

## William H. Ridings, 1941-1986

O. J. Dickerson and W. Witcher



William (Bill) H. Ridings, formerly of the Department of Plant Pathology and Physiology, Clemson University, died suddenly February 3, 1986, on his way to a professional meeting.

Professor Ridings was born in Fairmont, West Virginia, October 4, 1941. His undergraduate education was obtained at West Virginia University where he was awarded a bachelor of science degree in 1964. Bill stayed at West Virginia University for graduate work and earned a master of science degree in 1966. His Ph.D.

degree (1970) was from North Carolina State University, where he had worked under Dr. C. N. Norton.

Throughout Dr. Ridings' career, he demonstrated a desire and unusual talent for plant problem diagnostics. As a graduate student he worked as a plant disease diagnostician in the Plant Disease Clinic at North Carolina State. Immediately after finishing graduate studies, Bill joined the Florida Department of Agriculture as a plant pathologist in the Bureau of Plant Pathology where he had a distinguished 10 years of service. While at the Bureau of Plant Pathology, Bill was instrumental in developing the use of a pathotype of *Phytophthora citrophthora* as a commercial control of the stranglervine in citrus. Bill moved to Clemson University in August 1980 where he was manager and plant

pathologist in a Plant Problem Clinic. As in other locations, he quickly earned the respect of his colleagues and his many and varied clientele. If Bill had checked it, it was OK. Through his efforts and abilities a true Plant Problem Clinic at Clemson University was established. He did it by successfully coordinating and nurturing input from agricultural service facilities and several plant science related departments.

In addition to his clinic activities, Bill continued interest and activities in mycoherbicides and had developed a network of observers to alert him to any unusual pathogens of weeds. He directed the research of several graduate students in this area and served on several graduate student advisory committees. He was an active participant in the Southern Regional research projects on biological weed control.

Dr. Ridings had an unusual ability to attract and work with students. His special problems courses in the Plant Problem Clinic became so popular that enrollment had to be restricted. His trademarks became a willingness to assist, a friendly smile, a positive attitude, and very professional work. He was an inspiration to students and peers alike.

Bill was a religious person and lived his religion. He was a member of and leader in the Abundant Life Fellowship Church and was devoted to his family, his church, and his community. Our lives were enriched by having known Bill.

Bill is survived by his wife, Kathleen, and five children, Joseph, Vicki, Russell, Michael, and Kent.