

J. Robert Stiffler Chair of Horticulture and Botany

The J. Robert Stiffler Chair of Horticulture and Botany was conceived as a direct result of Bob Stiffler's vision of a collaborative effort between Old Dominion University and Norfolk Botanical Garden. This collaboration would connect the gardens and plant collections at the Garden with the skills and research expertise of the University. The goal was to develop a working partnership between the two institutions that would translate University-level horticulture and botanical studies into practical, hands-on gardening knowledge for the local, regional and national gardening public.

On October 4, 2003, the J. Robert Stiffler Chair of Horticulture and Botany was announced at a special ceremony hosted by Old Dominion University and then-President Rosanne Runte, Ph.D. at Norfolk Botanical Garden. Timothy Motley, Ph.D. was appointed to the position and the J. Robert Stiffler Chair of Horticulture and Botany became a reality.

There is a bright future for this partnership and the dream that Bob held for many years. He was pleased with the progress that he saw take place and he will certainly be remembered for the impact that he will have long into the future with this Chair that has been established in his honor.



NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN
A Natural Beauty.

J. Robert Stiffler



December 7, 1921 - January 20, 2010

James Robert (Bob) Stiffler
December 7, 1921 – January 20, 2010

"No garden writer could exist without a lot of help from friends who are better gardeners." -Robert Stiffler

Bob Stiffler was raised in Iowa and had mid-Western, home-grown love for the land and the plants that grew on it. He was down to earth, direct and always had time to stop and talk about the enjoyment that came from plants and gardening.

Bob was involved with anything and everything horticultural. His employment after graduation from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, was marketing agricultural and horticultural products. After his service with the U.S. Navy he began his career as a gardening columnist with the *Virginian-Pilot*. He was involved with many area plant societies and garden clubs (including the once-robust Men's Garden Club). He was also served on the board of trustees of the Norfolk Botanical Garden. His book *Gardening in Southeastern Virginia and Northeastern North Carolina* (1995) gave practical, month-to-month, and personally-experienced gardening advice for the Tidewater region.

It would be hard to find a local gardener who has not been influenced by Bob's horticultural knowledge and expertise at one time or another. It is impossible to measure the impact that Bob has had over the years on individual gardens and gardeners throughout the area.



J. Robert Stiffler Memorial

Norfolk Botanical Garden
Rose Garden Hall
April 27, 2010
7:00pm

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Donald R. Buma
Executive Director
Norfolk Botanical Garden

Bob's Role in Developing an ODU/NBG Collaboration

Lytton J. Musselman, Ph.D.
Mary Payne Hogan Professor of Botany
Department of Biological Sciences
Old Dominion University

Bob's Writing and Impact on Regional Horticulture

Aimee Batten
Editor, *Gardening in Southeastern Virginia & Northeastern North Carolina* and former editor, the *Home Section, Virginian-Pilot*

Ongoing Activities of the Stiffler Chair

Timothy J. Motley, Ph.D.
J. Robert Stiffler Professor of Botany and Associate Professor
Department of Biological Science
Old Dominion University

Closing Remarks

Dana Parker
Former President of the Board
Norfolk Botanical Garden

Light refreshments following service.