Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
On the Death of Professor Emeritus Louis Berninger

Professor Lou Berninger passed away on February 14, 2019, in Sarasota, Florida at the age of 89. Lou graduated with B.S. and M.S. degrees from Michigan State University and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison before serving as a faculty member for 30 years in the Department of Horticulture. He served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps at Quantico, Virginia before completing his doctorate. He married Miriam Annette Walker in 1951 and they were married for 67 years. They had four children: Mary Lou, Linda, Jo Ann, and Doug, along with seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Lou was very well respected within both academic and professional horticultural circles and was remembered by many for his kindness, his positive attitude, and his long service to the horticultural industry. Lou was recognized by the American Society for Horticultural Science as a fellow. Lou helped establish the Extension committee of the American Society of Horticulture Science and served as the first chairman. He served as the national president of Pi Alpha Xi, an honorary organization in professional horticulture. He published extensively, spoke frequently at conferences, and hosted the Garden Almanac TV show on WHA-TV. Lou developed and coached a statewide Future Farmer's of America floriculture contest that produced a national winner in 1974. He coached flower judging teams for approximately ten years and hosted the national intercollegiate flower judging contest in 1980.

Lou was actively involved in including foreign graduate students in family activities, including hosting two students for a summer and inviting students to holiday activities. This generated many fond memories among his children. Lou was an avid Badgers fan and was a regular presence at Wisconsin football, hockey and basketball events. He had season tickets in the upper deck in the first row on the 45-yard line for Badger football for more than 45 years. Lou and Miriam would travel back to Wisconsin each fall after retirement to attend games, enjoy tailgating with colleagues and friends and staying for the 5th quarter. While working on campus, Lou often stopped at the dairy store at Babcock Hall for his favorite butter pecan ice cream on the way to his car at the end of the day. Lou also enjoyed taking Midvale elementary school students for an ice cream treat at Babcock Hall after touring the horticulture greenhouses.

After he retired, Lou served as head of marketing for the ornamental division of Speedling, Inc. He and his family loved to travel, garden, and spend time with friends. In retirement he served as President of the Sarasota-Manatee chapter of the Wisconsin Alumni Association. He was inducted into to the Hall of Fame of the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation in 2012. Lou was buried with military honors at the Sarasota National Veterans Cemetery. His children remember how his sparkling wit, charming personality and frequent smile made everyone feel welcome. His family thanks the university and all his colleagues for fostering a wonderful and uniquely rewarding working relationship.