MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS KIRK W. MCVOY

Professor Emeritus of Physics Kirk W. McVoy passed away in Madison on October 21, 2003, after a battle with cancer. He was 75 and was a valued member of the UW Physics Department for over 30 years. He is survived by his wife Hilda, three children Christopher, Larry, and Annelies, and six grandchildren. A memorial service in his honor was held at the Olbrich Botanical Gardens on October 25, 2003.

Professor McVoy was born in Minneapolis and obtained his B.A. degree from Carlton College in Minnesota. He was selected as a Rhodes Scholar and studied at Oxford from 1950-52; he later served on the Wisconsin selection committees for these scholarships. He received a diploma (equivalent to a master's degree) from the University of Göttingen in 1953, and a Ph.D. in Physics from Cornell University in 1956. He was a fellow of the American Physical Society. He received a Fulbright Research Fellowship to the University of Utrecht, a Senior Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship which supported a visit to the Max Planck Institute in Heidelberg, Germany, and a Distinguished Visiting Professorship at the University of Gronigen in the Netherlands. He also served on the Program Advisory Committee for the Indiana Cyclotron. He worked closely with students and colleagues in Mexico, where he had many friends and was honored by election to the Mexican Academy of Sciences.

Professor McVoy's numerous research contributions were in the area of nuclear reaction theory. Here he contributed to the study of both resonant and elastic scattering. He was one of the early researchers to recognize the importance of understanding the interactions between heavy-ions, a field that has undergone rapid growth over the past 25 years. He is also well known for bringing techniques from other areas of physics into nuclear physics, including: the use of Regge-poles, concepts employed in optics, and semi-classical methods of analysis, all toward the better understanding of scattering behavior in heavy-ion reactions. The relationship between rainbows and nuclear scattering stimulated many of his ideas.

While a superb and world renowned physicist, Professor McVoy had strong interests and commitments in many other arenas as well. He had a phenomenal facility with languages, being fluent in eight languages. One of his last works was a translation of a poem by Chilean Nobel Prize winner, Pablo Neruda. Kirk had a life-long love of nature and concern for the preservation of the environment. He was an avid cross-country skier and canoeist, and a passionate advocate for environmental causes such as the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association and the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, on whose boards he served, and for whose causes he forcefully argued before public panels. Combining his interests, he developed a new course in the Physics Department dealing with the fundamental physics behind the processes underlying the important issues concerning the environment.

He will be sorely missed by his colleagues and friends in the Physics Department, in the university community, and at institutions he frequented around the world.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
William A. Friedman, chair
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Willy Haeberli