



Leo R. Beard

LEO R. BEARD

1917–2009

Elected in 1975

“Leadership in statistical applications and system analyses in hydrologic design and operation.”

BY JOSEPH F. MALINA JR. AND RANDALL J. CHARENEAU
SUBMITTED BY THE NAE HOME SECRETARY

LEO ROY BEARD, civil engineering professor emeritus, died in Austin, Texas, on March 21, 2009, at the age of 91.

He was born in West Baden, Indiana, on April 6, 1917. His family moved to San Gabriel, California, in 1922, where he grew up with five siblings. He attended parochial schools, Alhambra High School, Pasadena Junior College, and California Institute of Technology, from which he graduated with a BS in civil engineering in 1939. Also that year he married Marian Jeanette Wagar, with whom he had three children.

Roy Beard had an illustrious career with the US Army Corps of Engineers from 1939 to 1972, and retired as founding director of the Corps’s Hydrologic Engineering Center in Davis, California. He was known for his pioneering work on the application of statistics to hydrologic engineering. After his retirement he joined the University of Texas at Austin as lecturer and was appointed professor of civil engineering in 1976. He served as director of the Center for Research in Water Resources from 1972 until his retirement from UT in 1981; he was designated professor emeritus of civil engineering on

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September 1, 1987. He subsequently joined the engineering consulting firm of Espey Huston and Associates.

Professor Beard lectured at universities and professional organizations throughout the world. He was a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley and Utah State University and lectured at the University of California, Davis. He was a member of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), International Association of Hydrologic Sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and International Water Resources Association; a fellow and honorary member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE); and honorary member of the American Waterworks Association. He served as chair of the ASCE Water Resources Planning and Management Division, president of the AGU Section of Hydrology, editor in chief of *Water International*, and managing editor of the *International Journal of Hydrology*.

His many contributions to civil engineering were recognized by a number of important awards and designations. In 1975 he was elected to the National Academy of Engineering. In 2001 he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the ASCE Environmental and Water Resources Institute for "a lifelong and eminent contribution to the environment and water resources engineering disciplines through practice, research, and public service." He was designated an honorary diplomate of the American Academy of Water Resources Engineers in 2005, and in 2007 he received the ASCE Ven Te Chow Award "for advancing knowledge in hydrologic engineering in systems techniques for reservoir regulation, statistical methods for streamflow frequency analysis, flood hydrograph computation, and the development of computer based methods for hydrologic computations."

Marian died in 1973, and in 1974 Roy married Marjorie Pierce Wood of Austin. He is survived by her; his sister Margaret (Peggy) Nougier of Laguna Beach; his daughter Patricia Huntzicker of Portland, Oregon; his son Thomas Beard of Reno, Nevada; and his son James Beard of Hurricane, Utah; by Marjorie's daughters Patricia Fowler and Ann Bonner of Richland Springs, Texas, Kay DeVaux of Hot Springs,

Arkansas, and son Thomas Wood of Austin, as well as 22 of his and Marj's grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

Professor Beard said:

Don't cry for me. There could hardly be a better life than that which mine has been. Starting with wonderful parents and three older siblings (later two younger siblings), I have been blessed with an abundant and happy life, including two wonderful marriages, three children of my own, four step-children, and so many friends, including professional associates throughout the world. The world has been full of good for me. My cup runneth over a thousandfold!