



In Memoriam: Jim Cathey

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With sadness, the electrical engineering community learned that Professor Jim Cathey from University of Kentucky, Editor-in-Chief for more than a decade of *Electric Power Components and Systems*, passed away in February. We join the family in grief for the irreparable loss.

Observing time and time again how short our lives are, we should ask ourselves every so often how we spent it. Did we do enough good for the family and for the wider community to which we belong? In answering this question, we should adjust our trajectory in this world, for as long and as much as we can, based on virtue and talent, as Thomas Jefferson would say if he were still here with us. If Aristotle was right in defining happiness as “when you can develop freely your predominant talent,” then Jim Cathey was happy.

Jim joined the faculty at University of Kentucky decades ago, when I was there as a visiting scholar. Coming from industry, Jim had remarkable practical electrical engineering abilities, and all students who had electric machinery labs or design courses with him would testify to this. He was a devoted and passionate teacher. Although he had many published papers, Jim did not follow the crowd, and his published work was thorough and practical. His textbook on electric machinery is an excellent demonstration of teaching talent: depth, balance, clarity, practicality, and impeccably worked-out numerical examples.

More than a decade ago, Jim took over this journal from its founding editor, Professor Syed A. Nasar. Since then, the review process has been streamlined and an on-line process implemented, with the number of papers published per year more than doubling. This all took time and effort, but Jim was patient and hardworking, and he did it with diligence as a service to the worldwide electrical engineering community. For all of this and much else, the community is most grateful to Jim.

Occasionally, during my many visits to University of Kentucky, Jim invited me to lunch and we discussed matters of education and life. Jim was a religious man. Miguel de Unamuno, the great Spanish writer and philosopher, asked himself in his “personal

journal” whether, in order to be religious, one had to be good first or if it was the other way around. Well, Jim was both. His Ph.D. students, who are now well accomplished in life, will tell you about his goodness and dedication to them.

Jim enjoyed working afternoons and had a special sense of Texan humor; his office door read “Nothing makes sense before noon.” Jim was a quiet and practical engineer, teacher, and researcher who combined hard work and modesty to serve our community in Kentucky and around the globe through *Electric Power Components and Systems*. He did his share with dignity and honor, and we should always remember and praise his memory.

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