Memorial Resolution for Professor Lowell W. Bahe

Lowell Bahe was an avid reader. He loved books, and often frequented rummage sales in search of additional ones. On February 8, 1993, Lowell Bahe, Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, settled back with one of his beloved volumes, and quietly passed away.

Lowell began his life on the farm, and often invoked, with characteristic humor, the hard work and austerity of his early years as strong motivation for his future successes. After a tour in the Navy, he took advantage of the GI bill and entered Purdue University. He graduated with a B.S. in Chemistry in 1949, then went on to graduate school at Princeton, where he earned an M.S. degree in 1951 and a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry in 1953. Following his graduation, Lowell joined Allis-Chalmers as a Research Scientist, and soon became a Research Project Leader in Physical Chemistry. In 1957, Lowell joined the chemistry faculty at UWM, where he served with distinction until his retirement two years ago.

First and foremost, Professor Bahe was a teacher. He loved ideas and relished in the joy of explaining complex concepts in simple terms, to students and colleagues alike. His non-intimidating style made him remarkably easy to approach, even with questions for which the answer "should" have been known. He was a cerebral man, with knowledge and wisdom far beyond the edges of his selected vocation. He was a great conversationalist -- all who sat and chatted with Lowell were enriched by the experience.

Lowell approached everything that he did with enthusiasm, from the design and use of solar ovens, to his research on the structure of liquids and solutions. He displayed a stubbornness and tenacity toward his craft -- with no room for compromise. Lowell Bahe was a man of principle -- in his science, and in his life.

Ironically, it was a debilitating disease that best defined who Lowell Bahe was -- not because he was inflicted by it, but because he transcended it. It was often easy to forget that Lowell suffered from severe rheumatoid arthritis. Few have endured its significant and continuous pain with as much dignity. In spite of his ailment, and because of it, Lowell could be seen daily, methodically pedalling his bicycle up Maryland Avenue in Shorewood, where he lived. He had a hearty, unencumbered laugh, and a perpetual smile. With amazing grace, he allowed us to ignore his pain -- he never, never complained.

Along with his books, Lowell had his movies. He was a self-proclaimed cinema addict, known to view films, one after the other, into the morning. Lowell Bahe -- teacher; scholar; chemist; friend -- was also a devoted fisherman. A small sign in the shape of a fish still rests in the office reserved for Professors Emeriti on the 6th floor of the chemistry building at UWM where Lowell read and worked after his retirement. It announces simply "Gone Fishing."

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