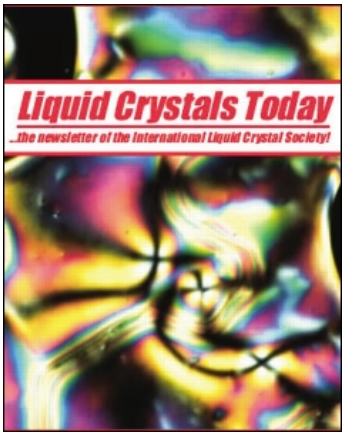

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In Memoriam

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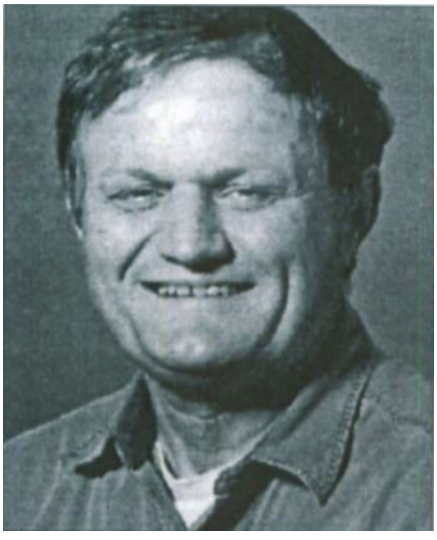
IN MEMORIAM

Dr David L. Johnson*



David L. Johnson, Professor of Physics at Kent State University, died on 30 December 1995, at age 59, of cancer. He is survived by his wife Rosine, a son and a daughter. Dr Johnson received his Bachelor's degree from St Olaf College in 1960 and PhD in superconductivity from Iowa State University in 1966.

He joined the faculty of Kent State University nearly thirty years ago, in 1966, as an assistant professor. In 1972, he was named associate professor and was promoted to full professor in 1981. He held visiting appointments at the University of Hawaii, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the University of Washington. In addition, he was an active member of the American Physical Society, Sigma Pi Sigma and Sigma Xi. His university activities were extensive as he served on the computer science curriculum committee, the academic and research challenge committees, college advisory committee, and various departmental committees. Dr Johnson received a faculty research fellowship at Kent State University, a Case-Lewis Summer Faculty fellowship and a NASA Lewis Research Center fellowship.

In the beginning of his career, Dr Johnson studied thermal properties of superconducting materials; however, he devoted most of his research effort to the study of high-precision ac heat capacity and quasi-elastic light scattering of phase transitions in liquid crystals. He made several important contributions to this field, including the universality of nematic–smectic-A1 smectic-C phase diagram topology. Based on his accomplishments, he was awarded a National Science Foundation Creative Research Award. During his career Dr Johnson directed thirteen PhD dissertations and two Masters theses. He gave nearly ninety scholarly presentations and produced a large number of scientific publications. Dr Johnson was instrumental in securing major research grants and fellowships totalling nearly five million dollars from various agencies including the National Science Foundation and NASA.

Reprinted from the abstract of the Memoriam Session, 16 ILCC, Kent State University, 1996

Dr Metka Luzar-Vlachy

With the death of Metka Luzar-Vlachy, on 9 March 1996, the Slovenian physics community lost an outstanding colleague, teacher and researcher.

Luzar-Vlachy began her university studies at the Medical Faculty, but she soon discovered that her true interests were in physics, a decision she never regretted. She graduated from the University of Ljubljana in 1973, where she also received her PhD in physics in 1982. After graduation she joined the Department of Physics of the University of Ljubljana as a teaching assistant and was appointed assistant professor of physics in 1983. In 1988 she became an associate professor and although she was severely ill for several years, she continued teaching, which she took very seriously, and doing research work until a few days before her untimely death. She was a member of the Condensed Matter Laboratory at the J. Stefan Institute in Ljubljana and a visiting scientist at the laboratory of Professor Alex Pines at the University of California at Berkeley, which she visited regularly for extended periods.

Most of the research work of Metka Luzar-Vlachy was devoted to NMR in liquid crystals. She began her career by contributing to the pioneering work of the group in Ljubljana on self-diffusion in liquid crystals by NMR, then moved to studying dynamics of different liquid crystal phases by spin-lattice relaxation measurements. Her doctoral work on the chemical shift presented a direct evidence for hindered molecular rotation in the ferroelectric SmC* phase. In recent years, in collaboration with the group of Alex Pines, she was the first to apply the sophisticated technique of zero-field NMR to liquid crystals.

On top of a professional career Luzar-Vlachy was a devoted mother of two girls. She had a lifelong passion for skiing, in which she excelled, and loved music. She was a warm and caring person showing interest in social issues and always striving for the good of the community.