John B. DeVelis

Elaine Cherry's Legacy to All Who Foster Excellence

I am writing this final salute to Elaine Cherry with deep feelings of sadness in the knowledge that she is no longer with us. I have many fond memories of Elaine. She was my close colleague and very dear friend.

My first contact with Elaine was during a telephone conversation with Joe Yaver, executive director of SPIE, shortly after I began my tenure as editor of Optical Engineering. Joe had called, his voice full of excitement, to introduce me to our new managing editor, Elaine Cherry, his "new gal" at SPIE. Joe could barely contain his enthusiasm for Elaine and her considerable talents. Joe was convinced that she was to contribute immensely to the Journal and SPIE in general. The fullness of time and much hard work by Elaine demonstrated Joe to be a prophet. Elaine was everything we expected and much more. She was the consummate professional; she was competent, dedicated, compassionate, and understanding. Very often those who worked with her misinterpreted her dissatisfaction with any sloppiness in the publication of all SPIE literature and her pursuit of excellence as domineering. However, her resolve for excellence has made all of us who worked with her better professionals. It was her way of teaching us the importance of excellence, which by her standards could never be compromised.

Because we shared goal congruence and because we had great respect for each other as professionals and as human beings, Elaine and I never had a professional disagreement. It would appear appropriate to mention here that both Elaine and I shared this same association with our mutual dear friend and colleague, George Reynolds, with whom we both worked very closely as a team and who is now also deceased.

From her early association when SPIE was located in Southern California until she retired, Elaine methodically built professional excellence into all SPIE publications and in-house processes. In the early days of our association, she accepted the full responsibility for producing the Journal so that I would be free to address the issues facing the editor. Resources at that time with SPIE were almost nonexistent, and Elaine, Joe, and I had to work under less than desirable constraints. Yet Elaine never faltered in her resolve, never compromised our goal of excellence, and, equally important to me, she never allowed the editor to do so. It was no accident that when SPIE moved its headquarters to Bellingham, the most critical person to Joe Yaver in the success of the move was Elaine. She continued contributing in this way throughout her tenure at SPIE as Director of Publications, and in my opinion her contribution to the success of SPIE and its professional posture today has been enormous indeed. She has left all of us who knew her, who worked with her, and who became her personal friends her legacy of excellence.

There is yet one more point to make about Elaine Cherry. If there was one of her personal characteristics that rivaled her dedication to excellence it was her compassion. I shall never forget how on my first birthday after my mother's death, I received one of my most cherished possessions as a gift from Elaine. It is a simple glass paperweight on which is scribed a beautiful biblical quotation with which I now close this tribute:

"To Everything there is a season
and a time to every purpose
under the heaven."

OPTICAL ENGINEERING EDITORIAL SCHEDULE

June & July 1990

X-Ray/EUV Optics

Richard B. Hoover
NASA-Marshall Space Flight Center
Space Science Laboratory ES-52
Huntsville, AL 35812
205/544-7617

August 1990

Electro-Optical Displays

Mohammad A. Karim
University of Dayton
Dept. of Electrical Engineering
Center for Electro-Optics
300 College Park
Dayton, OH 45469-0001
513/229-3611

September 1990

Optical Pattern Recognition

B. V. K. Vijaya Kumar
Carnegie Mellon University
Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890
412/268-3026

October & November 1990

Adaptive Optical Components

Mark A. Ealey
Litton-Itek Optical Systems
10 Maguire Road
Lexington, MA 02173-3199
617/276-2269

December 1990

Performance Evaluation of Signal and Image Processing Systems

Firooz Sadjadi and Hatem Nasr
Honeywell Systems & Research Center
3600 Technology Drive
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Minneapolis, MN 55418
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January 1991

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