

Russell E. Wright

June 19, 1939 – December 19, 2025

Russell E. Wright was born to Paul and Bernice Calvalege Wright on June 19, 1939, in Muscatine, IA, and passed away at home on Skiatook Lake in Oklahoma on December 19, 2025. He graduated from Muscatine, IA, and subsequently attended the University of Dubuque on a track scholarship. Later, he transferred to Iowa State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in zoology and a master's degree in entomology. He completed the PhD in entomology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Russell met Betty Throckmorton at Iowa State, and they married in 1963. Two children (Shelly and Dan) were born while the family lived in Wisconsin; and a third child, Jason, was born during the time that Russell taught at the University of Guelph. The Wright family moved to Stillwater, OK, in 1976 when Russ joined the Department of Entomology at Oklahoma State University. In 1992, he was named department head, and he held that position until he retired in 2004. During his career, he authored more than 60 journal articles as well as authored more than 30 OSU and Extension publications. In addition, he mentored many graduate students. Russell was actively involved in the community, including Scouts and Big Brothers, in addition to the Kiwanis Club. Furthermore, he was active in his church, the First Christian Church in Stillwater. After retiring, he volunteered at Our Daily Bread as well as served the Emeriti Association in variety of ways, including as president. Russell was preceded in death by his parents and by his brother, Ronald, and his sister Jean Brase. He is survived by his wife, Betty, his children, Shelly Norris (Randy), Daniel Wright (Brooke), and Jason Wright (Kallie), as well as several grandchildren, in addition to siblings Vernon Wright, Melvin Wright, Eileen Luba, Lorri Dicks, and Bernadine Brown, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.