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Dr. Ray Ediger (1936–2026)

Dr. Raymond “Doc” Ediger, devoted husband, father, grandfather, veterinarian, scientist, cattleman, mentor, and community servant, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026, at the age of 90. Born on Jan. 26, 1936, in Bethany, Oregon, he was the son of David and Lucille Cook Ediger. He earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Washington State University in 1961. He remained a proud alumnus throughout his life and was honored with the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine 2023 Alumni Award for Excellence in Practice.



Dr. Ediger’s 64-year career in veterinary medicine began in the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps, where he served at the First U.S. Army Medical Laboratory in NYC and the Fort Detrick Biological Laboratories in Frederick. In 1964, he became director of the Fort Detrick Animal Production Facility. During his 15-year tenure, he transformed the facility into one of the premier animal research centers in the U.S., pioneering procedures for germ-free laboratory animal colonies. He was recognized for the first largescale production of nude athymic mice, which have been extremely valuable in cancer research. His innovations in caging, automatic watering, diet formulation, air handling, facility design, and attention to animals’ psychological well-being established a gold standard in the field.

A Diplomate of the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine, Dr. Ediger authored 33 scientific papers that have been published in 30 languages worldwide, contributed to book chapters in lab animal books, and was the invited speaker at numerous scientific conferences. His 1974 Laboratory Animal Science paper, which identified *Citrobacter freundii* biotype 4820 as the cause of colitis in

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Meetings

Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month in the Garden Room, Elks Lodge, 289 Willowdale Dr., Frederick, MD 21702

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mice, established the animal model used to study Crohn's and irritable bowel diseases in humans.

In 1976, he established the National Institutes of Health Animal Facilities Diagnostic Laboratory in Bethesda. The following year, he joined the Maryland Department of Agriculture as state veterinary epidemiologist. Under his leadership, Maryland was declared Brucellosis-free. He initiated one of the nation's first Johne's disease eradication programs, helped develop the Maryland Scrapie eradication program, established MAPS and standard operating procedures for animal health inspectors, and played a vital role— working with APHIS—in eradicating the first avian influenza outbreak in the Del-Mar-Va region. In 1998, he was named the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Most Outstanding Employee of the Year.

He served on many Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees—among them USAMRIID (29 years), USAMBL, Bionetics, Cambrex, BioWittaker, Southern Research Institute, and Tonix Pharmica—and was active in accreditation inspections for laboratory facilities across the United States. He chaired and taught many professional, collegiate, and academic courses, including serving as clinical instructor for the Virginia-Maryland Regional Veterinary School, on the Veterinary Technician Course at Essex Community College, in Laboratory Animal Science at the Uniformed Services University, in AALAS technician courses at USAMRIID, and in the U.S. Army laboratory animal preceptorship program at Fort Detrick.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Dr. Ediger devoted countless volunteer hours to youth through 4-H and FFA, serving for decades as a public-speaking leader and veterinary-science instructor, judge, and workshop leader for projects in dairy, beef, swine, horses, goats, sheep, rabbits, and poultry. A familiar, steady presence at fairs, weigh-ins, field days, and livestock shows, he taught proper animal care, championed excellence in agriculture, coached students to district, state, and national public speaking victories, and mentored generations of young people— many of whom went on to become veterinarians and agricultural leaders. For his service, he was inducted into 4-H All-Stars and the Frederick County Camp Center Hall of Fame and received numerous honors, including Friend of 4-H, the 4-H Angel, and Friend of the FFA awards— testimony to a lifelong commitment to strengthening agricultural communities.

In 1982, he received the Maryland Governor's Citation for Bravery, the state's highest civilian honor, for risking his life to save a man being gored by a bull— an act reflecting the courage and selflessness that defined him. Among his many professional recognitions, his most cherished was the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the Maryland Veterinary Medical Association in 2012. In 1999, the Western Maryland Veterinary Medical Association established the Dr. Raymond Ediger Excellence in Agriculture Award, presented annually to a deserving high school student.

In 1966, Dr. Ediger met the love of his life, Louise Stull Ediger, and they were married for 48 wonderful years. They shared a lifetime of commitment to volunteer service. Together, they were honored by Maryland's Governor as the 2006 recipients of Maryland's Most Beautiful People Award, and, in 2007, they were the first Marylanders to receive the prestigious national Extension ESP Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Extension Service for volunteer service in the nation. They lived in Utica, Maryland, and owned and operated Green Spring Farm near Thurmont, where for more than 50 years, Dr.

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Ediger raised purebred Shorthorn beef cattle. A lifelong cattleman, he served in leadership roles with the Maryland Cattlemen's Association, the Pennsylvania Shorthorn Association, the Maryland Beef Council, the All Breed Cattle Sale and Jackpot Show to supply high-quality 4-H projects. For his service, he received the Maryland Cattlemen's Top Hand Award (2006), was named a Builder of the Breed by the American Shorthorn Association (2011), and received its Lifetime Achievement Award (2021). In 2017, he and his family were recognized as the Maryland Century Farm Family of the Year. He always kept a large menagerie of animals on the farm, including cattle, goats, horses, donkeys, chickens, peacocks, and more, which brought him great joy.

He was actively involved in civic and community organizations, including the Farm Bureau, the Frederick County Soil Conservation District, the Frederick Kiwanis Club, the Frederick County Humane Society, Ruritan, and the Grange. A faithful member of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Utica, he served as Council President and Sunday School teacher, living out his faith through service.

Dr. Ediger's life was defined not only by professional excellence but by integrity, steady leadership, humility, and an unwavering commitment to helping others. He generously shared his time, talents, medical expertise, and unforgettable stories. A gifted storyteller, he authored "Living, Loving, and Laughing with Animals: The Adventures of a Country Veterinarian" and, most recently, completed a second book, to be published later this year and illustrated with his watercolor paintings. He was also a prolific master gardener, and his garden in Utica delighted visitors. He discovered the Monocacy hop on Green Spring Farm—a genetically distinct and locally adapted hop that is boosting the state's craft brewing industry. Doc had a zest for life, loved music and traveling, and shared many adventures around the world with his daughter.

His legacy reflects a life well-lived, leaving an extraordinary mark on veterinary medicine, the scientific advancements he pioneered, the agricultural community he strengthened, the lives he profoundly touched, and the family he loved dearly. He was predeceased by his wife, Louise Stull Ediger; he is survived by his daughter, Lynnelle Ediger and husband Alexander Kordzaia; grandson, Lexo Kordzaia; sister, Dolores McMurtry; and nieces and nephews, Sue Bourdage, Kim Cornilles, Aaron McMurtry, and Alan Mc-Murtry. The family wishes to thank the incredible medical team at Johns Hopkins, Frederick Health Hospice, Kline House, Catherine Marcoux, and many friends for their exceptional care, compassion, and kindness.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 1 p.m., with Pastor Dahl Drenning officiating, at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Utica, 10621 Old Frederick Road, Thurmont, MD 21788. The family will welcome friends at St. Paul's on Friday, March 6, from 5-7 p.m., and on Saturday, March 7, beginning at 11:00 AM until the start of the service. A reception will follow the service, providing an opportunity for fellowship and the sharing of stories— something Doc would have truly cherished.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a tax-deductible contribution to Green-Spring Foundation, which has established the Dr. Raymond Ediger Scholarship Fund. Contributions can be sent to GreenSpring Foundation, 10521 Old Frederick Road, Frederick, MD 21701, or made online at <https://greenspringmusic.networkforgood.com>.



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Kiwanis Float and Washington's Birthday



Left: In 1995 the City of Frederick celebrated its 250th anniversary. A great parade was held. Featured was an award-winning float built by the Kiwanis club of Frederick!

Yesterday

Items from the files of The Frederick News-Post

100 Years Ago

Feb. 24, 1926 In observance of George Washington's birthday, members of the local Kiwanis Club, at their weekly meeting in the Francis Scott Key Hotel, learned of the interesting and patriotic plans to restore and preserve Wakefield, Washington's birthplace. The speaker was Mrs. Harry Lee Rust, president of the Wakefield National Memorial Association of Washington, D.C. At Wakefield, she said, Washington spent the early years of his life, until he was about 16 years of age. The Association has purchased 70 acres of land at Washington's birthplace and now plans to reconstruct as closely as possible the building in which the great American first saw the light.





BOD Agenda for Feb 3, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

SECRETARY'S REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION UPDATE

KEY CLUBS

BUSINESS

Donation to Kiwanis in Memory of Allen Byrne

Pancake Fundraiser – discussion

Kiwanis Website Fix

Board of Director's Appointment

Wreaths Across America

Frederick Hospital Pediatric Unit

ADJOURNMENT



Our club's Middle School Most-Improved Student Awards Banquet will be held the evening of May 14. Details to follow...



The Capital February/March 2026
KIWANIAN
The Official Publication of Capital District Kiwanis | www.capitaldistrictkiwanis.org

MARCH 4-WARD FOR KIDS AND PEDIATRIC TRAUMA

LEAD WITH PURPOSE AT DISTRICT MIDYEAR

Kiwanis

In this issue:

- Governor's Message
- Executive Director
- Governor-Elect Update
- SLP Updates
- Kiwanis Children's Fund
- Our Firm Foundation
- Service Showcase
- Eye On KI
- Midyear Deadline Approaching

[Click here to read the latest edition of *The Capital Kiwanian*](#)

Upcoming Birthdays!

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