

**DAC CROSSLEY PUBLISHES HIS FIRST NOVEL** - Dr. Dac Crossley, Jr. (*soilmite@earthlink.net*), Georgia Museum of Natural History, University of Georgia, Athens, GA, U.S.A., known for his work on soil mites, has published his first novel, "Guns Across the Rio: A Texas Ranger in Old Mexico." The book tells of a revolution that swept through Mexico to the United States, where a small company of Texas Rangers stands between ruthless Mexican raiders and the farms, ranches and villages of South Texas. In the story, Ranger Nacho Ybarra carries the fight across the border and confronts the famous revolutionary Pancho Villa. The 274-page paperback has received excellent reviews and is available from Amazon.com for \$14.50.

**OVER \$6,000 DONATED BY INDIRA PUBLISHING HOUSE TO LIBRARY OF THE NATIONAL AGRONOMIC INSTITUTE OF TUNISIA (INAT)** - University and institutional libraries worldwide are routinely strapped for funds and often unable to purchase needed journals and textbooks. While entomology, nematology, parasitology, zoology and other established disciplines have shown some strength in acquiring library grants, acarology has largely failed to secure similar support, with the expected adverse impact on research. To remedy this problem, Indira Publishing House recently donated several acarology texts plus the last five years of the International Journal of Acarology, a gift worth over \$6,000, to Tunisia's INAT library, much to the delight of Dr. Kaouthar Grissa Lebdi, INAT Dean Dr. Fethi Lebdi, and IRESA President Dr. Abdelaziz Mougou.

**RETIREMENTS** - (1) Dr. Gerd Weigmann (*weigmann@zedat.fu-berlin.de*), Institute for Zoology, Freie Universität Berlin, Koenigin Luise Str. 1-3, D-14195 Berlin, Germany, retired in 2007. However, he will continue to work on soil mites and would appreciate receiving reprints. (2) Dr. Terry A. Stasney (*tstasny@aol.com*), Division of Plant and Soil Sciences, West Virginia University, PO Box 6108, Morgantown, WV, USA, has retired, effective 31 August 2007. (3) Dr. James Amrine, Jr. (*jamrine@wvu.edu*), Division of Plant and Soil Sciences, West Virginia University, PO Box 6108, Morgantown, WV, USA, will retire, effective 30 June 2008.

**COMMENTS ON DR. DONALD DE LEON** - IJA readers will recall the article, "Donald De Leon (1902-1966): a tribute on the fortieth anniversary of his death," by Vikram Prasad (IJA 33(2): 181-184). Dr. Evert E. Lindquist (*lindquiste@agr.gc.ca*) of Ottawa, Canada, recently sent the following comments on this work:

"Your tribute to Donald De Leon was both interesting and well presented. Donald seemed both an enigmatic and intriguing colleague, and there is no doubt that much is left, either unsaid or unknown, about him. Shortly after my accepting a position here with Agriculture Canada in Ottawa, I initiated an exchange of correspondence with him, which led to a sharing of thoughts and loans of specimens, and became very special and fruitful to us both. This was only during a 4-year period, 1962-65, before his untimely death. Our exchanges had become increasingly collegial, and I had looked forward to meeting him 'on his own turf,' so to speak. I had no idea of his age, or that cancer took him so abruptly. I must go back to Martin Muma's 1967 obituary, to fill in, perhaps, some details. I was amazed to read that his M.Sc. was from the University of California (presumably Berkeley?), the alma mater for all of my degrees and training, although during a much later era. I wonder who his mentors were there. And who they were at Cornell.

His last days at the Mountain Home Veterans Hospital may indicate he was a veteran, although his employment in the U.S. Foreign Aid Program in the Philippines may have sufficed for him to be cared for there. And, I wonder, what type of cancer took him?

I have a gentle disagreement with your article, in stating that his descriptions of new species were brief and that his figures 'lack the details' that we are accustomed to seeing today. Yes, they were overly brief, but at that time his figures were actually quite well done, and at least as good as or better than many of the illustrations presented in papers by the then-leading specialists of the families Phytoseiidae and Tenuipalpidae. A problem with his figures was that they were much too reduced in publication. Perhaps that was to reduce costs, which he seemed to have to absorb personally. I have a couple of his hand-drafted inked figures, with notes, that are quite detailed - they were never published, but provide a perspective of the dimensions of his original illustrations.

Even the photo of Donald shows a suspicious nature, and seems wonderfully well chosen to depict this enigmatic man. Congratulations."

Dr. Lindquist wrote further: "As for the original figures I have from Donald De Leon, they are not phytoseiids or tenuipalps. They are two plates, one of *Zygozeius* (now placed in *Pachylaelapidae*) and one of the hummingbird genus *Tropicoseius* (melicharine *Ascidae*). My point was that the level of detail in his figures (many of which were of phytoseiids and tenuipalps), when viewed as full-sized inked drafts, is comparable to those that were being done by other notable contemporary acarologists who worked on those families in the mid 1950s to 1960s.

I am attaching a scanned image of the plate of *Zygozeius*, which I identified for him at that time (1964) as *Z. furciger* Berlese. How many others at that time were paying much attention to these structures, other than noting whether there were 'macrosetae' or not? His coverage of pore-like structures, both dorsally and ventrally on the body, was pretty good, too.

Could you share this message with Harold Denmark? If anybody could shed more light on the subject or respond to a couple of my queries, it would be him. Evert."