

DAVE RAYLE REMEMBERED

by Ken Johnson

I met Dave Rayle when we were both undergraduates at UCSB, where he excelled at swimming, surfing, badminton (intramural men's champ in '62), and academics. Sharing Bill Purves' Plant Physiology class in S'64 sealed both of our fates, and Dave began his graduate studies with Purves the following fall. After three short years, Dave had isolated and identified a new auxin (a plant growth hormone), grabbed his PhD, then spent a year with Rainer Hertel (Michigan State) and two with Bob Cleland (U Washington) working on the mechanism of auxin-induced growth. He came to SDSU in 1970 and continued his studies despite being given a small prep room for a research lab. This would not do, and after months of foot-dragging by the Botany department, Dave boldly commandeered a teaching lab (takeovers of classrooms were "in" back then) for him and his new graduate students.

Dave spent his 3rd SDSU year in Bochum, Germany, where he conducted some very clever experiments that led him and Cleland to formulate the seminal "acid growth theory" of auxin action. Despite a few assaults by naysayers, this major theory remains "alive and well" 30 years later. Dave continued his work on auxin over the years, making significant contributions in the areas of auxin transport, receptors, gravitropism, and auxin target genes, such as the plasma membrane H⁺-ATPases. He served as mentor to a score of graduate students, postdocs, visiting scholars, and me.

What I remember most about Dave was his no-nonsense approach to outdoor activities. We shared a number of fishing, crabbing, clamming, and hiking trips over the years, and I came to know Dave as a real gutsy recreationist. On one trip, we headed up Oregon logging trails to a really obscure fishing stream in his old pickup, which was clearly on its last legs. We ended up 25 miles in from the nearest house. All I could think of while fishing was the backpage headline: "Two professors missing in the wilderness." On another trip to the Point Loma kelpbeds in his "trusty" boat, we needed a tow home.

There was always a sense of adventure with Dave. I'll miss him everyday!