



Dr. Michael G. Richard

November 21, 2021

Dr. Michael Gaylord Richard, 72, died on November 21, 2021, at Poudre Valley Hospital, Fort Collins, CO, after a short bout with septic shock unrelated to COVID 19. He was a world-renown microbiologist specializing in the analysis of microbiological upset in wastewater treatment and the application of remedial measures. No memorial service has yet been planned.

Michael, known as Dr. Richard or Michael to most, Mike to his siblings, Dad to his children, and Mikey to a special friend and collaborator, was born in Vallejo, CA on October 28, 1949. He was the middle child of Marion Dean and Helen Richard, who long ago predeceased him; his older brother Larry Richard, of Oregon, and his younger sister, Jaime Rofkahr (Ken) of California, survive him. On March 25, 1972, he married Joan Fadenrecht in Hanford, CA and they were only four months short of their 50th anniversary at his death. They had two exceptional children once they moved to Fort Collins CO: Helen M. O'Hare (Pete) now of Ridgewood NY and Samuel A Richard of Fort Collins CO.

Michael attended the University of California at Berkeley where he met Joan and earned his A.B. in Field Biology and Ecology (1972), and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Environmental Health Sciences from the School of Public Health (1974/1980). He served as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the College of Engineering, Sanitary Engineering and Environmental Health Research

Laboratory, at the UC Berkeley, Richmond Field Station CA under Professor David Jenkins (1980-84) before moving to Fort Collins CO as an Assistant Professor of Environmental Health at Colorado State University from 1985-1992. Discerning that he was better suited to practical applications of his love of microbiology and the aquatic environment than to academia, he then went to work as a senior environmental specialist for RBD Engineering Inc and its successor consulting firms, Sear-Brown, and Stantec, from 1992 to 2005. He continued to occasionally lecture in CSU sanitary engineering courses and CSU professional workshops until 2003. In November 2005, he struck out on his own as a private consulting microbiologist, troubleshooter, and trainer (dba Michael Richard Wastewater Microbiology LLC), until his retirement in August 2019. He was a popular lecturer when a CSU faculty member and continued his enjoyable manner of teaching as an accredited trainer for operators and professionals in water and wastewater treatment.

Retirement was not as expected due to declining health and chronic pain, not to mention the onset of the COVID pandemic. Fortunately, he spent many years of his earlier life camping and fishing with first his father and brother and later with, Joan, various friends, and family. He earned Life Scout status with the Boy Scouts of America and became a gifted fisherman and skilled outdoorsman in activities such as archery, fly fishing and tying, tidal fishing, spin fishing, backpacking, and camping. He worked several years during grad school for Andre Puyans and Dave Inks where he learned much about the world of fly fishers and rod makers. Ever a patron of flea markets and old-time sporting goods stores, he was an avid collector of vintage fishing rods, knives, and classic archery bows, much to the chagrin of his wife.

Michael got his start with microscopes on a hand-me-down scope from his brother and went on to create a catalog of microscope slides of algae for his high-school biology teacher and to win a region-wide science fair with a project on stream ecology. He greatly respected and adhered to the scientific

method throughout his life and work. As Dr. Richard, he authored more than 100 papers and technical reports and was an author or co-author of five books on wastewater treatment microbiology including the Manual of the Causes and Control of Activated Sludge Bulking and Foaming, (3rd Edition, 1984). He has given more than 150 presentations at meetings nationwide and conducted more than 170 training courses throughout the US and Canada since 1980.

Michael provided troubleshooting for any biological wastewater treatment system. Notably, he developed an anaerobic pretreatment design adapted to the cold weather climates of Colorado and Wyoming which was becoming widely used by small municipal lagoon systems. He was also a specialist in MBR systems and helped many such plants get rid of membrane plugging problems. Altogether, Michael was involved in the diagnosis and correction of wastewater treatment microbiology problems for more than 800 cities and 500 industries.

Dr. Richard was also the recipient of the Harrison Prescott Eddy Medal, 1988, awarded by the Water Environment Federation for best published research; the National Environmental Training Association's Environmental Educator of the Year Award, 1998; the Russell Blosser Award from the Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI) in 1999; the Douglas Jones Award from the Pulp and Paper Technical Association of Canada for an eminent contribution to the literature on the improvement of the environment, 2000; and selected as one of the top 100 consultants nationwide by clients, 1996.

Michael came especially alive when sharing his love of phase contrast microscopes and the world of microscopic life. One of his goals was to provide training classes where every participant was able to work individually at an unshared microscope and he met that goal through his company in later

life. Michael was full of humor, a loyal friend, a storyteller, a pet and animal lover, and a devoted spouse and father as best he was able in spite of the time and travel demands of his chosen profession. He was a uniquely creative and caring individual who will be remembered for showing love through showering of gifts on, and small acts of kindness and helpfulness for, family and friends.

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Michael G. Richard*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *My heart goes out to Joan, Helen, and Sam at this time of loss. Michael was my uncle and although it's been many years since we crossed paths at their home in Fort Collins, I remember him as sweet and kind. I am mostly moved by his impact as a father, because his children are AMAZING. I loved having Helen and Sam as cousins--smart, funny, creative, they were always coming up with something new (fictional writing, games, etc.) when we visited, and time spent with them was illuminating and joyful. It is only natural to assume that part of that came from their loving father. Sending blessings of love and comfort. Rest in peace Michael. -Hannah*



Hannah Fadenrecht - December 29, 2021 at 07:09 PM



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Hannah Fadenrecht - December 29, 2021 at 07:09 PM

RM

“ My family and i are very saddened to hear about Michael's passing. He was known as Mike Rick in my house since that is our first names. He called me Ricky and I called him Mikey whether in emails or in our workshops. I looked forward to our annual Filament ID workshops in Oregon when we got to hangout together during the day helping people learn and dinner at night sharing stories, listening to Mike's bad jokes which he admitted to our classes were bad.

I met Mike in the 80's in Maine at a seminar and kept in touch ever since. We had training/consulting trips to Maine where we would meet in Portland and go to Cap'n Newick's where he would always get the Fishermans Platter and I would always get steamers and lobsters. We would both remark how much food the other had yet we would both finish our meals.

From his fly fishing expertise he developed back when he was at Berkely, he helped me purchase a bamboo fly rod on E-bay (E-bay being a favorite hobby for him looking for fly fishing stuff plus microscope stuff) and taught me how to cast from where I couldn't to where I progressed to terrible. We always talked about but never did a fly fishing trip together.

With tears now running down my face, I will miss him as a friend, a colleague, a mentor who helped an engineer learn and use microbiology to help troubleshoot wastewater treatment plants.

Rest in Peace Mikey - you will be sorely missed by the wastewater industry for the tremendous impact you had helping hundreds of plants and individuals solve their treatment plant problems. There is only one Mikey - Love, Ricky!

Rick Marshall - December 29, 2021 at 02:04 PM

JJ

Joan to Joan we have been with u both all the way thru Cal and onward to microorganisms! I feel with u on our loss.

Joan Jenkins - July 18, 2022 at 10:33 PM

RH

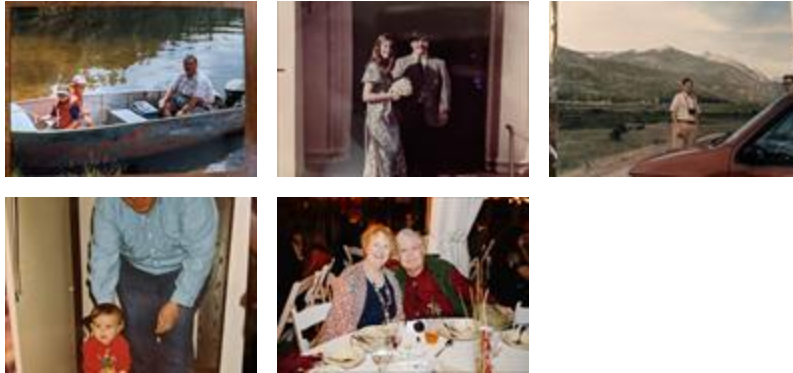
“ I couldn't possibly thank Dr. Richard enough for the assistance and guidance he has provided in my career. He took countless hours out of his time to teach me and answered thousands of emails and questions. In addition to Dr. Richard being a mentor and a father figure to me I was also proud to have called him my friend. As the years went by our conversations expanded from wastewater to all areas of life and it was always great to call him every couple weeks to catch up. In particular he loved to talk about microscopes and after every training event or business trip he would be excited to hear about all of the events during long road trips back home. In 2018 my wife and I visited him and we went to Rocky Mountain National Park. Because he had such a tremendous impact on my life, him being able to meet my wife and being able to spend a day hanging out with him and his wife was vey special to me. It hurts to lose him but rather than be sad I am trying my best to carry on his legacy, make him proud, and remember all of the good times we shared together. If there is indeed a place we go after this life I look forward to being reunited and continuing our friendship.



Ryan Hennessy - December 29, 2021 at 01:04 PM

PO

“ 6 files added to the album Memories Album



Pete O'Hare - December 21, 2021 at 01:09 PM

JM

“ Dr. Michael was a GREAT asset to the wastewater community. I was priveleged to attend many of his seminars and used him as an asset for troubleshooting wastewater problems. Send me some slides was his response when i would call him and he would call me back and send a written report after he had reviewed them. He had a passion for microbiology. He will be missed.

Jon Mays - December 20, 2021 at 05:29 PM

BB

“ Saddened to hear of Michael's passing. I was blessed in assisting him in selling various microscope accessories over the years but also servicing a large number of his microscope inventory. He was a true character and loved to chat on a variety of subjects. My condolences to his wife Joan, daughter Helen, and son, Sam. Memory eternal.

Brett Berrong - December 20, 2021 at 10:50 AM