

# MEMORIAL RESOLUTION DOUGLAS A. SKOOG

(1918-2008)

Douglas A. Skoog, emeritus professor of chemistry, died in his home in Palo Alto April 27, 2008, 7 days before his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Skoog was a nationally renowned teacher of Analytical Chemistry. His three analytical chemistry textbooks: *Fundamentals of Analytical Chemistry*, *Analytical Chemistry*, and *An Introduction*, and *Principles of Instrumental Analysis*, dominated the field for over three decades. The first of these widely used textbooks was published in 1963; the eighth edition appeared in 2003. The first edition of the second book was published in 1965 and the seventh edition in 2001. The first edition of the instrumental book appeared in 1971 and the sixth edition in 2005. Various editions of the three books were translated into several languages including German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Croatian, Turkish, Chinese and Korean and are used throughout the world.

Skoog received three national awards for his contributions to the teaching of chemistry: the 1993 Division of Analytical Chemistry of the American Chemical Society Excellence in Teaching Award; the 1999 American Chemical Society Fisher Award in Analytical Chemistry; and in 1998 he was elected as a fellow in the American Society for the Advancement of Science. In 1999 Skoog was made an Honorary Kentucky Colonel by the governor of Kentucky.

Douglas Arvid Skoog was born in Wilmar, Minnesota on May 4, 1918. His parents were Arvid C. Skoog and Hilma E. Skoog. In 1919 his parents moved to Portland, Oregon where he spent his childhood. The family later moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota where, in 1936, he graduated from Minneapolis Washburn High School. In the fall of that year, he enrolled in Oregon State College (now University) where he majored in chemistry. He became a member of Kappa Delta Rho social fraternity, and was elected to Phi Kappa Phi scholastic honorary society. Upon receiving his B.S. degree in 1940, he enrolled in a graduate program in analytical chemistry at University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign. While at Illinois he joined Alpha Chi Sigma, the professional chemistry fraternity. He was also elected to Sigma Xi, the honorary research society.

In 1942 Skoog married Judith M. Bone, a recent graduate of the University of Illinois who was employed as the secretary to the business manager of the university. In 1943 Skoog was granted the PhD degree in analytical chemistry and accepted a position as research chemist at the Research and Development Division of Standard Oil Company of California (now Chevron Research Corporation) in Richmond, California. The Skoogs moved to Berkeley, California in the fall of 1943 where they lived until 1947 when Skoog accepted a position as Assistant Professor Chemistry at Stanford University. The Skoog's lived on the Stanford campus from 1947 to 1987 when they moved to Webster House, a retirement facility located in downtown Palo Alto.

Skoog became a full professor of chemistry in 1962 and at the time became executive head of the chemistry department, a position he held until his early retirement in 1976.

During his career at Stanford, Skoog mentored several graduate students and published with them numerous papers in various technical journals.

Douglas A. Skoog Memorial Resolution—continued...

During his tenure at Stanford, Skoog served two terms on the academic senate and was on the board of directors of the Stanford Faculty Club when the new clubhouse was being planned. He became President of the Board the year the new clubhouse was occupied.

In 1962 Skoog joined two other chemists to form the Santa Clara Valley section of the American Chemical Society and became its first president. This organization still sponsors monthly scientific meetings for ACS members in the local area.

Skoog had many interests outside of his profession. In the early sixties, Skoog was active in youth baseball organizations and served as president of the Palo Alto Babe Ruth League for one year.

In 1962, Skoog realized a lifelong ambition and obtained a private pilot's license and during the next decade accumulated nearly 600 hours of cross-country flying visiting places in the Rockies, the Southwest, the Midwest and the Pacific Coast states. One of the places was eastern Washington where he became interested in irrigated farming. He ultimately invested in limited partnerships that owned and farmed this type of land. With two other friends, he became a general partner in a limited partnership that owned and farmed 900 acres of irrigated land on which they raised potatoes, mint, alfalfa, corn and wheat at various times. In the early seventies, this land was sold and the partnership dissolved.

Throughout his life in California, Skoog enjoyed the outdoors and backpacked throughout most of the Sierra and much of Santa Lucia Mountains south of Carmel. He also downhill and cross-country skied every winter and was avid and skilled fly fisherman. For many years he was a member of the San Francisco Fly Casting Club, which owns several acres and a clubhouse on the Truckee River just east of the town of Truckee. He and his wife spent several weekends each year at the facility.

Skoog was also a member of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco where he teamed with his close friend Dr. Sydney Mitchell of Palo Alto to do the properties for one or more major theatrical productions each year.

Skoog is survived by his wife of 65 years, his daughter-in-law Tammy of Palo Alto and grandson Jon Douglas of Oakland. He was predeceased by his two sons James Arvid and Jon Douglas.

Committee:  
Professor Richard (Dick) Zare, Chair  
Professor James Collman