

CUTT

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Remembering Mike Villani

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Professor Emeritus Michael Gerard Villani was revered by fellow scientists throughout the world, adored by his undergraduate and graduate students, and loved and respected by all. He was the consummate teacher, advisor and mentor.

He unselfishly devoted his time in questioning, cajoling and inspiring others to think creatively and to develop their potential. He always shared the success of his highly acclaimed program on turf insects with his staff and with other scientists around the country. His management style was to encourage freethinking and independence among those who worked both with him

and for him. He was the acknowledged master of the win-win situation. Villani rarely thought of himself and he gave far more than he got in return. Mike epitomized the best in all of us in both his professional and personal life. He will be greatly missed for the unique perspectives he brought to the science of soil insect ecology, the probing questions he asked that often made those associated with this area of research question long held beliefs about soil arthropod behavior, and the engaging and gentle manner in which he did so.

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A Tribute From A Friend and Colleague

Editor's Note:

In a departure from our usual Cornell Turfgrass Team program updates and perspectives we offer this tribute to our friend and colleague Mike Villani. In my short time here at Cornell University there were few people I quoted more often than Mike.

I would be lying if I said Mike and I always saw eye to eye on issues and matters of the turfgrass team. In fact as one of my faculty mentors, Mike took an extraordinary interest in my decision-making regarding the turfgrass program. He regularly challenged my motivation and intent, yet always listened as I outlined my thought process and what I thought we could achieve. At least we both loved the New York Yankees.

Each section in this issue reflects a different aspect of Mike's contributions to the world. This ranges from publications and projects to raising his children. You will be able to see the wide swath Mike cut and the impact he had on so many people's lives, as well as his discipline.

In preparing this issue, I was able to reflect on our six years together, by all measures way too short! I find myself looking for his input at team meetings, looking forward to his ignoring of my urgent emails, and simply looking at me and smirking as I got worked up about an issue. Yet, I know there are people close to Mike that miss him more regularly, especially, Connie and girls, Paul Robbins, and Nancy Consolie. Beyond the

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