

LAWRENCE K. MAGRATH

1943–2007

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It is with great sadness to report the loss of a friend and colleague Lawrence K. Magrath, biologist, orchidologist and curator, who died Saturday, 24 February 2007, after a long illness. Magrath, a 35-year member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (USAO) science faculty, previously served as professor of biology, director of interdisciplinary studies and curator of the OCLA Herbarium (herbarium acronym). Though he officially resigned March 2005, he continued teaching on a limited schedule.

Through the 1990s he led or supported one campus beautification project after another, adding flowers, trees, and shrubbery to create the String of Pearls Garden surrounding Austin Hall, the Water Garden to the north, the Sculpture Garden east of Davis Hall, and more. As a result of his leadership, the college won two Keep Oklahoma Beautiful awards in the 1990s, and the USAO Board of Regents presented a special commendation to him.

As a long-time leader in USAO's unique Interdisciplinary Studies Program, Magrath was recognized for classroom teaching, his dedication to liberal arts education, mentoring young scientists, and encouraging learning both inside and outside the classroom. He advised several student organizations and academic honor societies at USAO.

In 1994, Magrath was presented a plaque by the Oklahoma Junior Academy of Science (OJAS) for "Outstanding Contributions and Long-time Service." Magrath welcomed the OJAS conference to the USAO campus on several occasions. Also during 1994, Magrath published three poems in the "Journal of Evolutionary Psychology." As one of Oklahoma's authorities on Orchids in this region, he attended the American Orchid Society Trustees Meeting in New York City to serve as vice chair for the AOS Conservation Committee. He was a member of more than a dozen national and international societies in science, wildlife preservation, and teaching. For decades, he worked with the Oklahoma Academy of Science, the American Orchid Society, the Oklahoma Native Plant Society, the Flora of Oklahoma Project, and the Flora of North America Project, authored or co-authored some 50 articles, read at least 30 papers at professional conferences.

Larry was born 28 March 1943 in Garnett, Kansas. He was salutatorian at Westphalia Rural High School in Coffey County, Kansas. His bachelor's and master's degrees were from Kansas State Teachers College (now Emporia State University). He received an undergraduate fellowship to Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois. Larry was awarded his Ph.D. in botany in 1973 at the University of Kansas; his dissertation was entitled "*The native orchids of the prairies and plains region of North America*." Orchids remained the primary focus of Larry's research throughout his career. He developed the OCLA herbarium (ca. 22,000 specimens) with noteworthy collections from southeastern Oklahoma and the Orchidaceae of the central and southeastern United States.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NEW NAMES

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