Salutes the Virginia Association for Biological Education

The Academy Thanks the Virginia Association for Biological Education for Donating Remaining Treasury Funds to the Academy upon Disbanding.

The Virginia Association for Biological Education (VABE) was an active professional organization founded in 1972. Members of this organization met at various educational institutions throughout Virginia with programs, workshops, and field trips that focused on improving communication among institutions and individuals with interests in biological education. For a number of reasons, membership declined in the early 2000's. It became inactive in 2010. Members of the final Board of Directors voted in fall of 2012 to disband the organization and to donate the remaining organizational treasury funds to VAS.

Current VAS treasurer Richard Groover, a former member of VABE, coordinated the transfer. It is hoped that former members of VABE, who are not already members of the Academy, will consider joining and becoming active members. Welcome to the Virginia Academy of Science!



Dr. Deborah O'Dell, University of Mary Washington, President-Elect and Ryan Green at the Fall Undergraduate

2012 Undergraduate Research Award Recipients

Mentor*

Low Cost Devices for Improving Wireless Reception: An Analysis of Performance Degradation over a Wireless Network. Kyle Sachs and *Robert Marmorstein, Longwood University.

A Study of Chloroquine's Antiretroviral Characteristics. Ryan Green and *Lynn Lewis, University of Mary Washington.

Learned Responses to Herbivore-Induced Phytochemicals in the Parasitic Wasp, *Cotesia longregata* (say) (Hymenoptera: Braconidae). Christopher Crockett and *Karen Kestor, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Characterization of Different Mouse Models of *Citrobacter rodentium* Induced Colitis. Michael Canfarotta and *Andrew Fabich, Liberty University.

Pay Attention to What You Eat! Developing an Animal Model for Diet Induced ADHD. Lauren Woodie, Shannon Marwitz, and *Sarah Blythe, Washington and Lee University.

2013 Fall Undergraduate Research Conference

The Fall Undergraduate Research meeting was held on October 27, 2012, in Georgiadis Hall, at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, in Richmond, VA.

Thirty-five total research projects were displayed as posters, with thirty-six undergraduate students and their research mentors attending. Of these, 29 presentations were considered for five \$500, VAS Undergraduate Research Grants. Faculty and graduate students served as judges for the event.

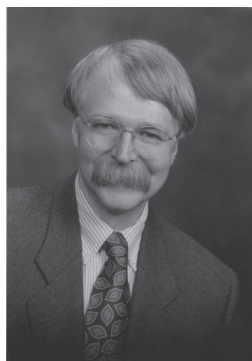
Dr. Deborah Zies, Associate Professor of Biology, University of Mary Washington, was the guest speaker, and gave a presentation titled, *Smith-Magenis Syndrome: An Investigation of a Human Genomic Disorder*.

Many thanks go out to the Institutions and individuals who were instrumental in ensuring a successful meeting, including the Virginia Academy of Science; Richard Groover, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College; Art Conway, VAS Executive Officer; Carolyn Conway, VAS Assistant Executive Officer; VAS President, Ralph Eckerlin; VAS Vice-President, David Crosby, and the judges: Dr. Arun Verma, Dr. Chris Osgood, Dr. Kathryn Loesser-Casey, Dr. Deborah Zies, Dr. Carlietta Paige and graduate students, Richard Elvin Ward, Jeremy Thompson, and Pretal Muldoon.



Lauren Woodie, Shannon Marwitz, recipients of one of the \$500 Research Grants.

***Honoring the Legacy of
Dr. Thomas Sitz,
Professor, Emeritus,
Biochemistry, Virginia Tech.***



The Virginia Academy of Science presented a tribute to Tom Sitz, (1944-2010), former President of VAS, at the annual business meeting at Virginia Tech. The video, showcasing Tom's considerable and invaluable contributions to the Academy, the Junior Academy, undergraduate research, and mentoring students will be available through the VAS website after

July 1. The Academy has established a *Thomas Sitz Scholarship Fund*, that when endowed, will support undergraduate students with an interest in biochemistry or molecular biology, who present their work at the undergraduate research symposium at the annual meeting. To honor Tom, you may send contributions to the VAS office in Richmond clearly designated for the *Thomas Sitz Scholarship Fund*.

VIRGINIA SCIENTISTS is the newsletter of the Virginia Academy of Science and is published three times a year. In addition to members, it is also mailed to government officials, members of the General Assembly, and Virginia college and university presidents. Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, Deborah Neely-Fisher (804-523-5592) at dneely-fisher@reynolds.edu

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Paypal is Now Available!

STEP 1: Go to <http://www.vacadsci.org/>

STEP 2: Click on the link *Join*

STEP 3: Follow the instructions to fill out a new membership form for the VAS (old forms no longer accepted!).

STEP 4: Please remember! You must save the membership form to your computer using the adobe save function.

STEP 5: Send in the new membership form to get credit for your dues. Send the new membership form to vas@smv.org immediately!

Or Mail to: Attn: Membership, Virginia Academy of Science, 2500 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23220-2054

STEP 6: Follow the paypal link and prompts to join and pay dues! Yes, you need a credit or debit card to pay.

**Reference List: Jessie Ball du Pont Article
(last page)**

Hewlett, Richard G. (1992). *Jessie Ball du Pont*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. http://books.google.com/books/about/Jessie_Ball_duPont.html?id=AZH-37Yu9UIC

Jessie Ball du Pont Foundation (2012). http://wordpress.dupontfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/2004_AR2.pdf

Midgett, Nancy S. (1991). *To Foster the Spirit of Professionalism: Southern Scientists and State Academies of Science*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press.

Staggers, H.J. & Flory, W.S. (1973). *A History of the Virginia Academy of Science, 1923-1973*. (<http://66.147.244.216/~vacadsci/history/chap7.PDF>)

Photo Credit: (1910) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jessiedupont.jpg>

1923



2013

***90 Years of
Service to Science and Virginia***

When we met at Norfolk State University in May 2012, the Academy began its 90th year!

We have much to celebrate!

We hope you will join in this historic occasion and make it a uniquely special moment by contributing a token of your recognition. We seldom request our Members and Friends to donate to the Academy ... But we feel certain that most of the Academy's Supporters would appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this joyful experience. Too seldom do we pause and recognize all the good and worthy achievements of the Academy. Too seldom do we recognize the dedication and hard work of those who have committed their time, effort, and expertise to our Academy's mission.

We hope you feel the same!

***Recognize someone who has made a difference in your life or the history of the Academy ... A Scientist?
... An Educator? ... A Family Member? ... A Mentor? ... A Coach? ... A Role Model? ... A Supporter?
You & your Honoree will be recognized at the 2013 Meeting and listed in a special 90th Anniversary is-
sue of Virginia Scientists.***

Just fill in the form below, make your check payable to Virginia Academy of Science, and send it to ...

**Art Conway, Executive Officer, Virginia Academy of Science
c/o Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 West Broad Street, Richmond VA 23220
Art is ready to assist you with any guidance you may wish at 804-864-1451.**

Honoree's Name(s): _____

Check one: ___ "In memory of" ___ "In honor of"

Your name(s) as you wish to be printed in recognition lists:

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Amount of check enclosed \$ _____ Mark your check: "Remember"

To recognize more than one person (couple or family), kindly photocopy the blank form (or simply attach your list), enter your information and make check for total contribution payable to Virginia Academy of Science.

Thank You!

***(The Virginia Academy of Science is an IRS 501(c)3 charitable and educational organization.
We do NOT share or sell our donor information.***

Who's Been Who in VAS History ...



Jessie Ball du Pont, Academy Benefactor

Jessie Dew Ball was born in Northumberland County, January 20, 1884. She graduated from Farmville Normal School (now Longwood University) and returned to the county to teach and assist in her father's law practice. Her family moved to San Diego where she became an assistant principal and cared for her parents. Her spirit of philanthropy began early as she drew from her educator's salary to provide college scholarships for needy students. As a teenager, she had met Alfred I. du Pont on his hunting expeditions to Virginia's Northern Neck; she and Alfred corresponded over the years and married on January 22, 1921. Jessie and her brother, Edward Ball, became active in Alfred's businesses and his several charitable concerns. Upon Alfred's death in 1935, Mrs. du Pont continued their support of organizations, churches, and colleges in Virginia, Delaware, and Florida with the creation of three foundations in Alfred's memory (Jessie Ball du Pont Foundation).

When J. Shelton Horsley, a prominent Richmond surgeon and 4th President of the Academy, sought to keep scientific talent in Virginia by establishing the Academy's Research Fund in 1925, Mrs. du Pont was an early benefactor. Like most Southern science educators, the Academy was attempting to respond to the post-Reconstruction exodus of researchers to the burgeoning opportunities offered by Midwestern universities. Dr. Horsley's effort to raise money for researchers was the most successful among the Southern academies (Midgette, p. 108 ff.). Mrs. du Pont responded generously to his 1937 request for endowment research funds (Midgette, p. 110-11) writing to him at the time: "Am glad to note that you realize that Virginia's most important asset is the quality of her people, and I earnestly trust we can hold more of our scientifically and professionally trained young people in the state" (Staggers, Ch 7, p. 39).

Mrs. du Pont continued her support of the Virginia Academy of Science over the years and her passing was noted in the minutes of Council: "A long-time patron of the Academy, Mrs. Alfred I. du Pont (Jessie Ball du Pont) died—at the age of 86—on September 26, 1970, at her home near Wilmington, Delaware. A native of Ditchley in Northumberland and a graduate of Longwood College, Mrs. du Pont was not only a benefactor of the Academy but also a number of educational institutions in Virginia" (Staggers, Ch. 7, p. 39). The Academy continues to support Virginia researchers through our Research Grants Fund and the annual prize for outstanding research, now the J. Shelton Horsley Research Award, has existed since 1927. By 1970, Mrs. du Pont had given away "more than \$100,000,000 to charitable, religious, and educational institutions" (Hewlett, p. xiv). Today, the Jessie Ball du Pont Foundation continues the legacy of charitable work that represented so much of the essence of this singular Virginia businesswoman, philanthropist, and educator. (Reference List: see page 3)

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