



Benjamin Mortimer Stout, III

December 21, 1957 - August 3, 2018

Benjamin Mortimer Stout III, 60, passed away August 3, 2018, at his home in Wheeling, WV, surrounded by his family.

Ben was a life-long resident of West Virginia born in Morgantown in 1957 to Ann Louise Savage Stout and the late Benjamin Mortimer Stout Jr., MD. Ben was a 17th generation immigrant descended from Richard Stout (c. 1615-1705, Nottinghamshire, England), who fled religious persecution, and Penelope van Princis Stout (c. 1622-1732, Amsterdam). Penelope was shipwrecked off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, maimed and left for dead, then nursed back to life by "her Indian father" and gifted to Dutch settlers at New Amsterdam, NJ. There she had 13 children, including a Benjamin. In the late 1700's some of Ben's ancestors migrated to the Hacker's Creek Settlement on the frontier of Western Virginia.

Ben graduated from Morgantown High School (1975), West Virginia University (BS in Agriculture and Forestry, 1980), and Tennessee Tech University (MS in Biology, 1982). Prior to obtaining his PhD in Biology from Virginia Tech (1990), Ben taught at Southern West Virginia Community College in Williamson and Logan. He would later return to those communities to testify in Federal Court on behalf of citizens arguing that valley fills stemming from mountaintop removal mining operations were a violation of the Clean Water Act. That 1999 testimony, a life changing experience for Ben, was followed by presentations on "The Ecological Consequences of Valley Fills" at national scientific meetings and for over 50 audiences ranging from grass-roots organizations to

major universities.

Ben conducted applied research that helped precipitate the creation of the Nation's 500th National Wildlife Refuge in Canaan Valley, WV, did a study of coal slurry impacts on well water that led to 500 West Virginia families being connected to a municipal water supply at Williamson, and performed studies of longwall mining impacts on streams in northern West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania. His environmental research, scientific publications, and testimony led to policy changes at the national level.

Ben was named Environmental Steward by the North American Benthological Society in 2007. In 2013 he received the "Don Gasper Science in the Public Interests Award" by the West Virginia Environmental Council, was named one of 25 "Visionaries" by Appalachian Voices, and was inducted in the first class of Fellows of the Society of Freshwater Science in 2017. Ben was a Professor of Biology at Wheeling Jesuit University where he taught and conducted research for 26 years. Ben's career-long goal had been to "bring the voice of science to the people."

Ben was active in many community and environmental projects including working with the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition and the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. He was proud of his West Virginia roots. He especially enjoyed camping, hunting and fishing in the West Virginia mountains and at the Sinks of Gandy.

Ben is survived by his mother, Ann Savage Stout Walters and step-father, Richard Walters of Morgantown, three sons, Benjamin IV of Charlotte, NC, Robert of Ashville, NC, and PFC 1st Class William of Clover, SC, and their mother Kathy Kyle Stout of Clover, SC. Also surviving are brothers James Stout of Morgantown and Robert Stout and wife Jodie of Saltsburg, PA, sister Nancy Stout of Morgantown, stepbrothers Craig Walters and wife Brenda of Reedsville, WV and Marc Walters of Buckhannon, WV, and stepsister Beth Walters of Raleigh, NC.

He was preceded in death by his father, Dr. Benjamin M. Stout, Jr.

The family is honoring Ben's wishes for no funeral service; a celebration of life

will be held at a later date.

Tribute Wall

AL

“ I am very thankful I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Stout. His excitement and passion for environmental work was nothing more than extraordinary. I appreciate the time he took speaking to me, reminiscing about being an alumni to Virginia Tech and showing me his research laboratory. It was always a pleasure and I will never forget lessons taught. Rest in peace, you will always be remembered, and go HOKIES.

Allyson - August 24, 2018 at 03:51 PM



“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Tony Winston - August 20, 2018 at 05:20 PM

BN

Mr. Big

Barnes L Nugent - April 18, 2024 at 01:10 PM

WF

“ Ben an I met at WJU. When I told Ben I was new to fly fishing and I had just purchased equipment through the course of conversation, we were tying knots by the trunk of my car in minutes. He was so passionate about fly fishing and the detail to be great. Earlier this past year he said instead of trying to catch fish, he wanted to focus on specific species of fish, that he wanted to specialize his craft and get better. That desire and passion will stay with me. He taught me a lot about fishing and had a few life lessons in there as well. May you rest in peace my friend, you will be missed and you will be remembered.

Will Ferguson - August 07, 2018 at 04:53 PM

TR

“ I'm a scientist today, and one of the people who inspired me to choose this path was Dr. Stout. I have such fond memories of his freshman ecology lab at WJU. Little did we realize that by suiting up in our boots or waders and making our way through the creek or the woods, we were learning not only about our environment, but also about the importance of research and the scientific method. He always taught us to push ourselves in our data collection efforts -- I can still hear him telling us to "get some more numbers!" in his good-natured way. I feel lucky to have learned from Dr. Stout, and I know I'm not the only one who feels that way. Rest in Peace, Dr. Stout!

Tara Richards - August 06, 2018 at 11:44 PM

MJ

“ Dr. Ben Stout was a wonderful human being, and we were all very blessed at WJU to have him as a member of our community. Genuinely one of the sweetest and most kind people that I ever had the pleasure of meeting. Dr. Stout was always someone that I spoke about with abundant passion when reflecting and sharing about my time and the people I met at WJU. Because he really embodied what it means to be a man for, and with others. He approached his work with such passion, a passion that he shared and used to help the communities in his home state. Dr. Stout was also a phenomenal listener, and always provided an overwhelming sense of comfort when you were around him. Really sad to hear of his passing, and his presence will be heavily missed on the WJU campus. I know that he did what he loved, and he made a tremendously positive impact on the people, and world around him. RIP Dr. Ben Stout.

Michael Jablonski - August 06, 2018 at 06:23 PM

CB

“ Ben was one of the professors I remember fondly as a student. Passionate about his beliefs and willing to back them up with action. He taught me to think outside the box; he had a lasting impact on my students, including myself. He will be missed sorely.

Christopher Bourque - August 06, 2018 at 10:44 AM

LR

“ Both Ben and I arrived at Wheeling Jesuit U. from Virginia Tech. Ben started at WJU in 1990, and I came later in 1995. Ben was open to collaboration with the WJU NASA Classroom of the Future on biology and sustainability educational projects for K-12, and his expertise was greatly valued by many of us at the WJU/CET. What I am most thank-full to Ben for, however, is his role as a mentor for my son, John. When John transferred from Xavier to WJU, he arrived as a second semester sophomore, which can be a difficult transition. Ben scooped up John right away and got him engaged in his water quality research projects. John participated with Ben's team of students in presenting to the WV legislature about their research. John learned a lot about the impact environmental research can have on public policy and communities. Ben made the biology degree go far beyond book learning. It was also great that Ben took his students into the back roads of West Virginia--it wasn't ever just about the data. The work addressed the impact that compromised water quality has on human communities and wildlife habitats. Dr. Ben Stout's legacy lives on through his students, publications, and audiences throughout WV and Appalachia who valued his voice and continue his work. What a pleasure and honor it was to cross paths with this wise soul.

Laurie Ruberg - August 05, 2018 at 01:02 PM

AR

“ Ben did heroic work in a heartfelt, humbling manner that touched so many lives. We are so grateful for all he did to protect the waters and people of West Virginia and beyond. Our condolences to the Stout family for this great loss of a great man.
Angie Rosser & WV Rivers Coalition

Angie Rosser - August 04, 2018 at 03:31 PM

MM

“ Ben and Kathy and the boys were my neighbors when I lived in Bethlehem. Ben’s life and abiding interests in the natural world were inspiring. I extend my deepest condolences to the entire family.

Maria McKelvey - August 04, 2018 at 01:07 PM

LD

“ I was very sad to hear of Ben’s passing. Although I haven’t seen Ben for many years, we were friends in high school and I have fond (and fun memories) of our "gang" hanging out together. Our "gang" being a group of MHS band friends. We had great times together in and out of band practice. Ben was the first to have a Genesis album before Phil Collins and Genesis made their entry on to the American music scene. I believe his mom had traveled to England and brought this back to him as a gift. We were in awe of that album and thought Ben was such a trend setter. My husband, much later, knew Ben through the WV Conservation Agency and his work with streams. Despite the fact that our memories of Ben are from very different times in his life, we agree that Ben was an intelligent, interesting and kind man. He will surely be greatly missed by many. I am praying for comfort for you and your family. - Lori Fairchild Durst

Lori Durst - August 04, 2018 at 12:45 PM

VN

“ Deepest sympathy to your family on the loss of Ben. He will be missed by many. I had the pleasure of talking with him several times and being out in the field with him on a couple of occasions. His dedication in his work was quite an inspiration. Ben's passing is a loss to us all.

Vickie Nutter - August 04, 2018 at 09:16 AM