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# DAVID NANNEY

October 10, 1925 -  
June 4, 2016

## David Ledbetter Nanney – October 10, 1925 – June 4, 2016

David Nanney, Professor Emeritus of Biology in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Illinois, died early Saturday morning, June 4, 2016, at Clark-Lindsey Village in Urbana. He was being treated for a fall which he had suffered about 4 weeks before his death.

David Ledbetter Nanney was born in Abingdon, Virginia, on October 10, 1925, to Reverend Thomas Grady Nanney and Pearl Ledbetter Nanney. When David was about a year old, the family moved to Wewoka, Oklahoma, where David spent his childhood, graduating from Wewoka High School in 1943. When David was eight years old, he suffered from a bone disease which prevented his participation in World War II. He attended Oklahoma Baptist University from 1943-46, graduating with a Bachelor's degree in English. He went to Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, where he earned a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Zoology in 1951.

Professor Nanney's first job was in the Zoology Department at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He left Michigan in 1958 for a year at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. He came to the University of Illinois in 1959 as a Professor of Genetics and Development in the School of Life Sciences. In 1984 Mr. Nanney spent a year in Münster, Germany where he was awarded a Humboldt Fellowship from the German government. He was a member of the American Academy of Science. He retired from the University of Illinois in 1990.

In 1970, David and Jean Nanney brought a 50 acre tract of land one mile north and one mile west of Villa Grove, Illinois. The family spent many happy hour at "the land" where they planted gardens, walked in the woods, raised bees (for a few years), mowed the grass and entertained friends for picnics. In 1999 they gave the land which is a natural flood plain to the University of Illinois as a research area.

The Nanneys lived on Indiana Avenue from 1959 until February of this year when they moved to the Windsor of Savoy.

Survivors include a son, Douglas Nanney, Louisville, Tennessee, and a daughter, Ruth Nanney Beshears, Columbus, Ohio, grandchildren Brian Beshears, Urbana, Illinois, Jonathan Beshears, Columbus, Ohio, and Josette Nanney Cruce, Raleigh, North Carolina. Great grandchildren are Julia, Marcus and David Beshears, Columbus, Ohio.

Memorial services will be June 11 at 2:00 p.m. at the Chapel of Saint John the Divine, 1011 South Wright Street, Champaign.

Condolences to the family may be made at [www.morganmemorialhome.com](http://www.morganmemorialhome.com).

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Peter Bruns posted on 6/11/16

Dear Jean and members of his family, I was greatly saddened to hear of David's passing. As one of the lucky people to by his graduate student, Dave touched my life in ways that in large part determined my path after graduation. He was a model mentor, allowing all of us in his laboratory to follow our own ideas and approaches. He supported, advised and helped but never interfered. As a pioneer in his field he was very much worth listening to; he always set aside time to talk with us. I am proud to have been associated with this smart, kind and very deep person.

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