



Academy Fellow
James W. Midyette, Jr.
1925-2001

The Academy has received word that James Webb Midyette, Jr. died January 17, 2001. Born in Fredericksburg, July 28, 1925, he served in the U.S. Army during World War II in Europe and the Pacific and graduated from Virginia Tech in 1949. A trusted advisor to several Virginia Governors, he retired in 1985 as director of administration of the Virginia Department of Agriculture where his career spanned four decades. As chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, among other offices, Jim contributed significantly to the Visiting Scientists Program -- now the Virginia Science Resource Network -- and the Academy's efforts to publish research on the Great Dismal Swamp. In cooperation with the National Science Foundation, Jim was one of the Academy's leading advocates for a Virginia science advisor in the executive branch in the 1960s and 70s.

The Science Museum of Virginia owes much to the work of Jim Midyette. In 1964, Council asked Jim to join Roscoe Hughes and Foley Smith on a committee to advance work on the founding of a state science museum, which the Academy had initiated as early as 1933. Pursuant to General Assembly passage of House Bill No. 524 in 1968, Governor Mills Godwin appointed a commission, the following year, consisting of Roscoe Hughes, Zan Stuart, A. Stewart, Delegate Glenn Yeattes, and Senator William Parkinson. Hughes asked Academy President Paul Siegel to appoint a standing Science Museum Committee within the Academy to provide expertise to the Gover-

nor's Commission. Jim served with Ed Harlow, Susie Floyd, Senator Lloyd Bird, Horton Hobbs, Perry Holt, Michael Kosztarab, Gwynn Ramsey, Harry Holloway and Randolph Gladding. The work of these bodies led to the establishment of the Science Museum of Virginia. Jim Midyette authored many of the Academy's reports, motions, and resolutions regarding the science museum including one by which the Academy contributed financial support to the authorized, but unfunded, State Study Commission on the Virginia Museum of Science.

Jim was elected a Fellow of the Academy in 1980. He was president of the American Seed Control Officials, commander of American Legion Post 206, president of the Independence Ruritan Club, and served as secretary of the Ashland War Memorial Association. In the Kiwanis, he was president of the Ashland Club and lieutenant governor of the Capitol District. Jim was a member of the Central Virginia Men's Garden Club and, after his retirement, volunteered at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and the Ashland-Hanover Visitors Center. He served on the board of trustees of Duncan Memorial Methodist Church where he was superintendent of the Sunday school. Jim's surviving family include his wife of 49 years, Lucille Pope Midyette, a daughter, Anne Reid Midyette of Virginia Beach; sons, James Webb Midyette III and wife, Mary Dinardo Midyette, of Chesapeake, John Pope Midyette and wife, Donna Shields Midyette, of Hanover; four grandchildren, Jamie, Lauren, Jackson and Michael Midyette; two sisters, Margaret M. Leinbach of Urbanna and Nancy M. Hypes of Harrisonburg.