Editorial

Jack D. Gaskill, Editor

Martha W. Stockton (1936–1989)

For several months I have known that I would eventually write this editorial—I just didn't know when. Now the time has arrived. Martha Stockton died at 3 o'clock this afternoon, November 16, 1989, after a lengthy bout with cancer. On behalf of the officers, governors, members, and staff of the Society, I wish to express our heartfelt sympathy to her husband Chuck, her daughter Sara, and the rest of her family and friends. This editorial is dedicated to her memory.

Martha was born on November 4, 1936, in Rochester, Minnesota, and graduated from Beloit College in 1958 with a BS degree in Geology (Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa). She was employed as an Assistant Geologist in the Exploration Department of the Ideal Cement Company, Fort Collins, Colorado, from 1958 until 1966, when she joined the Optical Sciences Center at the University of Arizona. From 1966 to 1973 Martha held the position of Editor at the Optical Sciences Center, and from 1973 until 1984 she served in a half-time position as Associate Editor. Between 1968 and 1984 she edited six technical books in optics and other scientific disciplines and was co-author of one of them. During the last dozen years of her life, Martha was a part-time technical writer and consultant for such companies as Hughes Aircraft Company, Scroll Systems, Inc., Systems Technology Associates, Sol Telecommunications Services, Inc., WYKO Corp., and the Dept. of Mining and Mineral Economics at the University of Arizona. And, of course, she served as Associate Editor of *Optical Engineering* from July 1985 until October 1989.

I first met Martha in 1968 when I joined the Optical Sciences Center, and I was immediately impressed by her

intelligence, her communication skills, and her professional manner. She was not only good in her job—she helped make other people better in their jobs. She was a tremendous asset to the Center and a delight to work with. When I was approached to serve as Editor of *Optical Engineering*, the first person I talked to was Martha. Only after she agreed to be my Associate Editor did I agree to take the position, for I was certain that I would not be able to accomplish what I was being asked to do without her. She did an absolutely superb job, and any editorial gains that the Journal has made during the past four years are due largely to her contributions. We all owe her a great debt of gratitude.

In addition to the professional activities mentioned above, Martha was a member of the Society for Technical Communications and the International Toastmistress Clubs. She held most of the offices in these organizations, including council and regional offices, and participated in several speech contests at the national and international levels. She also involved herself in many nonprofessional activities, serving as a Girl Scout troop leader, president of her homeowners' association, precinct committee person, deputy registrar, and Sunday school teacher, to name a few. She was a doer, not a complainer—a giver, not a taker.

Martha, it was a pleasure knowing you—both as a personal friend and as a professional colleague. And I want you to know that, even though I have grown weary of writing editorials, and even though this editorial is the most difficult one I have ever written, it was truly an honor to do so. I'm sorry that these last weeks and months were so painful and discouraging for you, and I'm sorry that we couldn't finish out our tour of Journal duty together. But someday, perhaps, if St. Peter hasn't been too offended by my editorials, I can join you in that big editorial office in the sky and we can be a team once again. And then maybe you can finish the article you were writing for authors, on the use of participles, that for some reason always seemed to get left dangling.

Editorial Schedule on p. 1280.