



CLASS OF 2015



By Will Nepper | Senior Editor

In March, the *Pest Management Professional (PMP)* Hall of Fame Selection Committee convened to determine the Class of 2015. The committee discussed the industry contributions of dozens of candidates nominated for induction. It's never easy to narrow the pool of candidates down to a handful, and as new generations of PMPs come of age and enter the industry, we don't expect it will get easier. That said, we think our committee did a bang-up job choosing this year's class.

The *PMP* Hall of Fame was established in 1997 to recognize and thank individuals who have had a hand in influencing positive change, mentoring and bringing important new research to light for the profession. These are the people who are responsible for the long-overdue, but ever-increasing respect the field of pest management has garnered as we move deeper into the 21st century. They are the dedicated game changers, mentors, risk takers and pioneers.

We draw our inductees from all facets of pest management — leaders in entomology, business, education, industry activism, professionalism and political leadership. They represent the industry's "best foot forward." Sometimes they speak for the industry or stand tall as advocate avatars within this uniquely familial profession. They're the people most willing to share their insights, research, knowledge, business savvy and best practices with their peers.

Sometimes these important folks shun the limelight, and don't get the recognition they deserve. Some are readily recognized by all, and their inclusion in our Hall of Fame is a "what took us so long" no-brainer. Whatever the case, each of them has earned and deserves our respect and appreciation.

The four inductees who will be joining the ranks of the *PMP* Hall of Famers this year are:

- **John R. Cook Sr.** (*posthumous*) of Cook's Pest Control, based in Decatur, Ala.;
- **Noad Corley** (*posthumous*) of Corley Pest Control in Dallas;
- **Dr. Laurel Hansen**, researcher and biology instructor at Spokane Falls (Wash.) Community College and adjunct professor, Washington State University, Department of Entomology; and
- **Dr. Phil Koehler**, Endowed Professor of Entomology, University of Florida (Gainesville).

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- 2015** John R. Cook Sr.
Noad Corley
Dr. Laurel Hansen
Dr. Phil Koehler

Lookie, here's Cookie

John Cook built one of the largest pest control companies in the country on honesty, courtesy, respect and customer satisfaction.

By John Walsh | Contributing Editor

In 1950, after graduating from Georgia Tech with a degree in architecture, John R. Cook Sr. was ready to embark on a promising career in the field he loved. But the death of his pest management professional (PMP) father, John L. Cook, that same year changed his life.

Cook Sr. felt compelled to fulfill the five-year termite guarantees his father contracted, so he returned to Decatur, Ala., with his wife, Jo. In addition to termites, he added pest control service to the company his father started and changed the name from North Alabama Termite Co. to Cook's Pest Control.

PMP HALL OF FAME 2015

NAME: John R. Cook Sr.

COMPANY: Cook's Pest Control

TITLE: Chairman emeritus of Cook's Pest Control

YEARS IN PEST MANAGEMENT: 58

KEY POSITIONS HELD: president, chairman of the board and chairman-emeritus of Cook's Pest Control; president of the Alabama Pest Control Association and the National Pest Control Association

CROWNING ACHIEVEMENTS: Grew his company from one full-time employee and only a few accounts to become the seventh largest pest control company in the United States; received the 2001 NPMA President's Pinnacle Award; Cook's Pest Control won the Better Business Bureaus' National Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics

TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Founded in 1928, Cook's has grown from a small business with one full-time employee and a handful of accounts to one of the nation's largest pest management companies, with 1,400 full-time employees and more than 300,000 customers.

During the 1930s and '40s, the family business focused on protecting residential and commercial buildings from termites. Cook Sr.'s architectural training honed his attention to detail, which was beneficial in expanding a pest control business during the '50s. While building their business, the Cooks stressed basic themes: honesty, courtesy, respect and customer satisfaction. Their philosophy of providing quality service and a good place to work has been the company's foundation.

John Cook Jr. — who at age 11 began working summer jobs in the office and in the field with technicians and salespeople — learned that integrity, honesty, courtesy and respect help build an organization, and that the reputation a company has from those ideals should be protected.

"One of Dad's sayings was 'Do what you promise, plus a little bit more,'" Cook Jr. says. "I often saw him give more than we promised to a customer, or more than they were legally due if ever a dispute arose.

It wasn't worth it to win an argument and lose a friend or customer or gain a reputation for being difficult to deal with. He often turned the other cheek when he didn't have to."

For 24 years, the Decatur office operated as the only branch of the company. Then it began to expand steadily. Presently, Cook's is located in more than 25 cities in Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi and Georgia.

'AN INSPIRING LEADER'

In 1972, Jim Aycock was a certified public accountant who didn't want to work as a public accountant anymore. At that same time, Cook Sr. was looking for a controller for his expanding company and hired Aycock. In 1978, he became executive vice president, and in 1995 was promoted to president and CEO. During his 43 years with the company, Aycock has never thought of leaving.

"There are many employees with a lot of longevity at this company," he says. "People enjoy the atmosphere and the freedom to do their jobs. There's no micromanagement.

"John Sr. was such a dependable, quality person," he adds. "You never had to worry about what kind of mood he was going to be in. He was so steady and consistent. I never saw him get upset. He was an inspiring leader."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34





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Brian Cook, chief administration officer and grandson of Cook Sr., loved growing up in the pest management industry. As a child, he would help his grandparents hang pictures on the walls of the company's different offices and organize the filing system.

"As a kid, you think that type of work is the most interesting," he says.



Clockwise from left: Cook emphasized training for sales and tech alike; Cook and John Jr. look over plans for expanding the Cook Museum in Decatur, Ala.; and Cook and his wife, Jo, with company mascot Cookie.

people. My grandfather once told me, 'We are in the people business, not the bug business. We just happen to kill

"But at the time, I didn't know why my grandparents did the work they did, which was because they cared about

bugs.' He was always trying to elevate the profession and give employees the tools and training they needed to be successful. He cared about people, whether they were employees or customers. That was the motivation he had for being in the business as long as he was."

"He put customers first," Aycock says. "He never wanted customers to have a bad experience."

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PHOTOS: BRIAN COOK



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INDUSTRY STALWART

Cook Sr., who was born in 1925 in Athens, Ala., was known for his creative marketing strategies. In the early 1960s, he and Jo were the driving force behind creating the Cookie the Cop mascot and a catchy jingle inspired by a popular 1930s song with the opening phrase “Lookie, Lookie, Lookie, Here Comes Cookie.” In 1981, the company attempted to market a new jingle, but public outcry forced them to reconsider and return to the original, which is a well-recognized tune throughout the Southeast.

Throughout his career, Cook Sr. — who enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during World War II in the South Pacific — served as president of the Alabama Pest Control Association and the National Pest Control

Association (now the National Pest Management Association, or NPMA). In 2001, the NPMA presented him with the President’s Pinnacle Award. That same year, the company won the Better Business Bureau’s National Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics.

Because Cook Jr. was exposed to the business and industry at such a young age, he doesn’t recall his first understanding of his father’s importance to the industry.

“I knew people respected him and looked up to him,” he says. “When he became president of the national association in 1973, as well as when he began giving talks at conventions, I became aware that what he was saying resonated with people. They learned from his perspective and opinions, and quite frequently — even to this day — they tell me how much one of his talks changed their lives and companies.”

Cook Sr. was the first person in the family to attend college, which helped him build the family business. As such, training and education were important to him.

“If someone was going to represent him in the industry, he made sure that person was trained and had the right tools,” Brian says.

Cook still came to work up until about a month before he died in February 2009 from pancreatic cancer. Grandson Brian was 25 years old.

“He saw me working in the business and was excited for me,” Brian says. When Brian eulogized his grandfather at his funeral, people told him he had big shoes to fill, but he says he felt differently.

“I don’t have to fill his shoes,” he says. “I just have to walk in his footsteps. I have the freedom to find my place in this business.” PMP

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'One of the Good Guys'

With his charm, style and sincerity, this Texas PMP worked tirelessly to make the industry more professional.

By Heather Gooch | Managing Editor

Editor's Note: The PMP staff would like to thank Mike Dickens, Champions Pest Control in Spring, Texas, and Debbie Gann and Nancy Shaw for their help tracking down photos for use in the magazine and our upcoming Hall of Fame ceremony.

When Noad Corley (1918-2000) is inducted into the Hall of Fame next month, he'll be listed among many industry friends — including Bill Spitz, Class of 2006.

"At every meeting, Noad stood out," recalls Spitz of Corley's industry heyday from the 1940s to 1990s. "He was among the first to look like a professional businessman instead of just the stereotypical 'bug man.' His suit was always neat,

and he wore a stylish hat. He was a credit to our industry, and I'm proud to say I knew him."

The three sons of another Hall of Famer, Bob Jenkins Sr. (Class of 2005), also have fond memories of Corley, who was president and founder of Corley Pest Control in Dallas. Like the Jenkins family, Corley and his late wife, Frances, were active in both the Texas Pest Control Association (TPCA) and National Pest Management Association (NPMA, known back then as NPCA).

"Noad was the only person to serve as TPCA president on two separate occasions," says Jenkins' oldest son, Bobby, president of ABC Home & Commercial Services in Austin, Texas. "In addition, I have never seen anyone work harder to sell NPMA memberships. No matter who he was talking to, he was trying to communicate the value of NPMA and give a personal testimonial about the value of membership.

"The other thing I always admired was that, even after his terms in leadership had long passed, he continued to participate and contribute to TPCA and NPMA," Bobby continues. "I have always respected his dedication to both organizations, and I found his willingness to continue to stay connected and involved to be inspirational."



The youngest of Bob Jenkins' sons, Dennis, president of ABC Home & Commercial Services in Dallas, says he was always impressed by the Corleys' friendliness and sense of fun. At industry functions, he says, "you could always count on when the music started, Noad and Francis would be out cutting a rug. They were good dancers and fun to watch."

Jenkins' middle son, Raleigh, president of ABC Home & Commercial Services in Houston, keeps it simple: "We loved them both very much."

Hall of Famer Norm Cooper (Class of 1999) was delighted to learn Corley was finally getting inducted: "He did so much for this industry. He was all about getting pest controllers trained on the technical and business sides."

Corley started in the industry as a young man, working for Elo Exterminators in Dallas. When he was drafted into World War II shortly after marrying in December 1943, the Army staff sergeant was stationed in a bunker off the San Francisco coast, translating Morse code for submarines, while Frances worked nearby in the shipyard.

"Mom gave him a quarter a day from her pay, probably enough for cigarettes or a Coke," daughter Debbie Gann recalls. "The rest she socked away, and when

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PMP HALL OF FAME 2015

NAME: Noad Corley

COMPANY: Corley Pest Control

TITLE: President and Founder

YEARS IN PEST MANAGEMENT: 50

CROWNING ACHIEVEMENTS: Creator of the NPCA Bird Control Manual; TPCA President 1954, 1968; NPCA Life Member; Greater Dallas PCA President (two terms); Texas Structural Pest Control Board member; NPCA Board of Directors; TPCA President's Award, NPCA Presidential Award, 1988 ICI Americas Leadership Award, 1993 Zeneca Leadership Award

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The tall, kind, blue-eyed joker, the man with the million one-liners, as granddaughter Amanda Gann lovingly described him, would be humbled yet touched by this recognition by his peers, Debbie Gann says. "He would have loved this honor."

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Daddy got out of the Army, that became the down payment on Corley Pest Control."

The Corleys were in business from 1947 until his 1993 retirement.

"I remember Dad got Mom a really long extension cord for the phone, so she could set it on the windowsill and take pest control appointments over the phone while she was outside hanging the laundry," Gann says with a laugh, noting the backyard would be quieter than the house full of her and siblings James, Nancy and Bobby.

Gann and her husband, Pat, continue in the industry today as co-owners of Gann's Pest & Termite Control in Keller, Texas. Pat Gann had worked for his father-in-law for five years.

"You could say I learned from the best," he says.

CAREER CAPSTONES

While known for his member recruiting, Corley also believed strongly in education and training. He was the creator and driving force behind the NPCA Bird Control Manual. In addition, Corley put the time and work into association leadership, including two terms each as president of the TPCA and Greater Dallas Pest Control Association (GDPCA). He also sat on the Texas Pest Control Board and the NPCA board of directors. In recognition of his work, he was granted lifetime NPCA membership.

Errol Cohen, director of sales and marketing of Bizzy Bees Pest Control, Carrollton, Texas, knew Corley during his later years.

"He was quite the character, yet an excellent pest controller," recalls Cohen, who is a past

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president of TPCA and GDPCA. "He always had humorous stories to tell, and was committed to improving our industry."

Tom Wright, son of Hall of Famer Bud Wright (Class of 2000) and managing director of Pest Pro Academy, Dallas, kept in contact with Corley after the latter's retirement. The pair had lunch together about once a month, and Wright recalls one of Corley's favorite stories.

"When DFW first opened," Wright begins, referencing the 43-year-old Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, "Noad had the bird contract for it. Security was pretty lax back then, and he was usually free to do his work without interference. But one day, while he was working at the control tower, he went to open a door and a SWAT team surrounded him, demanding to



Frances and Noad Corley enjoy a Monte Carlo-themed reception during a 1995 industry conference.

know his clearance and what he was doing there. Boy, was he surprised!"

Spitz, whose wife, Joan, was close to Frances Corley, says he still misses his friend today. He believes the industry had a true treasure in Noad Corley.

"You could always depend on him doing what he'd say he'd do, which is particularly important in association leadership. He was definitely one of the good guys in the industry." PMP

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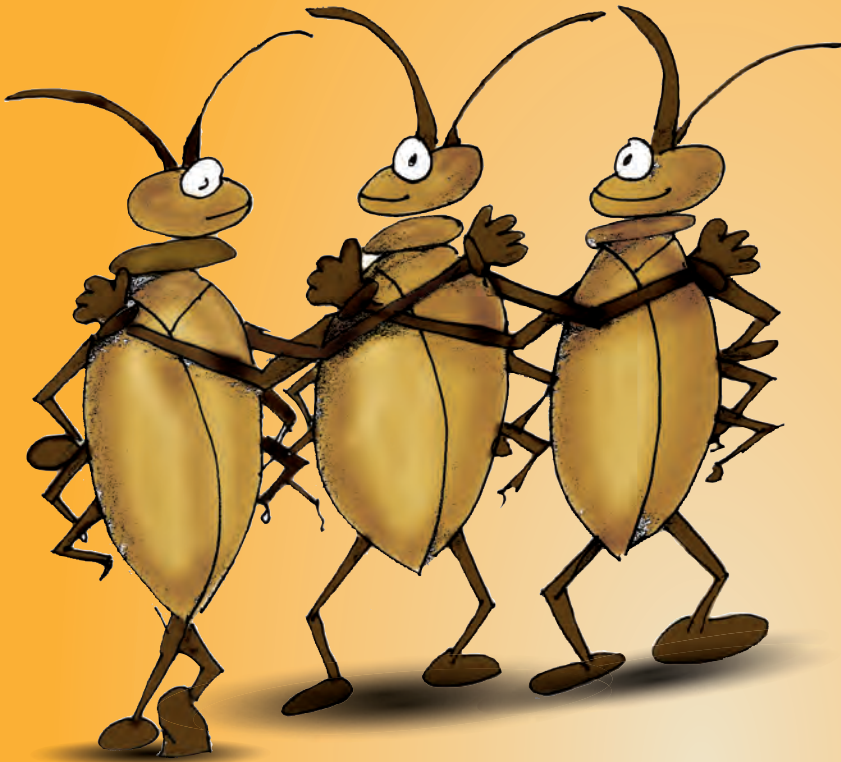


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Of ants and academics

Dr. Laurel Hansen has sculpted a lifetime love of entomology into a lifelong career in academia that benefits the industry she supports.

By Will Nepper | Senior Editor



Dr. Laurel Hansen may actually be an unparalleled U.S. researcher of all things ants. They're more than her favorite pest to study. They also pave the road of her career in academia — from the first entomology course she took as an undergrad all the way to her current research of ant behavior and biology.

"I'm particularly interested in ants infesting structures," Dr. Hansen says. "I also investigate exotic ants that invade the Pacific Northwest."

Dr. Hansen was the first-born daughter, the eldest of four sisters, in a family of six. Her farming family raised dry-land wheat and cattle in Davenport, Wash.

"Our extended family — aunts, uncles and cousins — all lived close by," Dr. Hansen explains. "Ours was

a close family whose lives revolved around the farm and what it offered.

"Growing up on a farm 20 miles from the nearest town allowed me to explore nature, and the freedom to investigate a lot of biological topics," she continues. "Because my father needed help at certain times of the year, I learned to drive all the farm vehicles, plus mow and rake alfalfa hay, herd cattle, bottle-feed orphan sheep and drive our wheat truck from the farm to the grain elevators."

But she was more than just a hardworking junior farmhand. Dr. Hansen also had a role in what was, at the time, largely referred to as the "woman's work," helping her mother with gardening, canning, cooking and raising her younger sisters.

Still, she stresses, "there was time for fun — sleigh riding, swimming in the [Spokane] river, picnics, picking wildflowers, church and Grange activities, and family get-togethers."

Working on the family farm fostered an interest in both plants and animals, and by the time Dr. Hansen reached college age, the groundwork laid by her childhood — and encouragement by teachers along the way — led to her first course in entomology her sophomore year.

"My interests in biology all rest with my instructors," Dr. Hansen explains. This includes her 8th grade science teacher as well as numerous other high school teachers.

"I went to a small high school, where there were only 28 in our graduating class. Twenty of us attended all 12 years together — so we knew one another well. We still get together as often as possible," she adds. "But it was my teachers who brought me down the path to biology, and in college I majored in biology and chemistry."

PAYING IT FORWARD

In a sense, Dr. Hansen spent the early part of her academic career paying forward her solid education, earning a bachelor's of arts teaching degree and certification from Eastern Washington University in 1962 to teach science, social studies and language arts for grades K through 12. After that, Dr. Hansen picked up her master's degree in entomology at Washington State University (WSU). This, in turn, was followed by 13 years teaching at a community college, before taking a year off from coursework and returning again to spend five years conducting research at WSU to earn her Ph.D.

Dr. Hansen still continues on at the community college, having logged a total of 47 years (and counting).

"I've also served as an adjunct at Eastern Washington University and Washington State University to assist with research and graduate students," Dr. Hansen says. "By 1985, my education was always mixed with

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PMP HALL OF FAME 2015

NAME: Laurel D. Hansen, Ph.D.

COMPANY: Spokane Falls Community College

TITLE: Instructor of Biology

YEARS IN ENTOMOLOGY: 30

KEY POSITIONS HELD: Adjunct Faculty, Department of Entomology, Washington State University; Summer Faculty, Department of Education, Eastern Washington University

CROWNING ACHIEVEMENTS: Earning a Ph.D. in entomology, 2006 Crown Leadership Award, Life Achievement Award from the Washington State Pest Management Association

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-Randy Nader, Nader's Pest Raiders



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-Larry Novy, Sterling Pest Control



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44

teaching, between my bachelor's degree and my master's and my doctorate.

"Teaching has always been my first love and since 1985, I've been able to successfully juggle teaching with research opportunities."

PLAYING FAVORITES

At press time, Dr. Hansen is heavily involved in researching structure-



Above, Dr. Hansen with her son, Darren, and daughter, Devorah. Above right, it's common to find the good professor exploring a crawlspace in the name of research.

infesting ants, as well as the exotic ants that invade the Pacific Northwest. She studies ants from all over the world, but admits she does have a favorite: The carpenter ant (*Camponotus* spp.).

The research Dr. Hansen conducts trickles down from the lab to industry practice, particularly where ants are concerned. She's had an insider's look at the industry from decades spent researching pest insects. In that time, she's seen changes, advancements and challenges old and new.

One challenge Dr. Hansen has observed during her career is the infusion of integrated pest management (IPM) into pest management practices.

"Incorporating biology, behavior and ecology into understanding the management of insects will always be important," she explains. "There is more to management than just chemical control."



And she should know, having spent plenty of time teaching chemical control fundamentals.

"After earning my master's degree, I became involved with pesticide education at all levels," Dr. Hansen says. "And after my Ph.D., I became involved with urban pest management because my research topic was ants. I learned quickly about management strategies — and, because of my teaching background, became an effective presenter in the industry."

Anyone who's had the opportunity to attend one of Dr. Hansen's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 48

PHOTOS: DR. LAUREL HANSEN

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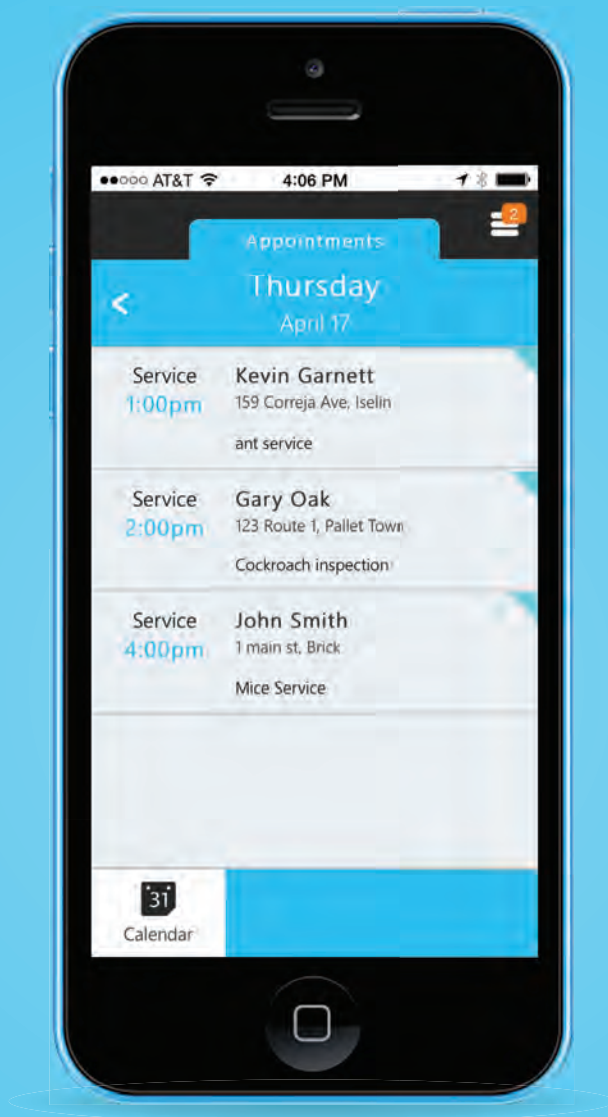
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-David Fredrick, Smithereen Pest Mgt.

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speaking engagements at a pest management industry event knows she can command a classroom with wit, dry humor and is able to convey big concepts with lots of information in a short period of time.

Dr. Hansen counts her study of ants on the island of Guam with university colleague Dr. Ross Miller as one of her major academic life achievements, “but I’ve collected ants from all over,” she says.

That’s singled out as merely one academic achievement, but with a personal history that’s entrenched in research, the tally of achievements is great, formidable and ongoing. Dr. Hansen also points to her influence on other like-minded individuals looking to follow in her footsteps.

“Working with students and helping them pursue careers in the field of teaching at any level or into fields of entomology or medicine is one of the



The teacher as a student: Dr. Hansen with her parents at her 1962 graduation ceremony at Eastern Washington University.

professional accomplishments of which I’m very proud,” Dr. Hansen says.

FAMILY TIES

Although single for the past 20 years, Dr. Hansen notes that her 36-year marriage produced her “greatest gifts” — daughter Devorah, son Darren, two grandchildren and 4 great-grandsons. Dr. Hansen says she’s also close to her three younger sisters, and is the guardian of the youngest, who

is developmentally disabled. Another sister assists Dr. Hansen on her numerous research projects.

Her love of travel dovetails nicely with the research she conducts. “One of my favorite places is Belize, where I’ve traveled a number of times to snorkel in the beautiful warm waters and to investigate the insects — particularly ants — in the jungle,” Dr. Hansen says. “The Mayan ruins there are also fascinating.”

Add to this a love of the theater and performing arts, reading historical fiction, gardening flowers and vegetables, hiking, and a deep involvement in her local church — and you’re looking at an example of a life well-lived, and the rich history of a doctor of ant investigations whose story has several chapters yet to be written. PMP

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PHOTO: DR. LAUREL HANSEN

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— GORDON MORRISON, BAYER

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The educational ringleader

Step right up and be amazed at just how much Dr. Phil Koehler has contributed to the industry during his four-decade tenure at the University of Florida. By Jerry Mix | Editor-at-Large



When a person reaches age 68 and reflects on more than 40 years of highly successful service with one organization, it's logical his thoughts start turning to retirement.

But that's not the case for the University of Florida's (UF's) Dr. Phil Koehler: "I have no plans to retire," he says. "I'm still having a good time, so I'm going to keep going."

Dr. Koehler points out the university has put together a good staff, including Dr. Roberto Pereira that has helped the Florida urban pest management industry. He played a key role creating a professional industry in

Florida by offering various training programs for pest management professionals (PMPs), conducting research that provides the industry with meaningful information and working with students looking to step into industry positions.

CASE IN POINT

Recently, the university hosted the 20th Southeast Pest Management Conference — an event Dr. Koehler helped start and nurture. The educational conference attracted a record-breaking 400 professionals this year.

The large attendance was due in no small part to the marquee names of several University of Florida entomology graduates who participated as presenters. NPMA CEO Bob Rosenberg, a UF graduate, also was invited. Several UF entomology graduates who now represent top-notch manufacturing and supplier organizations attended as well.

The success of the conference helped advance the reputation of the university's entomology and nematology department. Now Dr. Koehler is looking to the future.

"People are concerned about public health from the standpoint of diseases they believe they can get from insects like mosquitoes, ticks and bed bugs," he says. "One reason people choose the pest management

industry instead of doing control work themselves is fear. One of the growth areas will be public health entomology — mosquito and tick control, for example. People should be looking to the industry for control."

Dr. Koehler is focusing his research on ways to help PMPs specialize in "handling things people fear." He believes specialty insect work, such as bee control, is already being done in Florida. UF is also conducting mosquito control research, he says.

FROM SEA TO SUNSHINE STATE

Dr. Koehler, a Pennsylvania native, received a bachelor's of arts degree in biology from North Carolina's Catawba College in 1969 and a doctorate in entomology from Cornell University in 1972. He served as a Lieutenant medical entomologist in the U.S. Navy for three years. When he arrived in Florida in 1975, he was hired as extension entomologist. But he found there was a considerable difference between dealing with public health pest problems in a military setting and helping PMPs better their businesses through training seminars.

"My indoctrination into the industry was with the Florida Pest Control Association (now the Florida Pest Management Association, or FPMA)," he recalls. "We were doing workshops, and all of the training

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52

PMP HALL OF FAME 2015

NAME: Dr. Phillip G. Koehler

COMPANY: University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension, Gainesville, Fla.

TITLE: Professor, Department of Entomology and Nematology

YEARS IN URBAN PEST MANAGEMENT: 40

KEY POSITIONS HELD:

- Professor (1984-present) UF
- Associate Professor (1979-1984) UF
- Assistant Professor (1975-1979) UF
- Medical Entomologist (1972-1975) U.S. Navy

CROWNING ACHIEVEMENTS: Managing director, *Pest Pro*; author of four books on pests; UF Endowed Professor in Structural Pest Control; FPMA Endowed Professor for Urban Pest Management

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was on Saturdays. I'd jump in a car on Friday and drive to one of the association's nine regional meeting sites, conduct eight hours of training, and then drive back to Gainesville to get ready to work on Monday."

His wife, Adele, and sons Tim and Andy were able to still secure some family time with the busy professor, when he was able to focus on developing a teaching and research program on campus. Although neither son followed in

their father's footsteps, they each earned doctorates in engineering.

BUILDING INDUSTRY TRUST

Dr. Koehler is lauded as an inspiring speaker, educator and mentor, but his true passion is pest research. In 1995, he helped raise more than \$600,000 to build the Urban Entomology Building on the UF campus. The facility enabled Dr. Koehler and his students to start conducting the research that focused specifically on the needs of Florida PMPs. His research areas included German cockroaches, ants and fleas, but since then he has gradually moved from flea research to an emphasis on non-repellent soil termiticide testing.

As his research intensified in the late 1990s, Dr. Koehler talked to

At left, a family photo from 2010 with Andy, Adele, Tim in traditional Vietnamese wedding dress, and Thao, Tim's wife. At right, Dr. Koehler inspects a sticky trap.



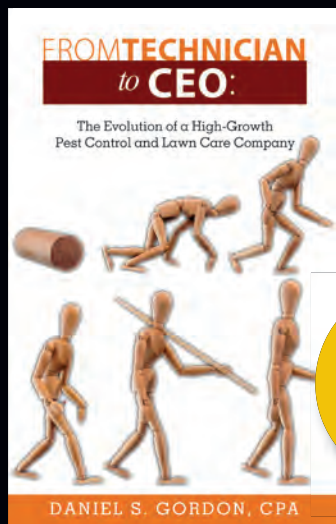
the industry about supporting a significant research program that was pertinent to PMPs in Florida. Recently, his program expanded to include mosquitoes, flies and bed bugs.

"We were in competition with other universities, and we needed to be able to compete," he says. "It was like everything else; if you don't put

CONTINUED ON PAGE 54

PHOTOS: DR. PHIL KOEHLER

From Technician to CEO: The Evolution of a High-Growth Pest Control and Lawn Care Company



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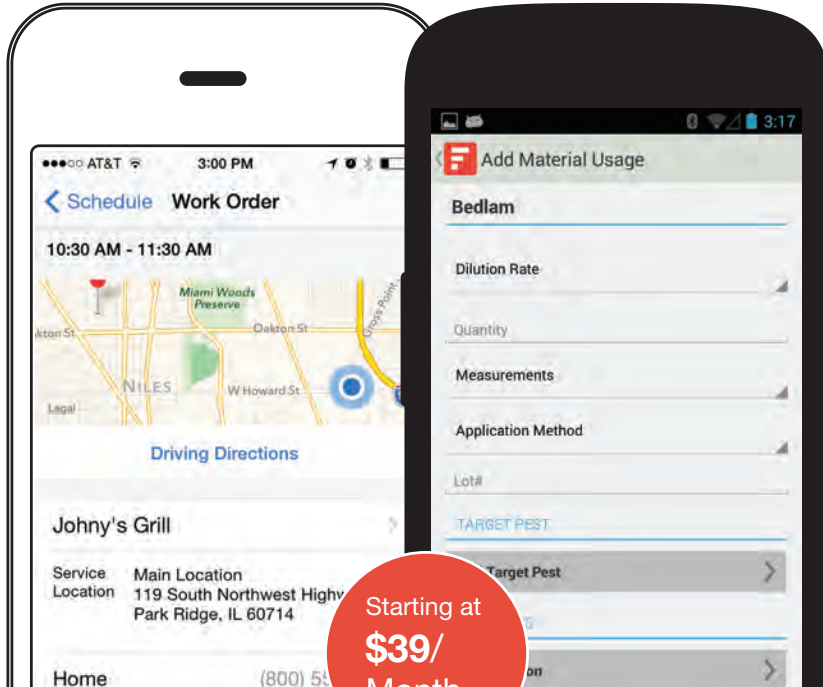
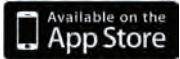
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money into your business, you won't have a business."

In 1999, Dempsey Sapp Sr., founder of Gainesville-based Florida Pest Control and Chemical Co. (and a member of the 2014 class of Hall of Fame) wanted to support the endeavor and challenged his Florida colleagues to follow his lead. Sapp and his wife, Margie, created the Endowed Professorship in Structural Pest Control with a \$1 million donation. Matching funds from the state then added \$750,000.

The FPMA heeded the call as well, raising \$600,000 for the FPMA Endowed Professorship for Urban Pest Management.

University officials advertised the two professorships inside and outside the state, yet they concluded the best person for the job was right under their noses. Dr. Koehler was named to both

positions. He showed his dedication to the industry by investing the interest from the funds into scholarships and projects.

"We felt we could use these funds to support students, as opposed to myself," Dr. Koehler says. "My salary was already being paid, so why not take the interest from these endowments to pay students and support student research, things that are going to help the industry?"

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Seeing the significance of sharing research and education globally, Dr. Koehler and his staff launched UF's entomology department's distance education program in 2000. Through the program, certificates in urban pest management are offered to students all over the world.

Drs. Koehler and Roberto Pereira in front of home base, the Urban Entomology building.



"These are highly motivated students who are working in the industry, and want to learn more," Dr. Koehler says.

His most recent endeavor with his team is *Pest Pro*, a bi-monthly, in-department magazine that publishes research findings.

He shrugs off this latest success with a typical quip: "I figured we were sitting around here with nothing to do, so we should take on a new task." PMP

You can reach MIX, a 2005 PMP Hall of Fame inductee, at jnmix@aol.com.

PHOTO: DR. PHIL KOEHLER

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