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## In Memoriam: Eugene Ralph "Gene" Mancini

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### Bill Goodfellow and Ruth Hull, SETAC North America Endowment Fund Board of Trustees

Eugene Mancini, 70, passed away this spring following several strokes. Gene, as colleagues and SETAC members knew him, was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Gene pursued a B.S. in biology from Kenyon College, graduating in 1970. He served in the U.S. Army as a combat medic and clinical laboratory technologist from 1971-1972. Gene married his wife of 47 years, Ruth Anne Randall, in 1972 in San Antonio, Texas. Following his military service, Gene continued his educational pursuits with a M.S. in zoology from DePauw University (1974) and a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Louisville (1978).

Gene started his professional career with Woodward-Clyde Consultants (1978-1982), followed by Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO; 1982-1999), ultimately founding and operating E.R. Mancini & Associates (1999-2016). He specialized in ecological assessment and remediation of oil spills and hazardous material incidents, performing numerous assessments regarding chemistry, biology, environmental toxicology and natural resource damage assessments (NRDAs).

Gene was a person that eagerly gave of his time to SETAC throughout his professional career, presenting numerous platform and poster presentations, chairing sessions at our annual meetings, publishing in our journals and financially sponsoring many of our programs. He sponsored SETAC North America as a sustaining member and was very active in SETAC committee work. Gene was most noted for his leadership in the development of the SETAC North America Endowment Fund, starting it with almost no cash resources and building it into the current fund of more than \$370,000. Many past, current and future students and early career professionals owe a part of their success from the vision and hard work that Gene and others have put into developing our North America Endowment Fund into a sustainable trust. In recognition of Gene's overall efforts, SETAC awarded him an Emeritus Membership status in 2014 and the Herb Ward Exceptional Service Award in 2016, SETAC's most prestigious international award for service to our Society. Recently, the SETAC North America Board of Directors have supported the decision to rename the Endowment Fund the "SETAC North America Eugene Mancini Endowment Fund" as a lasting tribute to his vision and determination in setting up our sustainable trust to benefit future generations of SETAC members.

While many of us know of some of Gene's activities in SETAC, most of us did not know his artistic accomplishments and love for music. He played the saxophone and acoustic guitar, sang tenor with the Kokosingers at Kenyon College, and sang in his church's choir. Outside of SETAC, Gene also volunteered for the Camarillo Family YMCA, was a long time member of the Ventura County, California, Sheriff's Department Disaster Assistance Response Team (1990-2012) and a perennial judge for local science fair projects. He also loved watching soccer, riding motorcycles, morning swims at his local YMCA, and spending time with his family, friends and his beloved new grandson.

Gene is survived by his wife, Ruth Anne; son Michael Mancini and his wife Adriana and their son Vincent; his daughter Lisa Sewell and husband Joshua; and his sister Anne Tumminia.

Lisa shared a humorous story that sums up her father and his attention to details. When Lisa was in elementary school, Gene utilized his aptitude for craftsmanship to help her build a class project that, in Lisa's words, was embarrassingly sophisticated. They both created a two-foot replica of a mine shaft, complete with miniature miners, a mine cart and tiny functional elevator operated by a pulley system. "Obviously," Lisa said, "we got an A for the project."

Gene was not one to bring attention to himself, rather he listened to what others were sharing. He was a wonderful mentor and left an impression on many of us, young and not-so-young. Gene had a quiet way of making you think about how your walk through life could leave things better than you found them. He often reminded his friends and colleagues to "always give back more than you take" as he presented in his high school's 50th reunion publication. He was a man that didn't just talk the talk, he truly walked the walk. We at SETAC will miss Gene's well wishes and words of encouragement to staff and members, the mischievous twinkle in his eye, and most of all, his vision for the future. We may never see his like again.

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