



## Donald Cronkite

March 15, 1945 - March 15, 2017

Dr. Donald Cronkite, 72, of Holland, MI passed away on March 15, after many years of living with Parkinson's disease. Professor Cronkite taught at Hope College for 32 years, offering classes in cell biology; embryology; genetics; introductory biology; evolution; history of biology; science and human values. He was also known as the Academic Director of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation summer institutes for high school biology teachers at Princeton, University; Director of Hope College Howard Hughes programs for minority access to the sciences; Co-Principal Investigator for National Science Foundation high-school/college partnerships to enhance secondary school science education; and a science curriculum consultant to 21 different colleges. Dr. Cronkite was a Member of the Hope College Board of Trustees, Campus Life Board, Religious Life Committee, Student Life Committee, and Library Planning Committee, and was founder of the Hope College A.J. Muste Memorial Committee to promote issues of peace and justice. He had previously taught at the University of Redlands, Redlands, CA, and had been a visiting researcher at University of Washington Friday Harbor Laboratories, San Juan Island, WA; Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, Crested Butte, CO; University of Wisconsin Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Madison, WI; Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA; University of Maryland, College Park, MD; University of California, Santa Barbara, CA; Biological Institute of Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan. He was the author of several textbooks, including "Cells and Heredity," and "A Problem Based Guide to

Basic Genetics." He published extensively in scientific journals, most notably regarding his paramecium research. He also wrote a popular series of articles for "Perspectives: A Journal of Reformed Thought."

Awards and honors include: highest honor of National Association of Biology Teachers—Honorary Membership Award, 2008; National Evolution Education Award, 2006; Michigan Science Teachers Association, College Teacher of the Year, 2005; NABT Four-Year College Biology Teaching Award, 1995; Sears Roebuck Foundation Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award, 1990-1991; Hope Outstanding Professor-Educator Award, Hope College, 1988; Commencement Speaker, Hope College, 1988; Distinguished Faculty Award, University of Redlands, 1976. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, an Eagle Scout, and belonged to the Order of the Arrow. He also served as a member of a committee of the National Council of Churches working on issues of human genetic technology; Moderator of the Christian Action Commission of the Reformed Church in America; Elder and Vice President of the Consistory, First United Presbyterian Church, Redlands, CA and Third Reformed Church, Holland, MI. Dr. Cronkite was the child of Altha and Charles "Ted" Cronkite, of Colorado Springs, CO. He is survived by his wife, Jane, of Holland, MI; son Ethan, daughter-in-law Amy, grandchildren Ramona and Henry, of Oak Park, MI; son Joel, of Holland, MI; daughter Emily, son-in-law Michael Coronado, and grandchild Lucy, of Belmont, CA. Funeral services will be held Tuesday, March 21, 7 pm, at Third Reformed Church, 111 West 13th Street, Holland, MI. Visitation is scheduled for Monday, March 20, 4 – 7 pm, at the Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home, 315 E. 16th Street, Holland, MI. Memorial donations may be made to the A.J. Muste Lecture Fund at Hope College, or to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

# Tribute Wall



“ Donald Cronkite

August 31, 2022 at 01:26 PM



“ *Dr. Cronkite, or Uncle Donald, was the Yoda of Master Teachers. At our Woodrow Wilson summer of '94, he engaged our hearts as well as our minds. He reminded to find ways to hook students into learning and add in ways to make learning fun as well as memorable. In our group, we began writing student dialogues from the point of view of two spiders in a biology classroom. We modeled our "Itsy and Bitsy" after his "Bing and Bong". Later when we attended NABT, we always looked for Uncle Don and the crowded of his workshops. We knew we would find his new ideas to capture students' interest to learn and love biology. Dr. Cronkite led me to become a better teacher for the sake of students."*

Cherry Sprague - March 28, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ *"My heart goes out to Don's family. I was a member of the 1996 Woodrow Wilson Biology Fellowship. He was a dynamic teacher and profoundly affected me and the thousands of students I have taught. I appreciated all his creativity, humor and passion for education. Please know his impact will be felt for a long time."*

Cathy Williamson - March 20, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ *"Donald Cronkite made biology education fun! He was an inspiration to us all. I am a better teacher today because of my interactions with him. He will be missed!"*

Jane Maczuzak - March 19, 2017 at 12:00 AM

TH

“*My deepest sympathy to the Cronkite family. Donald was truly one of a kind. I had the honor of meeting him for the first time during the summer of 1991 at the Woodrow Wilson Biology Teacher's Fellowship at Princeton. His down to Earth demeanor and his passion for biology were contagious. His sense of humor was priceless and oh did we hear about his precious Parameciums. He would often take us off campus to a local restaurant or "watering hole" and conduct his lectures on the white napkins at our table. I had the pleasure of keeping in touch and visiting at Hope College for his TOUCAN workshop. He learned of my passion for a good red raspberry pie and directed me to Crane Orchards to sample what he considered some of the best pies- and yes he was right! You are blessed in life to come across a few great people who are sincere, passionate, extremely intelligent, a great sense of humor, and truly care about other people. Donald Cronkite was one of those few great people. Thank you Donald for impacting my life...until we meet again... for another one-of-a-kind napkin lecture!"*

---

**Thomas Haren** - March 18, 2017 at 12:00 AM