WSWS Officer and Committee Report
March 2025

Office or Committee Name: Necrology
Officer or Chairperson Name: Earl Creech
Other Committee Members: Leslie Beckworth and Aaron Becerra-Alvarez
Date of Preparation (include year): March 5, 2025

Activities during the year: Information was collected for WSWS past and present members who passed away this last year. This year, our society lost two members, their write-ups are provided below.

Roland D. Schirman (Nov. 1, 1937-Mar. 22, 2024)

Dr. Roland D. Schirman, 86, of Dayton, WA, went home to be with his Lord and Savior on Friday, March 22, 2024, after a brief but aggressive infection, while attending the Western Society of Weed Science meetings in Denver, CO. Roland was born in Salem, OR on November 1, 1937, and was raised on a berry and dairy farm. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture from Oregon State University. Roland then attended the University of Wisconsin where he completed an M. S. in Agronomy and a Ph. D. in Agronomy with a minor in Plant Physiology.

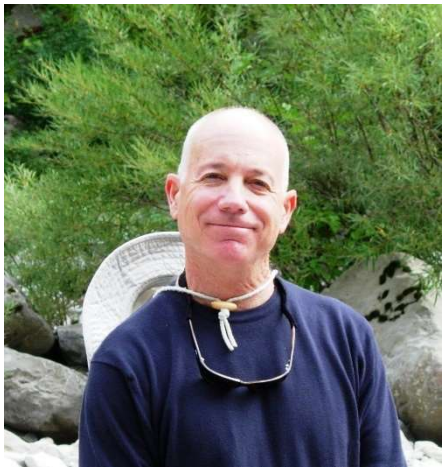
After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, he began his professional career in Product Development with Chevron Chemical Company located in Fresno, CA. With Chevron he covered 11 states. After two years, Roland accepted employment with the USDA-ARS in Pullman, WA, so he could find more time for his budding family. While working for ARS, Roland conducted research on weed management in No-Till farming in the Palouse Region and also conducted research on the biology and control of rush skeletonweed. Roland always had the best interest of the producers in mind when he conducted his research.

In 1979, Roland accepted a position with Washington State University in Dayton, WA, where he was Extension Agent and County Chair for Columbia County. Roland was an excellent agronomist and weed scientist and had the deep respect of the growers in Columbia and neighboring counties in southeast Washington. He conducted numerous herbicide trials, evaluated alternative crops, worked extensively with direct seeding and minimum or no-till, and he distributed bio-agents for the control of weeds. He worked closely with the Columbia County Noxious Weed Board and served as their Advisor.

Roland attended every meeting of the Western Society of Weed Science in the past 60 years. He served on numerous committees within WSWS, including Finance, Resolutions, Necrology and Nominating. He was chair of the Physiology/Chemical section. Roland published numerous articles in the WSWS Research Progress Report and made several presentations. Roland frequently volunteered his time to help with the registration desk at the WSWS meetings and help run the meetings. In 2005, Roland received the WSWS Fellow Award.
Roland was a long-time member of the Washington State Weed Association and served on the Board of Directors. In 1992, he was named "Weed Warrior of the Year", the highest honor awarded to a member. Roland was famous for organizing and running the annual weed identification quiz at the annual meetings.

Roland received many other awards for his contributions to agriculture. They included two notable extension awards, the "Kenneth J. Morrison Award" from the WSU Department of Crop and Soil Sciences and the "Excellence in Extension Award" from the National Association of Wheat Growers. He also received the "Professional Service Award" from the Washington Association of Conservation Districts.

Roland was preceded in death by his parents, Samuel and Lydia Schirman of Salem, OR, his wife, Carol, of over 48 years and his second wife, Betty, of 10 years. He is survived by his children, Steve (Donna) Schirman of Denver, CO; Susan (Shayne) Ganz of Corning, CA; and Jane (Edward) Kover of Eagle River, AR along with grandchildren, Billy Paterson, Jack (Samantha) Kover and Ellen Kover.



Carl E. Bell (October 19, 1951 — July 25, 2024)

Carl Eugene Bell, aged 75, passed away on July 31, 2024 in San Diego. He was born on October 8, 1938, in Los Angeles, to Ellen and Kenneth Bell.

He was a proud resident of California throughout his entire life. He graduated from Alhambra High and attended Cal State Long Beach. He worked for the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources in Imperial County, finding ways to control weeds and invasive species in agricultural crops. He retired as the Regional Advisor for Invasive Plants in 2014.

Bell began his 35-year UCCE career in 1979 as a weed science advisor in Imperial County, where he advised growers and production consultants on weed management on large farms as well as small-scale and organic produce operations. His research proved solarization was very successful at controlling weeds in organic winter vegetables at a reasonable cost.

In 2000, he was reassigned to Southern California to advise land managers on controlling non-native plants that invaded natural habitats. As UCCE invasive plants advisor, he served San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, Ventura and San Bernardino counties. Later in his career with UC ANR, he served for a period as UCCE director in San Diego County, in addition to his research and extension work. In retirement, he started his own consulting business, So Cal Invasives, to continue providing advice on managing invasive plants. Bell, who was born in Los Angeles, earned his bachelor's degree in botany and master's degree in plant biology from California State University, Long Beach.

"From early on, I realized how lucky I was to be working as a weed scientist, both with UC and with the larger world of weeds outside the ivy-covered walls," Bell wrote in a 2014 blog post announcing his retirement. "Weed scientists and practitioners have always been inclusive, supportive and interesting; and populated by fun-loving, intelligent, hard-working and egalitarian colleagues."

Carl was fun-loving, incredibly intelligent, a great cook, a nature lover, and he worked with passion. He was a snowboarder, surfer, and dancer. Carl enjoyed backpacking and car camping, and visited as many National Parks as possible. He did a sabbatical in Greece at the American farm school in Thessaloniki, where he fell in love with all things Greek. Later in life, Carl enjoyed traveling Europe, visiting botanical gardens all over the world. He became very interested in tai chi, kung fu, and meditation.

He is survived by his wife Judy Bell, sons Nicholas and Gregory, grandson Ocean, and brothers Franklin and Richard.

Recommendations for Board Action: None

Budget Needs: None

Name of Person Preparing This Report: Earl Creech