



Emmett Perry was born into a farming family where at a young age his passion for gardening began. After moving to Rutland with his wife Rogene, Emmett tended a large vegetable garden and became a master grower of Gladiolas. His back yard was a sea of color prompting him to enter many of his best varieties in the flora culture exhibit at the Vermont State Fair. Eventually he took over as superintendent of the flora culture booth and became an active member in the agricultural society. Fortunately for us, he made a decision to take the EMG course in 1992. For many years he volunteered to facilitate the new EMG classes, assisting the instructors and creating themes for each class. During fair time in addition to running the flora culture booth, he worked with other EMG members, setting up an informational table at the west end of the Bergstrom building with literature about the EMG program and volunteered his time answering gardening

questions for the visiting public. He was instrumental in securing the permanent booth area the Rutland Chapter now occupies in the Bergstrom building and over the years made many upgrades to space. He was adept at finding donations or low cost materials for the projects and he contributed many many volunteer hours improving the spaces we use today. Emmett also had a vision for a display garden to enhance the EMG mission so he and a handful of other EMG's began creating the garden space near the booth area and along the dairy walkway. He spent countless hours at the fairgrounds during the summers while he tended to the gardens and booth area.

Emmett's devotion to the Rutland EMG chapter was evident to all who have had the privilege of working alongside him at many of our volunteer projects throughout the years. His quiet, hardworking presence motivated many interns and EMG's to strive to be as active and involved as he has been in our projects. In 2016 the Rutland Chapter recognized Emmett's life time of hard work, mentoring and leadership with a much deserved award for outstanding achievement. His passion for this program and what it stands for was an inspiration to all of us who have had the honor of working with him over the years.

By Jan Sherman, Rutland EMG Chapter Chair - <https://www.cliffordfuneralhome.com/obituary/emmett-perry>

Emmett Perry took the EMG course in 1992 (one of the first!), and played an important role in the Master Gardener program in many aspects. He was a mentor to many students and volunteers within the Rutland Chapter, and was a very dedicated volunteer for the program. He completed 2,354 volunteer hours up until his declining health made it difficult for him to participate. He received his 1,000 hours lifetime achievement gold badge and certificate and was very proud of this accomplishment. I had the pleasure of getting to know Emmett when he would host Nancy Hulett and I for a Rutland Fairgrounds visit each year. We would hop on his golf cart and enjoy a personalized tour of all the beautiful gardens at the fairgrounds. Being the gentleman that he was with a very kind soul, he would always treat us to a hot Italian sausage for lunch or a maple creamie for dessert! I always looked forward to seeing him every year and have missed him over the last 7 years. I know he was a special friend to many of you in the Rutland Chapter. My thoughts are with you all, and Emmett's family.

By Lisa Chouinard, UVM Extension Master Gardener, Office & Program Support