

Dr. Diane R. Nelson is Professor Emerita at East Tennessee State University, retiring in May 2003 after 35 years of service. In 1993, she received the ETSU Distinguished Faculty Award, the university's highest award for combined achievements in teaching, research, and service. In April 2000 she was selected by the Association of Southeastern Biologists as the recipient of the Meritorious Teaching Award, the society's most prestigious award. Although she is "officially" retired from ETSU, she continues to conduct research and to provide service to her profession.

In addition to her interest in invertebrates, especially "water bears" (tardigrades), Dr. Nelson developed a passion for marine biology and underwater photography in 1980. She enrolled in courses at the Bermuda Biological Station for Research and other marine biological stations in Puerto Rico, Texas, and Georgia. As a result, Dr. Nelson taught marine biology and invertebrate zoology at ETSU, and she led students on field trip courses to Bermuda, the Bahamas, Australia's Great Barrier Reef, and Bonaire. After teaching Chautauqua short courses for college teachers at the Bermuda Biological Station for several years, she taught college students and teacher workshops in the summer program at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution in Ft. Pierce, Florida. During the past 20 years, she has conducted research on fish behaviors with Dr. Eugenie Clark (*National Geographic's* "Shark Lady," Professor Emerita at the University of Maryland, and Senior Research Scientist at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, Florida). These studies have included whale sharks in the Sea of Cortez, sand tilefishes in Belize, gobies in the Red Sea, and triggerfish, venomous catfish, and convict blennies in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Dr. Nelson's 1998, 2002-2003, and 2008-2009 calendars of underwater photographs, "Ocean Gems," have received numerous regional and state awards. Many of her outstanding images have been donated to the permanent collection of the Reese Museum at ETSU and sold to benefit the ETSU Honors Program, the Reece Museum, and the Natural History Museum at the Gray Fossil Site, where she has taught "Shark School." She has been featured in *Southern Living*: "Diving Diva...a spitfire in scuba gear" and in the regional magazine *Marquee*, "Diving into Life." In addition several photographs have been published in college textbooks.

Although she was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2002, she is now cancer-free and continues to dive and take underwater photos. Her husband, Dr. Jack L. Nelson, a Ph.D. chemical engineer retired from Eastman Chemical Company, is an exceptional underwater videographer, who also consults with Dr. Clark on research.