



In Praise of Dr. John Olive, Ecology Professor

Thomas J. Hall

As a pre-med student in 1970, I was completely blown away by the first Earth Day. Until that time I had been a biology major while taking pre-requisite courses for medical school. I began focusing more on environmental issues and courses under the direction of my advisor, Professor John Olive, PhD. He inspired me to study freshwater biology and to do field work, including taking samples to gauge the quality of the Cuyahoga River from its start to its end in Cleveland, where it had caught fire. I changed my major to ecology my junior year and planned to pursue an environmental work career if I did not gain entry into medical school. In my senior year, when I failed to gain

medical school admission, he helped me chart a new course to do graduate work in zoology at The Ohio State University and encouraged me to spend the summer of 1972 at their freshwater field station in Put-in-Bay, Ohio, Stone Laboratory.

The ten weeks I spent at Stone Lab probably changed my life. I did very well academically and loved every minute I spent there. They focus on education, field work, and research and have some of the finest faculty from schools all over Ohio. During the 1972–73 school year, I continued my work and aimed for a PhD in some type of environmental studies while once again applying to medical schools. To my surprise, I was a late acceptance to the Ohio State College of Medicine in July. I accepted their offer and went on to a long career in emergency medicine. I also served as a medical director for Anthem Insurance. Although my path changed, I never forgot Dr. Olive and Stone Lab and all they did for me. I have been a supporter of Stone Lab for many years and since my retirement have taken the mantle of president of their support group, the Friends of Stone Laboratory. I feel a deep debt of gratitude to my alma mater, The University of Akron, but especially to Dr. Olive, who had such a great influence on me and countless other students. Thank you for allowing me to tell my tale.