

Obituary

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It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Professor Bernhard Wunderlich in the evening of August 16, 2012, in Knoxville, TN. Professor Bernhard Wunderlich, arguably the most influential thermal analyst of all times passed away at age 81.

Professor Wunderlich immigrated from Germany to the U.S. in 1954 and received his Ph.D. from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois in 1957 under the leadership of Prof. Malcolm Dole. He was an instructor at Cornell University until 1963. From 1963 until 1988, he was a Professor of Chemistry at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY. He served as a consultant for the DuPont Company for many years. In 1988, he moved to Knoxville, TN and was appointed a Distinguished Scientist at both the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, until his retirement in 2001.

In his scientific career, Professor Wunderlich focused primarily on the thermal analysis of polymers. Among his many accomplishments, the most important ones were the creation and characterization of equilibrium crystals (extended chain crystals) of polyethylene, the discovery of the rigid amorphous phase in semi-crystalline polymers, the precise measurement and publication of the heat capacity tables of macromolecules in the ATHAS (The Advanced Thermal Analysis System) databank, and publication of the detailed theory of Modulated Temperature Differential Scanning Calorimetry. He has authored ten books and 575 scientific publications. His students include many renowned scientists, several of whom are well-known thermal analysts.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Richard and Johanne Wunderlich; and brother, Frank Wunderlich. He is survived by his wife, Adelheid “Heidi” Wunderlich; son, Brent Wunderlich; daughter, Caryn Wunderlich; brothers, Joachim Wunderlich and Manfred Wunderlich; and two grandchildren.

We will be always proud of the fact that we learnt thermal analysis from Professor Wunderlich.

His former students: R. Bruce Prime, Joseph D. Menczel, Larry Judovits, Michael Jaffe, Marek Pyda, Maria Maura Di Lorenzo, Stephen Z. D. Cheng, Janusz Grebowicz and the Executive Council of the North American Thermal Analysis Society.