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IN MEMORIAM

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**DIANE J. MUNDT (1955-2013)**



On 10 July 2013, a most saddening news came in about the sudden demise of Dr Diane J. Mundt, who lost her life in a car crash, along with two young ladies, her niece Amanda Mundt and Meagan Bell. That tragic accident happened while they were returning to the airport in Port au Prince, Haiti, after one of many charitable visits with Opportunities for Communities, Inc., a not-for-profit organization co-founded by Dr Kenneth Mundt, Diane Mundt's brother, who participated in the mission too.

Diane Mundt was a committed member of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) and of numerous other societies and committees including American College of Epidemiology, International Society for Environmental Epidemiology, ASTM International (formerly American Society for Testing and Materials) – Technical Committee E56 on Nanotechnology, and Society for Epidemiologic Research. She served as the Secretary of Medichem, the international scientific association for occupational and environmental health in the production and use of chemicals since 2008, following the 36<sup>th</sup> Medichem congress in Amsterdam. Soon after that, Diane Mundt gradually became a collaborator of *Archives of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology* and eventually Advisory Editorial Board member in 2012. Her assistance was highly valued, especially in publishing the thematic section of issue 2/2012, containing articles based on presentations given at the 39<sup>th</sup> International Medichem congress in Heidelberg, Germany and the Medichem mini-symposium in Vienna, Austria, both held in 2011.

Diane Mundt earned her Master of Science degree from Harvard University, School of Public Health in 1979 and a Doctoral degree in epidemiology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1990. She

was trained as a postdoctoral fellow in musculoskeletal epidemiology at the Columbia University, New York City until 1991. She began her career in 1979 in the Environmental Epidemiology Branch, Radiation Studies Section, National Cancer Institute, NIH in Bethesda, MD. She was an epidemiologist with about 30 years of experience in the application of epidemiological methods in the areas of occupational and environmental health, specialising in research and policy applications, systematic evaluation of health effects of chemical compounds in particular, and had an extensive background in the critical review and interpretation of epidemiological studies.

Diane Mundt worked as a Principal Consultant at ENVIRON International Corporation. Her professional activities included heading ENVIRON's team of experts on epidemiology, toxicology, industrial hygiene, and environmental fate and transport of nanomaterials, membership in the Industry Advisory Board to Northeastern University Collaborative Nanoscale Science and Engineering Center for High Rate Nanomanufacturing, directing an epidemiological study of perflourinated surfactant exposure and possible clinical health outcomes, directing a critical review and evaluation of confounding in the occupational asphalt epidemiological literature and a field assessment of historical process changes for a trade organization, directing reviews in the refining and hot mix paving sectors to evaluate and document materials added historically to asphalt in each of these sectors, providing technical and editorial oversight of reviews of the epidemiological and toxicological literature regarding the health effects of dioxin exposure for the Air Force 2002 Ranch Hands Health Study, comprehensive reviewing and summarising of the occupational and environmental epidemiology studies of associations between solvent exposure, including benzene, trichloroethylene, perchloroethylene, methylene chloride, and risk of disease in humans at the request of the Institute of Medicine (IOM), and providing technical and editorial

oversight of reviews of the epidemiological literature for various chemical compounds in support of various litigation matters. She had also managed and provided scientific input to numerous US National Academies committees and served on US university faculties in various capacities, including Georgetown University, Washington, DC and the University of Chicago, Chicago, IL. In an obituary written by her ENVIRON's colleagues, Diane Mundt has been portrayed as a great scientist who has left behind a legacy of excellence in health sciences.

Diane Mundt always performed the tasks she was involved in with high professionalism and, at the same time, constructive criticism and great enthusiasm. She was indeed not only a skilful Medichem officer or our journal's supportive advisor, but above all, a true and close friend to most of her colleagues with whom she worked with all over the world. Notwithstanding the hard blows she herself had to endure from fate when she suddenly lost her beloved husband not so long ago, she kept on working, helping, and encouraging others to do their best. During all this time she

maintained an amiable, friendly, and caring attitude, giving so much more to her fellow beings than she would ever expect to get back from them.

Diane Mundt was a true cosmopolitan and our grief for her demise is amalgamated across artificial geopolitical borders in this joint tribute. She will be remembered as a knowledgeable professional, most kind colleague, an exceptionally warm and sympathetic person with a good soul. As Prof. A. M. Thiess, founder and Honorary President of Medichem put in his Last Good-by Note, in Diane Mundt Medichem has lost a faithful, dedicated and always active member.

Diane Mundt was a great colleague and dear friend on whom we could always count. She will be missed as an irreplaceable member of Medichem and of the Advisory Editorial Board of *Archives of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology*.

*Michael Nasterlack, Steffen Hitzeroth,  
and Martina Piasek*