

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS ALBERT R. ERWIN

Albert Rich Erwin, professor emeritus in the physics department, died at age 79 in Madison on April 5, 2011 after a short illness. A native of North Carolina, he attended Duke University and graduated *summa cum laude* in physics in 1953. He continued to pursue his interest in physics at Harvard University, earning his doctorate in 1959. That same year, he joined the faculty at the University of Wisconsin and continued his career here until his retirement in 2005. His enthusiasm for physics and his curiosity were undiminished, and he continued his research after retirement.

Throughout his career, Albert used his technical expertise to advance the field of experimental high energy particle physics. He was among the first to recognize the utility of computers in analyzing experimental data. The high-energy research program fostered the advancement of computing capabilities on campus. These early experiments used the bubble chamber technique, in which particle reactions were analyzed by scanning and measuring photographs, done by both skillful assistants and machines built at the UW. One of the most important results was Albert's co-discovery with Professor William Walker of the rho-meson in 1961. That discovery, augmented by other observations of particles, led to the classification of these particles as composites, eventually leading to the modern picture that these particles are made up of quarks.

When the Fermilab collider came into operation, Albert turned to electronic detection methods. He made fundamental contributions to the characterization and description of the jets of particles produced by quarks. Taking advantage of the highest energy then available, Albert and his collaborators initiated the search for a new state of matter, a Quark-Gluon Plasma. After years of effort, the technique was refined, and this plasma was later identified at the Brookhaven National Laboratory's Relativistic Heavy Ion Accelerator.

Beyond his research program, Albert was a talented and empathic teacher of both undergraduates and graduates. He trained 13 PhD students, many of whom became successful and productive researchers. His students recall fondly his sense of humor, his patience and high standards. Albert was a man of honesty, integrity and humility. He followed his curiosity and instincts and not the fashion. He was a credit to his profession, to the University of Wisconsin, and, above all, he was true to himself. We will all miss this role model of grace, knowledge, intense work ethic.

Professor Erwin was a fellow of the American Physical Society and was a member of its Division of Particles and Fields. Although he was passionate about his physics, he found time for other diversions. He was a ham radio operator most his life and enjoyed the outdoors — running, canoeing, hiking, and bicycling. Albert is survived by his wife, Denise Morchand-Erwin; a daughter, Christa; and three grandchildren.

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