REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
CHARLES S. BEIGHTLER

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Charles S. Beightler, professor emeritus, mechanical engineering, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The General Faculty

IN MEMORIAM
CHARLES S. BEIGHTLER

Charles Sprague Beightler, Ph.D., died Sunday, March 27, 2011, at his home in Austin, Texas. After graduating from Nicholas Senn High School in Chicago, Illinois, he entered an accelerated pre-engineering course of study through the U.S. Army’s Specialized Training Program. He served his country in World War II as a radio operator and forward observer with the 71st Infantry, 44th Division in France, Germany, and Austria, earning a Bronze Star Medal for acts of valor in November 1944. He continued to serve as a reserve-commissioned officer until 1957. Although he did not brag about or mention it, Charles was proud of his service in the military and displayed his medals and awards in his home.

After the war, Charles obtained a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) in 1950. He worked as an engineer for Aerona Manufacturing Company and then served his country again overseas in the Korean Conflict during the early 1950s. Following his term of service, he returned to the University of Michigan and earned his M.S. in Mathematics in 1954. He worked as a research engineer for General Motors, as an operations research analyst for Arthur Andersen and Caywood-Schiller, and as director of operations research for Ernst & Ernst. Ultimately, he returned to academics, serving as instructor in mathematics and engineering while attending Northwestern University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering in 1961.

Charles moved to Austin in 1961 to take a position with UT’s Department of Mechanical Engineering, where he taught for the next several decades, and eventually became affiliated with the faculty in operations research and industrial engineering. As more faculty members were added over the years, the group became increasingly prominent within the department.

Charles authored numerous books and papers and was awarded the Lanchester Prize for best publication in operations research in 1967. This textbook was subsequently translated into three languages: Spanish, Chinese, and Russian. He also coauthored Applied Geometric Programming with D.T. Phillips, which was published by John Wiley in 1976. For the Encyclopedia of Computer Science and Technology, Vol. 7, 1977, he wrote “Duality Theory.” In addition to the books mentioned above, Dr. Beightler wrote thirty-five papers in journals and proceedings, presented numerous invited lectures, performed pre-publication reviews of several books for Prentice Hall, supervised a number of master’s theses and Ph.D. dissertations, and received funding for his research from federal and state agencies and industrial sources. His research covered optimal design in the applicability of geometric programming methodology to large-scale problems, including the development of optimal flood routing policies to minimize damage caused by flood inundation and the efficient utilization of exhaustible energy resources.

Charles served as research associate at Stanford University during several summers. In 1971, he received a faculty award for Excellence in Engineering Education. He was honored to be a Fulbright Lecturer in applied mathematics at the University of Freiburg in Germany from 1971 to 1972. During those years, his five children rapidly learned German, attending school in Freiburg.
Charles had many diverse interests, including literature, music, languages, and aviation. He flew as a private pilot and flight instructor and especially enjoyed aerobatics in his Stearman biplane. Charles was set in his ways— in a humorous sense. Being raised in Chicago, where the first wintry blast came much earlier than in Texas, he often appeared on the Austin campus just after Labor Day in his earmuffs and a scarf. He lived a full life, enriched by both his immediate and extended families.

Reflection on the Lanchester Prize by Professor Emeritus Doug Wilde, Stanford:

Chuck and I first met in the dean’s office soon after joining UT Austin. The dean told us that we would be competing to see who would start an operations research program. Immediately afterwards, Chuck and I agreed to cooperate rather than compete, our collaboration often taking place in Scholz Garten. Thus, together we wrote the Lanchester Prize book, *Foundations of Optimization*. The work unified many diverse approaches and became a classic in operations research.

Four decades later, the president of a Scottish teacher’s college was accused of plagiarizing the book for his Ph.D. dissertation. It is worth noting that the only words he deemed worth repeating were written by Professor Beightler.

Chuck made his mark, and we will miss him.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professor J. Wesley Barnes and Professor Emeritus William G. Lesso.

Distributed to the dean of the School of Engineering on July 27, 2011, and posted under “Memorials” at: http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/.