Critical Reviews™ in Biomedical Engineering, 42(5):349–350 (2014)

IN MEMORIAM: SKIPPER POEHLMAN

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KEY WORDS: Biomedical Image processing

William (Skipper) Poehlman

Dr. William (Skipper) Poehlman, our friend, a distinguished colleague, and a dedicated teacher and researcher, recently passed away. Skip, as he liked to be called, served McMaster University with dedication for 37 years, first as a research associate in the engineering physics department and later as a faculty member in the engineering physics, computer science and systems, and computing and software engineering departments. In 1996, he was acting chair of the computer science and systems department. He retired in 2011 as an associate professor.

Skipper received undergraduate degrees in engineering physics (1968) from Niagara University (Lewiston, New York, USA) and in physics (1969) from Brock University (St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada). He qualified with a master's degree in nuclear physics (1972) and a doctoral degree in electrical engineering (1980), both from McMaster University. He began his career as a licensed professional engineer in Ontario in 1992. He was married to his college sweetheart, Dr. Barbara Ley, for more than 30 years.

Dr. Poehlman was a well-respected educator, as his multiple awards for teaching excellence from the student body at McMaster University illustrate. His research spanned many fields, among them distributed computing, data acquisition, human interfaces, control systems and applications of computer-based systems to nuclear engineering, flexible manufacturing, medical imaging and pattern recognition,

0278-940X/14/$35.00

and environmental sciences and energy conservation[1–6]. He served as a referee for several IEEE Journals and authored five book chapters as well as fifty-two peer-reviewed papers in journals and conference proceedings. He also held grants from provincial and national funding agencies and, along with Dr. Darel Mesher, was granted a patent from the U.S. Patent Office (U.S. patent number 273507) entitled "An Environmental Controller for Sealed Structures."

Skip's students hold positions in academia and a wide variety of industries, including banking, biomedical engineering, power generation, nuclear engineering, solar energy, energy conservation, and software engineering. His enthusiasm was inspirational, and he encouraged students to be inquisitive and to continually explore the boundary of knowledge. As a supervisor of fifty master's students, ten Ph.D. students, and more than fifty-one senior undergraduate theses in electrical and computer engineering and computer science and software engineering at McMaster, Skip worked hard for his students, and from whom he demanded a high quality of critical thinking. On his own he maintained a high level of originality in his research. He is missed greatly by all of us who worked closely with him.

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