



IN MEMORIAM

André E. Läuchli
Distinguished Professor of Plant Nutrition, Emeritus
UC Davis
1933 – 2015

On January 8, 2015, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and the University, lost an outstanding colleague and friend. Dr. André Läuchli, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Department of Land, Air and Water Resources (LAWR), succumbed to the adverse effects of pancreatic cancer. Professor Läuchli retired from UC Davis in 2006, but remained active administratively as Associate Vice Chancellor of Research, and continued his passion for research and scholarly work related to plant stress physiology, both on campus and overseas, until the final weeks before his death.

André was born in Basel, Switzerland on December 15, 1933, where he was raised and where he studied botany at the University of Basel. There, he joined the Schwizerhuesli fraternity, where he met many of his life-long friends, including Rita, whom he married in 1957. In 1960, André received his Ph.D. at the University of Basel under the direction of Prof. Max Geiger-Huber. He remained at the University working as a Botanist and Lecturer until 1968 when he accepted a two-year postdoctoral fellow position with Dr. Emanuel Epstein at UC Davis. After his fellowship at Davis, he joined the faculty at Texas A & M University where he worked for two years as an Assistant Professor. Later, he accepted an appointment as an Associate Professor at the University of Technology at Darmstadt, Germany until 1977, and then accepted a Full Professorship in Botany at the Veterinary University in Hannover. In 1979, Dr. Läuchli was offered a Full Professorship position in plant nutrition at the UC Davis, where he stayed for the remainder of his career.

André was internationally recognized as a leading scholar in salinity stress physiology and plant mineral nutrition. His professional interests focused on the physiology of salt resistance in plants, subcellular compartmentation of ions, ion mobility, and the efficiency of plant nutrient uptake and utilization. A colleague noted in a letter supporting André's advancement above-scale that his "remarkable research achievements have put him at the top of his field". In recognition of his academic achievements, André was awarded the Humboldt Research Award for senior U.S. scientists in 1992 and an honorary doctorate, Dr. (h.c.), for agricultural sciences from the Justus-Liebig University of Giessen, Germany. His expertise in plant physiology continues to be highly acknowledged in several scientific journals, including the *Journal of Plant Physiology*, *Planta*, *Plant Physiology*, *Plant Biology*, and *Physiologia Plantarum*. Dr. Läuchli also served on the editorial boards of a number of journals, including service as Associate Editor for the prestigious journal, *Plant Physiology*, and as Section Editor of *Plant Biology*. He published over 140 original papers, mainly in highly regarded plant science journals, and more than 30 book chapters. In addition, he edited several books in the field of ion localization and salinity. According to Web of Science, his work continues to be highly cited.

His close colleague, Dr. Rana Munns from CSIRO in Australia, said that André was a "dedicated teacher and mentor to young people" in the area of environmental stress physiology and plant nutrition, not only at UC

Davis, but to students in labs all around the world. Another colleague, Dr. Karl H. Mühling at Christian-Albrechts University in Kiel, Germany, noted, “Most of his Ph.D. students and postdoctoral scholars followed in his footsteps becoming professors (themselves), which further demonstrates his scientific impact”.

André was not only a highly respected researcher in this field and a dedicated teacher, but he was also a diplomatic administrator and a very kind man. These qualities were recognized by his fellow colleagues, and five years after accepting his position in LAWR, he was appointed as department Chair, and continued in that role until 1991. As Chair, André unselfishly worked long hours into the night on research and his administrative responsibilities. After his successful tenure as Chair, he served as the Executive Associate Dean for the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences from 1992 to 1998, and as interim dean in 1999. His administrative activities did not stop there. In 1998, he was appointed as Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and was later recalled to this appointment after his retirement. The University recognized André’s lifetime achievements, and he advanced to the title of Distinguished Professor in 2003, where he remained until his retirement in 2006.

André was an exceptional scientist and dedicated administrator. He was a revered mentor to his graduate students and postdocs, and a valued colleague. He had a passionate willingness to listen to students' and colleagues' problems and propose solutions, be they scientific or personal in nature. André was actively researching, writing, and reading to remain on top of his field, even while terminally ill. The Department, the College, the University, and the entire international academic community have lost a highly respected scientist, and his fellow workers have lost an outstanding colleague, but André will live forever in our memories.

André is survived by his caring wife, Rita Läuchli of Davis, his two daughters, Christina and Sabine, and six grandchildren (Jonas, Nicolai, Sina, Benjamin, Melanie and Julia). A memorial service was held in Basel, Switzerland in the same church where he and Rita were married 58 years earlier, and André was laid to rest in the city where he was born.

Steve Grattan and Randal Southard
Department of Land, Air, and Water Resources