



Judith Croxdale (1941-2002)

“I believe plant and animal biologists have much to learn from one another because current molecular and genomic information shows plants and animals share some regulatory mechanisms but in other cases have novel mechanisms or regulatory players. Finally, I believe all scientists, but especially those who represent [professional] societies, have a special burden to educate the public and policymakers about developmental biology and its potential for the world’s population.” These were thoughts Judy Croxdale shared recently with us in her SDB ballot biosketch. Unfortunately she will not be able to see this come to fruition as she died suddenly of a heart attack on June 14, 2002, in Madison, WI.

Judy started her studies in English at the University of Colorado, interrupted them to start a family, and resumed some years later after her divorce. This time she went to UC Berkeley, graduating with an A.B. and then Ph.D. in Botany. After a first academic position at the Virginia State University, Judy moved to University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1979, where she remained and was a Full Professor of Botany until her untimely death.

Her most recent research focused on patterning of epidermal tissue and regulatory genes; relationship between trichome and stomatal patterns; binding partners of regulatory genes during trichome and during stomatal initiation. But her interests were broader and included studying effects of microgravity on growth pattern, and she analyzed the development of potato tuber grown on the space shuttle. She was the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Plant Growth Regulation*. Dr. Croxdale was committed to improve undergraduate teaching, and was instrumental in several curricular reforms at the UW-Madison. She was also very active in several groups to encourage women undergraduate and graduate students to enter careers in sciences and engineering.

Judy was very independent and adventurous, very involved on campus and with her neighborhood; she was a pilot, a creative cook and hostess. She was committed to a healthy lifestyle and even taught aerobics for several years, making her death while riding bike so ironic.

Judy is survived by her mother Winifred Liberini, son Leyton Croxdale and daughter-in-law Lisa, and brother Michael Gerow.

A celebration of Dr. Judith Croxdale's life will be held in September at UW-Madison, when her students are back on campus. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to "UWF/Croxdale Scholarship Fund", P.O. Box 8860, Madison, WI 53708, a fund established to support women beginning research careers.