



Dr. Larry S. Daley

September 21, 1936 - September 15, 2025

Dr. Larry S. Daley, Professor Emeritus of Horticulture at Oregon State University, passed away on September 15, 2025, at the age of 88. Born on September 21, 1936, in Liverpool, England, Larry was proud of his Cuban heritage and his descent from General Calixto García, a revered leader in Cuba's fight for independence who famously supported Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War. That legacy of courage and intellect shaped Larry's own life—a quiet but enduring thread through his work and values.

Larry earned his B.S.A. and M.S.A. in Fruit Crops from the University of Florida and his Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from the University of California, Davis. He spent his career advancing agricultural science in Oregon and beyond. His research helped improve crops and he contributed to cancer research through studies on Taxol®, a plant-derived chemotherapy drug. He was known for blending precision with creativity—most notably in a published paper where he encoded the Mona Lisa into a living leaf using spectroscopic imaging, a feat he was quietly proud of. Throughout his career, Larry mentored many gifted graduate students, including Dr. Li Ning. He deeply valued their brilliance and the legacy they continue to shape.

Larry's intellectual curiosity also led him deep into the history and ecology of Cuba, the land of his heritage and the heart of many family stories. He

authored the memoir *Love and War in Cuba*, a sweeping and deeply personal account of his family's triumphs and tragedies across generations. In it, he explored Cuba's political upheaval, ecological transformation, and cultural resilience—drawing on both scientific research and intimate family history. The book stands as a testament to his belief that science and story are not separate—that truth lives in both data and memory.

After retiring, Larry embraced a new chapter of exploration, traveling the world with his beloved wife, Natalie Daley. Together, they ventured down the Amazon, stood in awe on Easter Island, explored the Galápagos, wandered the streets of Morocco, and sailed through Europe—often aboard Princess Cruises, whose itineraries became a map of their shared adventures. These journeys were more than vacations; they were expressions of curiosity, partnership, and joy. Larry held deep admiration for his daughter Jillian Daley, whose gifted writing and fierce intellect brought beauty and insight into the world.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Natalie Daley; his daughter, Jillian Daley, married to the Hon. Pam Haan; his daughter, attorney Kara Daley, married to Poul Petersen; and his three cherished grandchildren—Rory, Jesa, and Aren. He was preceded in death by his son, Ethan Daley, a gifted engineer who earned his Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Ethan's wife, Corine Martineau, a brilliant scientist and beloved member of the family, survives him.

No service will be held, in accordance with Larry's wishes. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Ethan's Coffee Fund with the Benton Community Foundation, in honor of his son Ethan Daley, or to Lumina Hospice, whose compassionate care supported Larry and his family in his final days. Both causes reflect the spirit of inquiry, kindness, and dignity that Larry carried throughout his life.

Tribute Wall

KI

“ I will always fondly remember Larry's love of knowledge. Every time I saw him, he wanted to talk about science, or history, or some cool book he was reading. He was fascinated by everything around us. He never wanted to make small talk. He would rather talk about dogs, or vikings, or the Taino people. I loved that.

And I will always remember his garden, a living work of art, and something that will go on delighting people for years to come.

Kirsten - September 20, 2025 at 12:02 AM



“ From Kirsten P.: I will always fondly remember Larry's love of knowledge. Every time I saw him, he wanted to talk about science, or history, or some cool book he was reading. He was fascinated by everything around us. He never wanted to make small talk. He would rather talk about dogs, or vikings, or the Taino people. I loved that.

And I will always remember his garden, a living work of art, and something that will go on delighting people for years to come.

Jillian Daley - September 19, 2025 at 10:44 PM



“ In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Lumina Hospice in Corvallis: <https://www.luminahospice.org/donate/> or to Ethan's Coffee Fund (a scholarship for his late son managed by Benton Community Foundation): <https://bcfgives.org/ethans-coffee-fund/>

Jillian Daley - September 19, 2025 at 12:54 PM



“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Jillian Daley - September 19, 2025 at 12:49 PM



“ Here is an article that "The Oregonian" wrote about my Dad: <https://www.oregonlive.com/hg/2020/02/a-towering-corvallis-garden-grows-from-the-cuban-roots-of-the-family-who-lives-there.html>

There is also a video to go with that article: <https://youtu.be/wKtRL42rPBI>

My Dad also wrote a book about his life: <https://www.amazon.com/Love-Cuba-Larry-Daley-Ph-D/dp/1794119477>

Jillian Daley - September 19, 2025 at 12:44 PM



“ I posted about my Dad on Facebook and Instagram and was touched by the kind responses. Many people sent condolences. Here are just a few of the comments about my Dad:

Ioana J.: "I am so sorry for your loss, Jillian 💔 Your dad was an amazing man and I feel privileged to have met him. Your stories about him are legendary and he will continue to live on in many hearts and minds. Sending big hugs to you, your sister and your mother to get through this tough time."

Myrna S.: "Remembering some of the best people in my lifetime."

Michael R.: "Your father lived the kind of life you could write a novel about, judging from what you've told me about him."

Kirsten P.: "We have to keep the stories going, you know? I know I will."

Michael D.: "A great man indeed. I enjoyed our interactions, Ó Dálaigh."

Zach C.: I have two memories of your dad, one where we visited you in Texas and ran through a field full of weeds that gave us cuts, and one in Oregon when he showed us that amazing garden."

Jillian Daley - September 19, 2025 at 12:41 PM

ME

“ I became a friend of Larry’s oldest daughter, Kara when we were in 6th grade and almost immediately spent a fair amount of time after school at their first Corvallis residence hanging out until it was time to go home. I didn’t have much contact with Larry until after they moved to their current home and started coming around to regular family events. When I did see him, he was generally ensconced in his favorite chair watching the events unfold around him. He was always ready with a story, anecdote or whimsical joke for anyone who ended up in his orbit. I always had the impression that he possessed more than a little fae whimsy! I hope he’s even now puttering about in a fairy forest.

Melanie - September 17, 2025 at 12:21 PM

TW

“ Natalie and family: I'm sorry for your loss. I didn't know Larry well, but wish you blessings through your grief.

God bless,
Terry Wright (Mel's mother)

Terry Wright - September 17, 2025 at 09:56 AM

AD

“ I had the opportunity to know Larry over the recent years at Timberhill Gym. What a wise, thoughtful, humorous and gentle man! He lived a remarkable and full life. May his memory provide comfort for all that knew him. Safe Journey Larry and God Bless You

Alan Deitch - September 17, 2025 at 12:38 AM