

Department of Mineral Resources

Lynn D. Helms – Director

North Dakota Industrial Commission

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NEWS RELEASE

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Julie LeFever Posthumously Receives Award

HOUSTON, TEXAS- Former Wilson M. Laird Core and Sample Library manager Julie LeFever was honored Sunday by the American Association of Professional Geologists (AAPG) with the Robert R. Berg Outstanding Research Award. LeFever passed away in December of 2016 after a long illness. Her brother and sister accepted the award on her behalf. The Robert R. Berg Outstanding Research Award is given in recognition of a singular achievement in petroleum geoscience research.

“Julie was so thrilled to learn in November that she had won the award,” explains State Geologist Ed Murphy. “After more than three decades of dedication to researching geology in the state, I think she is truly deserving of the award. Julie’s early work on the Bakken formation was the foundation for many companies looking to produce oil in North Dakota.”

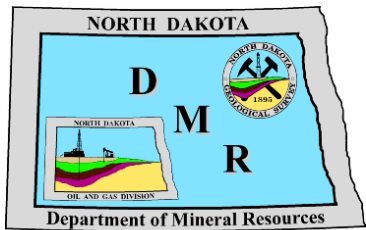
In 1989, Julie became manager of the Wilson M. Laird Core and Sample Library in addition to her subsurface geologist duties.

In 1990, Julie authored her first paper on the Bakken Formation (Mississippian/Devonian). She would go on to author or co-author more than 50 Bakken papers, earning her the affectionate nickname of “Miss Bakken” among those working in the Williston Basin.

Julie authored more than 150 papers, articles, posters, maps, etc. on the Paleozoic and Mesozoic rocks in the Williston Basin. Twenty of those were collaborations with her husband Rich and in later years more than two dozen with Stephan H. Nordeng. Although she made a significant contribution to the literature on the Williston Basin and the Bakken Formation in particular, it was her readiness to share her wealth of knowledge, much of it unpublished, with others which set her apart from most researchers. Countless industry geologists, professors, and graduate students benefited from Julie’s spontaneous, one-on-one core workshops in the Wilson M. Laird Core and Sample Library.

“My first experience with Julie was while I was working with industry,” recalls Department of Mineral Resources Director, Lynn Helms. “She was already considered one of the experts on the Bakken, but she was also extremely knowledgeable on the Spearfish. It was Julie who helped with our research on the Spearfish. That work, led to the South Westhope Unit.”

As recognition of her valuable service, one of the core laboratories in the recently expanded Wilson M. Laird Core and Sample Library was named in her honor during the building dedication on September 26, 2016. During that ceremony, Julie heard from industry and academia how valuable her contribution had been to them.



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“As Director I was not surprised to learn that Julie won this award. She was an incredibly dedicated employee. She put in whatever hours necessary to promote the oil and gas resources of the state,” says Helms. “Her reputation and the core library are so intertwined. The recent expansion of the core library is in large part a result of that. There is a tremendous amount of respect from the Legislature and from industry for the work that went on there. Julie’s contributions to the state will live on through her work and she will truly be missed.”

Julie will be remembered for her dedication to students, faculty and industry. She was always eager to answer questions and share her love of geology.

This is the second major award that LeFever received from the AAPG. The other AAPG award was for one of her publications that won the John D. Haun Landmark Publication Award in 2015.

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