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Office of University
Communications

January 7, 2015

Manuel “Allen” Setzer Died Dec. 30 Following an Extended Illness

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – A man who was instrumental as a faculty member at Gardner-Webb and responsible for the significant growth of the University’s radio station, WGWG 88.3 FM, died on Dec. 30, 2014, at Wendover Hospice in Shelby, N.C., at the age of 84. Manuel “Allen” Setzer served as an associate professor of Spanish in the GWU Department of Foreign Language and Literature for nearly three decades and as station manager of WGWG for over 25 years.

Born December 24, 1930, in Caldwell County, N.C., Setzer graduated from Hudson High School. He continued his education at Lenoir-Rhyne College where he took part in the drama program. Later, he earned a master’s degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1965), and also attended La Universidad Interamericana, located in Saltillo, Mexico (1957), University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, N.M. (1963-64), and the Universidad de Salamanca in Salamanca, Spain (1974). He began working at Gardner-Webb in September of 1965 as an instructor of Spanish, a post he maintained for 28 years. During his time at GWU, Setzer became heavily involved in the radio station, and as general manager, oversaw several significant expansions.

“Allen Setzer was a pioneer and ushered WGWG through times of incredible transition,” reflected Noel Manning, associate vice president for University Communications and Marketing and current WGWG

Setzer at WGWG (right)

general manager. “He was there when WGWG went from roughly 5,000 to 50,000 Watts, and also launched the first Internet stream of WGWG.org at a time when very few were considering the digital radio landscape. He was dedicated to the service of Gardner-Webb University and WGWG, and his efforts at WGWG were monumental. Mr. Setzer’s commitment to the success of the station was inspirational.”

Setzer at WGWG (right)

Jeff Powell, who serves as operations manager at WGWG, said he first met Setzer as an undergraduate student at Gardner-Webb. “His work ethic was amazing,” Powell shared. “He seemed to always be at the station, keeping an eye on the equipment and the students. I worked for him as a student beginning in 1984 and then as a part-time worker until 1999. In large part, it is because of Mr. Setzer that I do what I do now. He instilled in me a love of

radio. I am honored to be here now trying in some small way to honor his legacy as the station continues to evolve yet carry forward the voice of GWU.”

Serving in the United States Army, Setzer was stationed in New Mexico. A longtime drama enthusiast, he also acted frequently and played the part of a soldier in “Unto These Hills” in Cherokee, N.C. He enjoyed working at the station and tinkering in the garden.

Setzer in the U.S. Army

Memorial contributions can be made on behalf of the family to the Hospice of Cleveland County, 951 Wendover Heights Drive, Shelby, NC, 28152.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University blends a liberal arts core curriculum with more than 55 major and minor professional programs of study, a comprehensive academic experience that flows from our Christian commitment to intellectual freedom, service and leadership.