

John Edward Greenleaf, Ph.D., 1932 - 2017

John E. Greenleaf, Ph.D. passed away on 3 November 2017 near his home in Saratoga, CA due to iatrogenic complications from treatment of cancer. John was born to Julia Flint and John Simon Greenleaf in Joliet, IL in 1932. He was raised in Springfield, IL. Among other high school activities, he was on the riflery team. He enjoyed recalling how he carried his rifle on the bus to the YMCA range to practice. He with his tennis partner won the Illinois state doubles championship in 1950. He served in the Illinois National Guard as a saxophonist and drum major. During graduate studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, he met Carol Johnson. They fell in love and married in 1960. Their marriage and close friendship thrived the 67 years to his passing. John also fell in love with study of human physiology at this time, and earned his Ph.D. in 1963. Thereafter, he took a position at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Ames Research Center, and he worked there until retirement in 2002.

Dr. Greenleaf became a thought-leader and internationally renowned physiologist, with extensive and important contributions in human systems-level environmental and exercise physiology. He published 185 original peer-reviewed articles (48% of which were first-author works), as well as numerous book chapters, patents, and other works. In 1965, he conducted the first NASA-funded study using female test subjects, which was very controversial at the time. He operated by the principle that human research should never harm anyone. This was over 3 decades before others formally raised the idea for wider consideration. His other core principles included: avoid research “fads”, embrace diversity, be the first test subject in your own research, adhere to fiscal regulations, and refuse to be bullied by administrative forces. He was an eager collaborator and consummate team-builder. His international collaborations included 5 sabbaticals with Polish scientists behind the Iron Curtain (1973-1989). He enjoyed similarly productive work with grateful colleagues in Sweden, Denmark, and Japan.

Legions of Dr. Greenleaf’s former students and colleagues carry on his ways of science. He thrived on the axiom of many successful scientists: avoid falling in love with hypotheses, so that when unexpected findings appear, they arouse curiosity instead of fear. His scientific acumen came with a warm demeanor, delightful sense of humor, and ready laugh. At scientific meetings, he was most often found in the poster sessions engaged in light-hearted yet insightful dialogue with presenters. He received awards too numerous to list fully, but they include: the NASA Apollo Achievement Award, the Exceptional Space Act Award, the Aerospace Medical Association Eric Liljencrantz Award, the American College of Sports Medicine Citation Award, the University of Illinois Distinguished Alumni Award, the APS Environmental and Exercise Physiology Section Honor Award, and Honorary Membership in the Polish Physiological Society. Among other activities in retirement, Dr. Greenleaf facilitated commercialization of his rehydration beverage called “The Right Stuff”.

Most of Dr. Greenleaf's publications are listed as entries 6-178 in a PubMed.gov search of "greenleaf je" (as of early 2020). He was interviewed for the American Physiological Society Living History Project in 2007 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v678jMjbt4Q>), a biographical article was published later (John Greenleaf's life of science. *Advances in Physiology Education*. 36: 234-45, 2012), and he published his autobiography in 2013 (*And That's the Way it Was!* JE Greenleaf. ISBN: 978-1-61170-139-5, Robertson Publishing, 2013). He is survived by his wife Carol. Dr. Greenleaf's legacy will include the Greenleaf Endowed Professorship in the Department of Molecular and Integrative Physiology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and the John and Carol Greenleaf Award for prolific environmental and exercise-related publication in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*. Donations to that Award in his honor are welcome, and can be made to the American Physiological Society.