

# Tracy W. French

*May 22, 1951 — March 3, 2009*

Dr. Tracy W. French, Associate Professor in Clinical Pathology at the College of Veterinary Medicine, was a beloved teacher, mentor and friend. Tracy passed away peacefully at his home in Freeville, New York on 3rd March 2009, after a long and courageous struggle with illness.

Born in Indiana, Tracy obtained a Bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences from Indiana University in 1973 and became a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Purdue University in 1977. Soon after, Tracy followed his calling into Clinical Pathology with a three-year residency at the University of Florida. During his residency, Tracy developed a serologic test for the diagnosis of *Ehrlichia platys*, a rickettsial organism that causes severe infectious thrombocytopenia in dogs. Upon completion of his residency, Tracy remained at the University of Florida as a Visiting Professor of Clinical Pathology, before joining the faculty at Cornell University as an Assistant Professor in 1982. Tracy then spent his professional life in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, where he dedicated himself to teaching clinical pathology to veterinary students, interns and residents, assisting with collaborative research projects, and performing professional diagnostic service.

Tracy was an outstanding clinical pathologist and diagnostician. He spent many hours at the microscope, diagnosing diseases in sick animals and helping veterinarians make crucial decisions regarding patient care. He had a gift for identifying strange structures, pigments or organisms in blood and cytology smears and for providing plausible explanations of confusing laboratory results. He was always available and armed with a smile and words of encouragement to trainees and colleagues alike. His gems of wisdom will be remembered and used by those he taught over the years. All of those who worked with or for Tracy, including the medical technologists in the laboratory, held him in the highest regard. All appreciated his patience, wealth of knowledge, fairness, mellow personality and caring nature. He served both the University and his profession by participating on various educational committees, serving as President of the American Society of Veterinary Clinical Pathology and functioning as Director of the Clinical Pathology Laboratory for many years. His collaborative efforts yielded numerous publications and contributed to advancing the field of veterinary clinical pathology.

Tracy was an outstanding teacher. He was dedicated to the education of veterinary students, interns, and residents, and continuing education of veterinarians in clinical practice and academia. He readily embraced new teaching methods and was one of the first clinical pathologists in the country to use the web for clinical pathologic

education. He had an eye for good web design and would spend hours perfecting images for web display and publication. To facilitate self-driven student learning in a new case-based curriculum introduced in Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1995, he helped create web-based clinical pathology laboratories, teaching cases, and modules on hematology, clinical chemistry and urinalysis. Indeed, his enduring legacy to Cornell University was the creation of these web-based modules, now known as eClinPath at Cornell University. This phenomenal resource remains one of the few educational veterinary clinical pathology sites available on the worldwide web. It has been used, and will continue to be used for years to come, by veterinary students, veterinarians, veterinary technicians and teaching institutions worldwide.

Tracy also had a rich and fulfilling life outside of work. He liked nothing better than driving those beemers (particularly the roadster) around upstate New York, playing guitar, sailing in the high winds and rough water on Cayuga lake, or riding his catamaran in Florida.

He had a hotlink to the webcam on the lake, so he could continuously monitor wind conditions and know when it was just right to go sailing. He was totally free and fearless on the water, no matter what the conditions. Above all, he loved his family and placed them first. He was a devoted, loving and committed husband to Mica, father to Trevor and Hannah and stepfather to James, Wesley, Joshua and William. He only wanted happiness and good health for all of his family.

Tracy was a quiet, gentle and compassionate person, who treated everyone equally and with good humor and respect. He will be remembered for his kindness, thoughtfulness and concern for others, for his unfailingly positive outlook, his tremendous zest for life and his incredible reserves of courage. He was a valued and beloved colleague, mentor and friend and will be missed by those who had the pleasure to work or interact with him.

*Tracy Stokol, Chairperson; Julia Blue, Linda Chapman, John Randolph*