Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison  
On the Death of Professor Emerita Ingegerd Keith

Dr. Ingegerd (Inge) Keith, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Comparative Biosciences in the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, passed away on May 15, 2019.

Born on June 14, 1941 in wartime Sweden, Professor Keith earned her undergraduate degree (Zoology, 1968) and master’s degree (Zoology, 1971) from the University of Stockholm. She received her Doctorate in Human Medicine (M.K. degree, 1976) from the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. She developed an interest in neuroendocrine cells in the lung, and the effects of hypoxia while working with Dr. James Will in the Department of Veterinary Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She received her Ph.D. degree in 1980, and briefly continued as a postdoctoral fellow in the Cardiopulmonary Group.

In 1981, Professor Keith became an affiliate faculty member within the Department of Veterinary Science. In 1982, Professor Keith became an Assistant Professor in the Department of Structural and Functional Sciences (now the Department of Comparative Biosciences) within the newly established School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was promoted to Associate Professor in 1987, and Professor in 1996 within the Department of Comparative Biosciences.

Professor Keith’s most important and influential work was in respiratory biology and the physiological roles that neuroendocrine cells perform in the lung. In particular, she examined the response of lung neuroendocrine cells to hypoxia in adult and newborn animals. In addition, she looked at the effects of various toxins on these cells, including nicotine, diesel exhaust, asbestos, and bacterial endotoxins. She was also an active collaborator, and contributed to research involving wildlife, bladder function, prostate biology, and cancer. As a teacher, Professor Keith helped develop the curriculum for the new veterinary school in Veterinary Histology and taught in that class from 1983 until her retirement in 2001.

Professor Keith was particularly active in promoting women in scientific research and academia, and served on the advisory board for the “Women and Science” committee at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1994, she was recognized for her service and was given the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Wisconsin Equity Initiative Award, and the Leadership in Education Award. She was a Facilitator for Women and Science Distance Education Programs from 1998-2001.

Professor Keith was beloved by her many associates and colleagues. Proud of her Swedish heritage, she spent parts of many summers in her family’s cabin adjacent to the King’s Forest Wilderness Area in Sweden. More locally, Professor Keith spent time in a rustic cabin on Chambers Island in Door County, Wisconsin, where she and her family could fish and sail back-and-forth to the mainland. With her love of the wilderness, Professor Keith and her husband, Lloyd, bought a gold claim on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and panned for gold with some success. Professor Keith was a deer hunter who shared her fall hunting adventures with her colleagues, describing how her deer stand was equipped with an extension cord to keep her coffee warm and operate her electric blanket! Her other hobbies included silversmithing, stained glass work, weaving, rock hounding, gardening, and home remodeling/restoration.
Professor Keith is survived by her husband, Lloyd Keith, Emeritus Professor in Wildlife Ecology, her beloved children, and great- and grandchildren.

Memorial Resolution Committee

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