

Member Spotlight: February 2011

Jeri Jewett-Smith 1953 - 2011



Jeri Jewett-Smith, long-time active member of the Brodhead Watershed Association, and President from 2008-2009, passed away at her home in Crescent Lake Estates early Sunday, February 27.

Jeri served on the BWA Board from 2004-2010, and is best remembered for the many people who trace their interest in the BWA to their friendship with Jeri. She inspired numerous students and fellow educators with her passionate interest in the natural world.

Jeri was Director of Environmental Studies at ESU from 2001 to 2010. She had an active scientific

career, authoring and co-authoring numerous publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and mentoring over forty student researchers during her career. She retired in December 2010. One of Jeri's areas of interest was invasive plants in the Brodhead watershed and she was Project Manager of BWA's Invasive Species Management Plan project for three years. During the time many watershed residents learned from Jeri how to better care for their piece of the watershed. Jeri was an inspiring teacher of young and old.

Jeri was born in Dayton Washington and often stated that she spent her first eighteen years trying to get out of Dayton WA and the last forty years trying to get back. She was in the process of making that a reality, purchasing a small piece of property in the foothills of the Blue Mountains outside Dayton and building a micro-cabin for summer visits. A veteran road tripper, Jeri packed up the pets and husband every year to travel America, most often with Dayton, WA as the final destination, but over 33 years of married road tripping she managed to cover most of the lower 48 states. She was intensely interested in environmental conservation, and land stewardship, becoming very involved in the Brodhead Watershed Association, rising to serve as its president in 2008. She injected optimism wherever she applied herself, and that, most of all, will be remembered by those who worked closely with her.

After graduation from Dayton High School in 1971, she attended the University of South Florida, earning B.S. and M.S degrees in Biology. She also married fellow student John S. Smith, from DeLand, FL. Together, they worked several years as research technicians at the

University of South Florida Medical School, and then moved to Texas to pursue doctoral training in biology at The University of Texas at Austin, Marine Science Institute. Jeri specialized in physiological ecology of seagrasses, and upon receipt of her Ph.D. she continued her seagrass studies at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, the University of Tampa, Texas A&M International University, and finally at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania.

