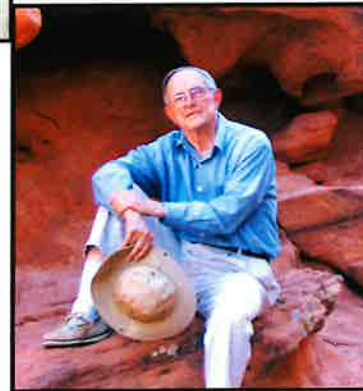


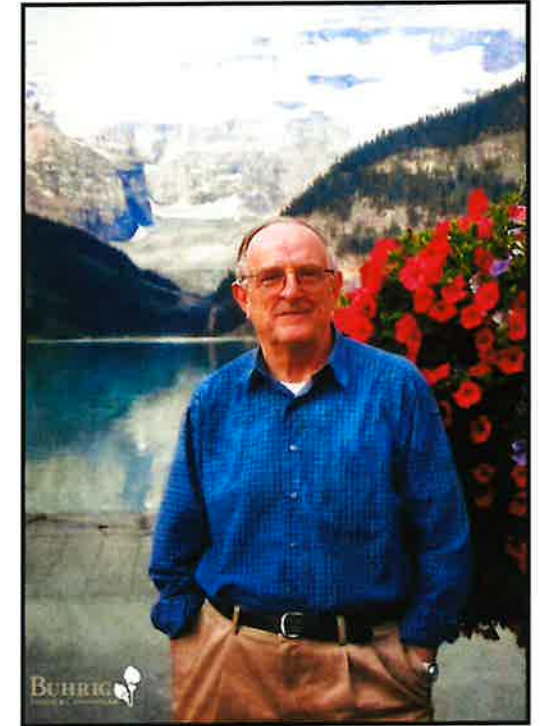


The moving finger writes; and,  
 having writ, moves on: nor all  
 thy piety nor wit shall lure it  
 back to cancel half a line, Nor all  
 thy tears wash out a word of it.

~ Omar Khayyam



*In Loving Memory*



**Henry Albert Taitt**  
 September 29, 1933 ~ June 17, 2024





## Henry Albert Taitt

Henry Albert Taitt, age 90, died peacefully in his sleep on June 17, 2024 in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. He spent most of his adult life in Charleston, Illinois, where he and his wife taught at Eastern Illinois University, raised their children, were active in the community, and enjoyed many decades of active retirement.

Henry was born at home in Cambridge, Maryland on September 29, 1933 to Ann Cook Taitt and Henry William Taitt. He was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, Nancy Paul Taitt, his brother Robert Edgar Taitt and his sister Jane Marie Taitt Galla. Henry and Nancy were married in Cambridge, MD on January 1, 1959. He is survived by his sister-in-law Carolyn Taitt of Sierra Vista, Arizona, sister-in-law Julia Brown of Towson, Maryland, daughter Katharine Taitt Ireland (Randy) of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, daughter Jennifer Taitt Ross (Mark) of Houston, Texas, and son Joseph Edward Taitt (Yubo) of San Jose, California. He was a loving and attentive grandfather, survived by Kelsey Langan (Devin), Jessica Hoff (Matt), Megan Helsley (Ben), Larry Ross (Mariana) and Henry Z. Taitt. He is also survived by two great-grandchildren: Chloe Langan and Ryan Hoff.

Henry loved to learn and his passion in life was teaching. He earned a BS in physics from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College), a MS in Education Administration from the University of Maryland, a MS in Physics from the University of Delaware, a MS in Astronomy and a PhD in Science Education from the University of Illinois. Most of his teaching years were at Eastern Illinois University in the Physics and Education departments, but one of his favorite assignments was a year teaching high school physics on a US Army base in Heidelberg, Germany. He and Nancy traveled almost every weekend during that year, visiting many European cities, including Moscow. In the summer of 1962, he worked for Goddard Space Center (NASA) in Greenbelt, Maryland. He enjoyed the work and the trips down to Florida to attend rocket launches, but soon returned to teaching because "it was better for family life".

Henry loved hosting "Camp Taitt" with his grandchildren in Charleston, where they would take hikes in his wooded property, build bridges across the creek, play in the treehouse and test out the latest rope swing. When it was too hot outside, his extensive model train layout in the cool basement was a challenging diversion. Henry's huge library upstairs was another child magnet with plenty of books, comfortable reading nooks, stuffed animals, chess sets and interesting knick-knacks from his world travels. His favorite question to them was "What do you see yourself doing in five years?" followed by "What is your plan for accomplishing that?"

In 1965 Henry and Nancy moved to Illinois, first living in Mattoon and then Charleston. In 1973 their house caught fire and was completely destroyed because the fire company wasn't allowed to fight a fire 50 feet outside city limits. They loved their country property and decided to rebuild on the same site.

Henry's community service activities included being a Cadettes (middle school) Girl Scout leader (with wife Nancy as co-leader), where his Boy Scout experience was likely a heavy influence as the girls canoed, hiked, camped, tied knots, sailed, learned to build fires in the rain, etc. and did little to no crafts.

In the summer Henry taught tennis lessons for the town's rec department, created a youth team tennis league and created a variety of county tennis tournaments, including ones for novice players who had never won tournaments before. He was skilled in motivating youth. He also conducted various science and model rocket workshops for kids through EIU in the summer.

In 1978 Henry bought a Tandy microcomputer for his children, as he felt microcomputers were going to have a significant impact on education. This led to hosting children's computer programming classes in his home on the weekends, which led to creating CREATIVE Programming which established after-school computer centers in many Midwestern school districts and major science museums in Chicago, Boston, Minneapolis and Miami. In 1982 his program was featured in an educational supplement of the Chicago Tribune.

After selling his company he returned to EIU in 1988, this time teaching in the Education department, where he could influence students planning to become science teachers and teach them how to make science fun and understandable by using a hands-on approach. During this period he developed the idea of Science Triathlons, giving students from area schools a chance to compete against each other in unique challenges. He taught many off-campus courses and workshops for teachers, all about innovative ways to teach science to grades K-12. After retiring from EIU in 1999, Henry and his wife traveled the world, taking many cruises and visiting their children and grandchildren.

He enjoyed reading, working in his yard, changing his model railroad layout, watching football on TV and spending time with friends. Henry will be remembered as a true gentleman, always polite, courteous and gentle. He was optimistic, innovative and honest, had an inquisitive mind, enjoyed debating, and often employed the Socratic Method with friends and family. Through his teaching of future teachers, his educational impact reached far and wide. He will be missed by many.

Memorials in his honor may be made to the Henry A. Taitt Physics Scholarship at Eastern Illinois University.

