Memorial Resolution

for

Associate Professor Ernst A. Schwandt

Ernst Schwandt suffered a heart attack in his office on Wednesday, November 26, 1986 after having taught a class that morning, and he died the same afternoon at Columbia Hospital.

Ernst was an unforgettable individual who led a varied and uncommon life. He was born on May 15, 1925 in Dortmund, Germany and came from a family of coal miners in the Ruhr district. Some of the attitudes and customs of the miners were retained in his adult life, including a strong affection for his coworkers, and the love of, and ability to tell, a good story. As a young man he developed a love for mathematics, and for flying (which he learned during the war). During the occupation he was selected to teach mathematics in a program sponsored by the University of Maryland, by Stuart Haywood, a professor of mathematics in the program. Subsequently he received an invitation to fly for Lufthansa, and an invitation to attend the University of Maryland under Haywood's sponsorship; he accepted the latter. He attended the University of Maryland 1954-56, George Washington University 1956-58 (B.A.), Michigan State University 1958-60 (M.S.), University of Florida 1961-62, and University of Minnesota 1962-67 (Ph.D.), and then he came as Assistant Professor to UWM.

He also worked as an associate mathematician at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory 1960-61. At that time he met a young English woman, Aileen Wigmore, and after a whirlwind romance they were married. Ernst is survived by Aileen.

His area of mathematical specialization was automorphic functions. Although he published only a few papers, they are of high quality and have been well received. In fact it was the judgement of one expert that one of Ernst's results "should become a standard part of textbooks in the field."

It was in teaching that he distinguished himself. The many facets of his personality came together in the classroom to make him a successful and popular teacher. His knowledge and love of good stories enabled him to add an anecdotal dimension to mathematics. His appreciation of the beauty of his subject came through strongly in his lectures. What distressed him most, and what he could never reconcile himself to, was the lack of appreciation for this beauty by students who did not apply themselves.

Socially, Ernst was a generous, warm-hearted host with a great sense of humor, who loved to see people happy, and knew how to make them feel that way.

Frederick Bagemihl
Gilbert Walter