

Don W. Klopff: A Remembrance

James C. McCroskey

Dr. Donald William Klopff passed away on August 27, 2010 after a brief illness at his home in Kailua, HI.

Wife: Beverly Son: Donn

Dr. Klopff and I met at the University of Hawaii in the late summer of 1960. He was director of the debate and public-speaking programs and my new boss. This was my first day teaching at the college level (I had previously taught and managed high school speech and debate programs). We became very close friends shortly after and stayed that way for the next 50 years. My daughter Linda (who thinks of Don as her grandfather), Don's son Donn, and I were privileged to visit Don and Beverly just a few of weeks before his passing, just after the PACA convention in China. His son and I presented Don's last paper at PACA this past August.

In our last visit, Don was still laughing and telling me what I should be doing rather than what I was doing! He was an expert at that!! Don was my life long mentor/friend and now is sadly missed.

Most people who have known Don think of him as being "that great scholar from Hawaii." That is very appropriate. However, I think of him as that but also "that great scholar from West Virginia." When Don retired from teaching at the University of Hawaii, I contacted him and teased him about moving to West Virginia. After several interactions, he got serious about his joining us at West Virginia University (WVU). He agreed to come to WVU for a summer. I got permission to hire him from my Dean. The Dean suggested that I should try to get Don to stay longer. After talking about the idea, Don decided to stay a little longer—and it turned out to be 10 years. During that time he brought intercultural communication to WVU and prepared many, many of the students at WVU to teach others how to deal with intercultural communication. He was a great scholar and a great teacher. Don is one of few people in academia who have ever been chosen to

James C. McCroskey (Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University, 1966) is Scholar in Residence in the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Correspondence to James C. McCroskey, Scholar in Residence in the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL 35244, USA. Email: email@jamesemccroskey.com

be honored by two universities as "Professor Emeritus." Ironically, I first learned of Don's passing from a person at WVU.

Communication scholars from all over the world, but particularly those on the Pacific-Asian region, will miss them the most. He and his colleagues in Hawaii worked hard to launch communication organizations over the years. In the early years these organizations brought together scholars who taught debate and public speaking. His first regional organization was known as the Communication Association of the Pacific. Members came from many Asian countries as well as Australia and the United States, particularly Hawaii and the U.S. west coast. This organization had a journal that focused on intercultural communication scholarship. Later Don led the movement to create a new and broader organization called the World Communication Association (WCA). One of WCA's goals was to have conventions all over the world. Many of us called the WCA "Don's Organization," particularly those of us who joined this new organization at its first convention. One of the things he always wanted was to have WCA sponsor conventions on all of the continents. It was ironic that this *wish* came true in China when WCA members in the past summer, while participating at the Pacific and Asian Communication Association (the newest of "Don's organizations"), agreed to hold their 2011 convention in Peru. I am one of the few people who were present at all of the first of the conventions of each of "Dan's organizations." I will look forward to seeing Don's final wish come true.