



IN MEMORIAM

Regitze R. Vold
Professor of Chemistry
UC San Diego
1937 - 1999

Regitze R. (Gitte) Vold was born and raised in Copenhagen, Denmark. She obtained her Ph.D. in 1962 from the Technical University of Denmark, but spent most of her life in the United States. Beginning her career at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 1965, Gitte attained the rank of full professor in the Department of Chemistry at the University of California, San Diego in 1982, the position she held until her death in 1999.

Gitte became a Chemistry professor in the days when few women chose, or were allowed to choose, this career. She always expected the best from herself and from her colleagues. She was a wonderful role model because she was truly brilliant, worked hard for everything she discovered, and managed to retain her warm, humorous, affectionate personality. She showed the field of science that women could participate fully, while still being women. By just being herself she inspired many women scientists to be leaders in their respective fields. Gitte was a leader in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry by setting rigorous standards for students and by being a forceful voice in faculty meetings. She was a role model and mentor for many successful women faculty both at UCSD and elsewhere.

Professor Gitte Vold was world- renowned for her research in the field of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy, making many critical contributions over the years. She was first involved in the development of the theory of nuclear relaxation. She was known for her experimental rigor and for her development of novel experiments to test the latest theories. She was, in fact, one of those rare individuals who crossed the boundaries of theory and experiment, distinguishing herself in both. She could just as often be seen with pages of Hamiltonian operator functions as with a soldering iron in her hands. Gitte remained at the forefront of the field as one of the first to apply NMR to biologically important molecules. In her last studies, she developed methods to study membrane- bound proteins in small lipid "bicelles" which have fascinating properties in magnetic fields that Gitte could explain from fundamental principles of NMR.

She was exemplary in her service to the field of science in general, and NMR in particular, serving on review panels of prestigious journals such as the Journal of the American Chemical Society, the Journal of Magnetic Resonance, and the Biophysical Journal. She published more than one hundred thirty scientific articles, mentored dozens of students, and earned numerous awards such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) creativity award and election as a Fellow of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Outside the lab Gitte could be found traveling (Hawaii and New Mexico were two of her favorite spots), entertaining friends, indulging her hobby of photography, or planning her next ski trip. Learning to ski at age 53, she could be found on the double black diamond slopes skiing very fast. Gitte passed away on April 11, 1999 while attending a retirement symposium in honor of Ray Freeman in Cambridge England. Her life was far from drawing to a close. She left behind a thriving lab of students, papers yet to be written, and projects to finish.

Elizabeth A. Komives, Chair
Jane Dyson
Stanley Opella
Susan S. Taylor