



Edward Arthur Schano

October 9, 1918 – February 16, 2010

Professor Edward Schano grew up in Buffalo, New York, during the great depression. Money was scarce, jobs were difficult to find and government programs such as the WPA and CCC provided work for the unemployed. Nonetheless after graduation from high school in 1937, Ed found work for a few months in 1940 as a salvage clerk, gathering scrap metal in a radiator shop. He next landed a job bucking rivets at Curtiss-Wright Corporation. Before long he was a riveter, then assembler and eventually an experimental mechanic at the Corporation. He worked on a large variety of airplanes including military aircraft such as the B-17 Flying Fortress, B-24 Liberator, and Curtiss P-40 Warhawk, among others. He enrolled at the University of Buffalo and planned to work on aircraft for Curtiss-Wright during summers. But in 1941 the Draft Board required that he work full time on aircraft. He managed to continue his education at the University of Buffalo by enrolling in evening courses that were offered by Millard Fillmore College while continuing to work on aircraft during the day. As World War II broke out, Ed was eager to join the Army Air Force but the Draft Board, likely because of his skill as an aviation mechanic, pressed him to continue his work on aircraft. Ed married Evelyn M. Hackspacher in 1942 and their first child, Edward was born a year later.

By mid-1943 Ed was allowed to join the Army Air Cadet Program, graduating as Navigator in 1944, and subsequently serving as Navigator in bombing missions over Europe. After the war, Ed held the position of Information and Education Officer in the U.S. Air Force at the European Air Depot. Ed was honorably discharged as Captain in 1947. He returned to the U. S. and continued his education at the University of Buffalo, completing his sophomore year. In a decision that started him on the path to his professional career, Ed accepted a job in 1948 with the Kreher Poultry Breeding Farm in Amherst N.Y. In 1949 he transferred to the College of Agriculture at Cornell University where he majored in Poultry. He became a member of the Cornell University Poultry Science Club and served as president of the Club in his senior year. He received a B.S. degree in 1951.

As an undergraduate, Ed Schano was employed part-time by the New York State Poultry Improvement Plan and then worked full time as a Record of Performance (R.O.P.) Inspector from 1951-1952. Ed accepted a position as a technologist in the Department of Poultry Science at Cornell University in the fall of 1952. He received an appointment as Assistant Professor in the Department of Poultry Science in 1953. Following completion of an M.S. Degree at Michigan State University in 1957, he was promoted in 1958 to Associate Professor Poultry Science at Cornell University. Ed was promoted to Professor of Poultry Science in 1978 and retired as Professor Emeritus in 1986.

Ed Schano's charge was to develop an extension program focusing on youth. He developed a marvelous program that used poultry as the 'hook' to attract youngsters. He always emphasized that the program was not designed to teach 'Poultry' but to use poultry science to help kids develop strengths that would serve them well in their adult lives. Ed's educational philosophy was summarized in his own words in the FORWARD of the Cornell University Poultry (4-H) Handbook. Ed wrote: "In New York State, we use poultry as an educational tool to help us develop in our youngsters all of the wonderful ideals of initiative, resourcefulness, competence, and integrity that we as parents, leaders, and teachers feel are so important. Let us hope that as we work to develop the potential of our youngsters we will in part begin to fulfill our own."

Ed vigorously pursued this philosophy by preparing instructional materials and worksheets on a variety of poultry topics for 4-H members, as well as lectures, tapes, and written guidance for adult leaders. He organized 22 Regional Poultry Science Schools across New York State as part of a Teen Leader Program in which youth received training in various aspects of poultry science, public speaking and leadership. The 4-H Agents in each region selected the top candidates as Teen Leaders from their regions and these leaders were offered the opportunity to participate as 4-H Poultry Science Ambassadors at the NYS Fair. These Ambassadors progressed through a variety of positions and leadership roles until the very best of them were selected to participate in a Northeast Poultry judging team, while a few other outstanding Ambassadors were selected for a Career and Education Opportunities Tour to learn more about the poultry industry. Ed's gentle, encouraging touch and his infectious enthusiasm was evident throughout this important program.

Ed's highly successful 4-H Incubation and Embryology Program was designed not only to promote interest in science, but to provide training in English grammar, composition, spelling, and mathematics. By the time of Ed's retirement, approximately 4,000 teachers and 80,000 students annually benefitted from this outstanding educational activity.

Professor Ed Schano was the epitome of what land grant-based extension education has been and should continue to be in the service of public education. He was a master teacher who brought a passion, dedication, and enthusiasm to his youth and adult education projects that was literally infectious. Even if you worked outside of his area, the interactions with Ed made you want somehow be a part of or at least support these educational initiatives. He cared deeply about those he reached with educational materials and experiential exhibits and that caring infused all he touched. He was particularly committed to give young people the information and tools useful for pursuing a happy and fulfilling life. Ed always took the time to ask about what was going on in the life and career of others.

To work in the same department with Ed was a treasure that grew in richness over the years. In Ed's eyes, each new day brought a marvelous new opportunity, a gift that should be cherished and enjoyed. When Ed was in a meeting, even his presence lighted the room and no topic, no matter how challenging could dampen the air of joy. In a specific example, Ed was a part of a meeting seeking solutions for fiscally challenging changes at Cornell where the economics of some educational resources were impacted. Ed had seen it all in his prior life's experiences growing up in tough times and knowing how to be both resilient and resourceful. While he was a strong advocate for those to be educated, he was equally a sympathetic partner toward those seeking the economic solutions. Since Ed cared deeply about all things, he was equally effective as a listener as he was as an outstanding educator, and was able to understand and articulate different points of view. Even through these tough fiscal times, people left the meeting feeling uplifted and indeed you had been, because of Ed's presence and active engagement in the discussion. Whether through spoken words or something beyond that, Ed helped to make us all better people and better Cornell faculty members.

Ed Schano was an excellent athlete who played high school football and was a member of an undefeated team that in 1936 won the Harvard Cup as the City of Buffalo champions. Ed also was a member of the straight and 4-oared crews that both won gold medals at the U.S. Rowing Association Championships in 1938 and 1939 and gold medals in the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta in 1938, 1939 and 1940. As an adult Ed played squash and tennis, among other sports and enjoyed camping with his family. He liked to hunt and fish. In fact, Ed loved the fellowship of his associates and the challenge of catching Walleyes to the extent that he continued to participate in the bi-annual fishing excursions of the departmental poultry group to Bob's Lake in Ontario, Canada - even after it became physically challenging for him to do so.

Ed Schano and his four children suffered the untimely loss of Evelyn to cancer after 22 years of marriage. Ed married Mary Anna (Benedict) Perry and her eight children in 1967. Three children were born in subsequent years. At one point during his career at Cornell University, Ed recalled that he was asked what came first: "Is it that my work as a Youth Specialist using Poultry Science as an educational tool has prepared me for life as the father of 10 boys and 5 girls, or did my experience as a father prepare me to be a youth specialist?" Ed's reply - "One thing for sure, I've got to like kids." Ed was a man of deep faith and truly lived it every day of his life.

Ed is survived by his wife Mary and 14 children including Thomas Perry, Eric Schano, David Perry, Richard Perry, Deborah Henry, Loraine George, Joseph Perry, William Perry, Mary Anne Flowers, Robert Perry, Margaret Wooley, Michael Schano, Catherine Llana, and Andrew Schano. Ed was predeceased by his oldest son, Edward Spencer Schano.

Richard E. Austic, chair; Rodney R. Dietert, Robert B. Gravani