



The year 1950 proved to be a major turning point in the direction of Harry's life. First, his marriage to Patricia Ann Middlekauf brought him together in an enduring partnership with a companion who would share his zest for life. And then the newlywed Yoders moved to Ames, Iowa where Harry enrolled as a veterinary student at Iowa State University. Although he had been a rather indifferent student during much of his earlier education, Harry had finally found something to engage his considerable intellectual energies. He achieved an outstanding academic record as a veterinary student, earning a prestigious scholarship and graduating first in his class with a D.V.M. degree in 1954. This was followed by two years of service in the U.S. Army Canine Corps at Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital in Washington D.C., where son Greg (1954) and daughter Janet (1956) were born.

When Harry returned to civilian life, he embarked on a career that combined his lifelong fascination with poultry and his training as a veterinarian. After brief intervals in private practice and working for the Vantress Poultry Farm in Jasper, Georgia, a professionally defining opportunity was presented to him. As a veterinary student at Iowa State, Harry had worked as a helper in several research laboratories and had become intrigued by the work he participated in. He had always been a practical problem-solver at heart, and scientific research offered a chance to solve genuinely challenging and meaningful problems. In 1957, Iowa State invited Harry to return as an assistant professor, a position in which he would also be able to continue his graduate education under the guidance of the widely respected Dr. Melvin Hofstad. A second son, Mike, was born in Ames in 1958 and Harry eventually received his Ph.D. degree in 1963. By that time he had become an acknowledged expert on avian mycoplasmosis and was promoted to associate professor. In 1965, the quality and significance of his work earned recognition with an award for the best research paper published in *Avian Diseases* during the previous year.

The Yoder family embarked on a new adventure in 1965 when Harry accepted a position as a Veterinary Medical Officer at the Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory (SEPRL) in Athens, Georgia, a relatively new facility of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Harry's career in Athens would continue until his retirement in 1988, and he would gradually acquire a reputation as one of the most prominent poultry health professionals of his generation. His research program consistently produced pragmatic solutions to problems of real economic significance for the poultry industry and played a leading role in reducing losses from mycoplasmosis. Among Harry Yoder's many research accomplishments, he demonstrated that initially unapparent vertical transmission was an important aspect of avian mycoplasmosis in some lines of chickens, he developed a procedure for the pre-incubation treatment of hatching eggs to inactivate *Mycoplasma*, he established parameters for accurately interpreting serologic test results for *Mycoplasma* infections, and he developed one of the first effective inactivated *Mycoplasma* vaccines. An extensive portfolio of influential research papers was published to document these achievements. Harry approached his work with patience, persistence, and thoroughness, and he enthusiastically shared his ideas and his time with anyone who needed his help. Because of his expertise, his practical nature, and his accessible personality, Harry Yoder's advice was continually sought by scientists, producers, and regulators from

around the world. He became a widely esteemed leader in his profession and served as an editor of several editions of *Diseases of Poultry* and as president of the American Association of Avian Pathologists in 1976-77. While serving in this role, Harry directed the formation of a new committee dedicated to the History of Avian Medicine and appointed J. Franklin Witter as its first chairperson.

However, for those who knew him, Harry's numerous scientific accomplishments represented only a small fraction of the many ways in which he earned admiration, respect, and affection. He had learned early in life that joy could be found in simple, honest, skillfully performed manual tasks and he passed this lesson along to his children. His legendary sense of humor could be irreverent, but it was often self-deprecating and was never condescending. He extended his devotion to family into his community and his workplace, becoming a surrogate parent to several generations of SEPRL staff members. Although he took intense pride and pleasure in his profession, Harry was also passionate about his wide-ranging personal interests and hobbies, including fishing, woodworking, antiques, vehicles, photography, gardening, travel, and exploring. After moving to Athens, he had immersed himself into the regional culture of the South and became an enthusiastic ambassador for his adopted home. After retirement, Harry would find another fulfilling role as a proud and actively involved grandfather. Dr. Harry W. Yoder, Jr. passed away in 1999. He was kind, funny, hard-working, knowledgeable, and sensible. He loved both people and poultry, and he devoted his life to solving their problems.

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*Biography solicited by the Committee on the History of Avian Medicine, American Association of Avian Pathologists.*

*Additional biographical materials may be available from the AAAP Historical Archives located at Iowa State University. Contact information is as follows:*

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