



Robert Warren Newburgh

March 22, 1922 - August 4, 2024

Robert Warren Newburgh, a distinguished scientist and beloved family man, passed away peacefully on August 4, 2024, at the age of 102. Known affectionately as Bob, he was born on March 22, 1922, to Oscar and Ida Selma Kreutz Newburgh in Sioux City, Iowa.

Bob's journey from a small town in Iowa to becoming an influential figure in scientific research was marked by integrity, cooperation, and an unwavering commitment to advancing knowledge. After graduating from high school in Sioux City, he enlisted in the US Army during World War II, where he served honorably as an officer in the Medical Service Corps, retiring with the rank of Captain. His military service laid a foundation of discipline and leadership that would characterize his entire career.

Following his military service, Bob pursued higher education with fervor. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of Iowa, followed by a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin. His academic journey led him to Oregon State University, where he embarked on a prolific career. Rising through the ranks from Assistant Professor to Professor in just six years, Bob's tenure at Oregon State was marked by significant contributions to the field of biochemistry. Over the years, Bob held several administrative positions at the University that at different times included the Assistant Director of the Science Research Institute, Chair of the

Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics, Dean of the Graduate School and concurrently, for one year, Acting Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Bob's research was in the field of developmental and cell biology, using primarily insects and cell cultures as models. He focused on the neural development of a variety of organisms. His groundbreaking research was supported by prestigious grants from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science

Foundation, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Dreyfus Foundation, and the Life Insurance Foundation. He took great pride in helping to establish the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics at Oregon State University and in the lasting impact it has had on students pursuing degrees there. He was honored with the title of professor emeritus upon leaving Oregon State University.

In 1980, Bob transitioned to Washington, DC, where he continued to make substantial contributions as the Head of the Section on Molecular and Genetic Biosciences at the National Science Foundation. His leadership extended to the Office of Naval Research, where he served as the Director of the Biological Sciences Division and later as Director of Biological and Biomedical Science and Technology. Under his guidance, numerous initiatives advanced our understanding of developmental biochemistry, cancer, neurobiology, and toxicology.

After retiring from the Office of Naval Research, Bob took on the role of Executive Director of the Protein Society, where he furthered his commitment to the advancement of protein science until his final retirement in 2004. His efforts in this role helped to foster collaboration and innovation within the scientific community.

After relocating to Tallahassee in 2008, Bob remained active in his community. He contributed his expertise and time to various volunteer positions, including

the Leon County Advisory Committee and the Tallahassee Ranch Club Homeowners Association governing board. He was a devoted patron of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, and attending their concerts brought him immense joy and fulfillment. His involvement in these organizations reflected his enduring commitment to service and community engagement.

Bob spent his final years at St. Augustine Plantation in Tallahassee, Florida, where he was cherished by residents and staff alike. His warmth, wisdom, and generosity touched the lives of many, leaving a lasting legacy of kindness and integrity.

Bob is survived by his loving wife, Janet, and his children: son Kirk (wife Gene), daughters Christina Freeman (husband Benjamin) and Collette, and stepchildren Juan Miguel Cardenas, Linda Marie Cardenas, Joseph Edward Cardenas (wife Veronica), and Victoria Cardenas. His daughter Elizabeth Downer predeceased him. Bob also leaves behind a number of beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A dedicated scientist, a devoted husband, and a cherished friend, Bob's contributions to science and his community will be remembered with deep gratitude and respect. He will be interred at the National Cemetery in Tallahassee on September 6th at noon, where his life and legacy will be honored.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Bob's memory to the Big Bend Hospice are gratefully received. His enduring impact on science and his compassionate spirit will be remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing him. Todd Wahlquist is assisting the Newburgh family with their arrangements (850-385-2193, www.bevisfh.com).

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee National Cemetery

5015 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Previous Events

Memorial Celebration

SEP 6. 12:00 PM (ET)

Tallahassee National Cemetery
5015 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Tribute Wall

CB

“ Bob was such a strong, gentle, sweet gentleman. I miss seeing him every day. Life was hard for him the last year or two. He persevered in his quiet way. My husband & I ate with him every day for about a year when we first came to Saint Augustine Plantation. He never said too much, but we found he was a very educated man, two phds, I believe. He spoke proudly of his wife and we could tell how proud of her he was. She was so faithful to him, visiting often. We all celebrated his last few birthdays. I hope she will be comforted in her grief and know he is remembered well.

Carol Broadway

Carol Broadway - August 12, 2024 at 08:15 AM

JN

Thank you, Carol, for a lovely tribute to my husband Bob. Yes, the last year or two were difficult for Bob, but he is now at peace.

Janet Newburgh - August 21, 2024 at 10:22 PM