

WE HEAR THAT

Francis Yost

Francis Lorraine Yost, emeritus professor of physics at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, died on 6 October 1989. He was 81 years old.

Yost received his bachelor's and master's degrees in physics from the University of Kentucky, finishing in 1931. He earned his PhD from the University of Wisconsin in 1936. Together with his thesis adviser Gregory Breit and John A. Wheeler of the University of North Carolina, Yost published analytical methods for solving the Coulomb Schrödinger equation, which previously had only been solved using the WKB approximation. In a famous 1936 paper (*Physical Review* **49**, 174) Yost, Wheeler and Breit gave the first exact solutions to the repulsive Coulomb potential. Their further work established the importance of these exact solutions for obtaining realistic Coulomb penetrabilities.

In 1936 Yost joined the physics department at Purdue University, where he collaborated with Lothar W. Nordheim. In another landmark paper (*Physical Review* **51**, 942, 1937) the two showed the rather large influence of Coulomb distortions on the interpretation of β -decay rates and on the extraction of matrix elements from decay intensities. Yost went on to assume a series of physics posts in the Washington, DC, area. From 1946 to 1954 he was at the US Naval Ordnance Laboratory, first as chief of the mathematics analysis division and later as chief of the weapons analysis division.

In 1954 Yost returned to Kentucky to become head of the physics department. In 1965 he left that position, but he remained a professor until his retirement in 1973.

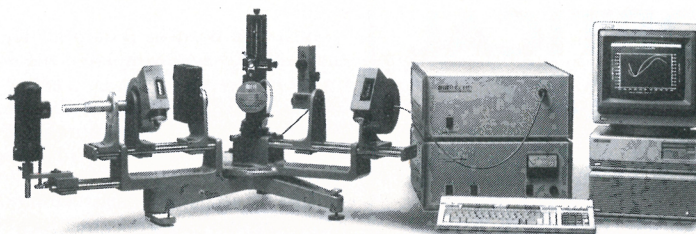
In the mid-1960s Yost developed an introductory course for students with little mathematics background. Under his leadership, the two-semester course, taught from a textbook that Yost himself had written, became so popular that the enrollment swelled to as many as 1500 students.

Yost became known, particularly in his later years, as a man with a dry, sardonic wit. He especially enjoyed telling stories featuring his own foibles.

MARCUS T. McELLISTREM
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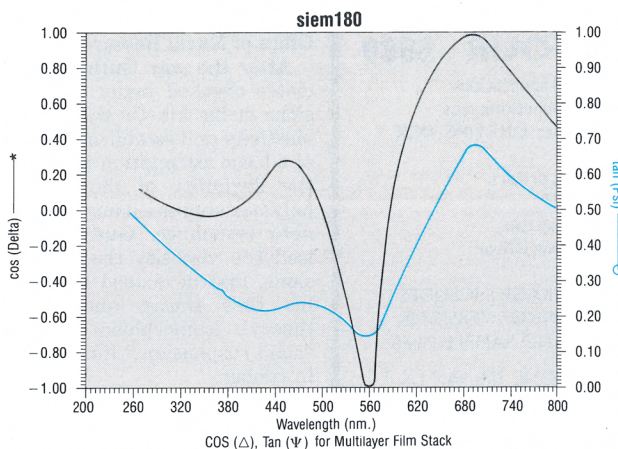
Eugene Guth

Eugene Guth, 84, died on 5 July 1990 from complications following a heart attack. He was an internationally



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