

OBITUARY

Thank-you Bernhard!



Courtesy: Holger Gärtner, WSL, Birmensdorf; Switzerland.

Forestry researcher Bernhard Denneler died prematurely this past January. Info Campus asked one of his friends, Professor Yves Bergeron, to write a few lines to underline this sad loss. We present the text here.

Bernhard was a citizen of the world who allowed the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) to establish links with a number of foreign students and researchers interested in dendrochronology. *Bon vivant* and night owl, he was known to not always live up to the legendary punctuality of his Swiss origins. Nonetheless, he was always there, even at the crack of dawn, when work (students) demanded it. In his science, Bernhard had no tolerance for approximation – to the point of questioning (often rightfully so) the conclusions of seasoned researchers.

He leaves behind an immense void that will be impossible to fill. However, he will have passed on a precious inheritance: the dendrochronology laboratory at the Lac Duparquet Research and Teaching Forest Station that we are continuing to develop. In order to pay homage to Bernhard, UQAT unveiled a commemorative plaque at the laboratory, which he designed and of which he was the first Director.

Originally from Switzerland where he studied in economics and geography, Bernhard Denneler came to Canada to undertake his doctoral studies in Environmental Sciences at the UQAM. His doctorate focussed on the influence of lake water levels on forests bordering Lakes Duparquet and Abitibi. In 2001, upon completion of his Ph.D., he joined the forestry research team at the UQAT. A passionate researcher in dendrochronology (the study of growth rings in trees), he continued his work on the influence of climate change on the forests of Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

Bernhard Denneler died on 13 January at the age of 43 as a result of cancer.

The Foundation of the UQAT has created a fund in his name that will permit foreign students to undertake research internships in dendrochronology at the Lac Duparquet Forest Research Station. People wishing to contribute to the fund are asked to contact Foundation Director, Mr. Pierre Lafontaine, at +1 819 762 0971x2272 or by e-mail at pierre.lafontaine@uqat.ca.

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