



Petras Vytautas Avizonis

Foreign Member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences since 1994

Dr. P. V. Avizonis was born August 17, 1935 in Kaunas, Lithuania. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, USA in 1957. He earned a master's degree in physical chemistry in 1959 from the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware. In 1962 he received his PhD in physical chemistry from the University of Delaware.

During the period from August 1961 to March 1962, Dr. Avizonis was a physical chemist for Sun Oil Company, Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania. He was a military physicist from 1962 to 1965 and was assigned to the Air Force Weapons Laboratory (AFWL), where he was responsible for creating, organizing and developing in-house laser technology efforts.

In 1966 Dr. Avizonis became Senior Scientist, Laser Group, Effects Branch, Research Division, AFWL. In this job, he effected the conception, formulation and implementation of the Air Force High Energy Laser Program. He served in this capacity until 1969.

In December 1969, Dr. Avizonis became Technical Director of the Laser Division of AFWL and was responsible for achieving the technical goals of the laser programs. He directed laser research and development with AFWL.

From 1973 to 1983 he was Technical Director of AFWL's Advanced Radiation Technology Office (ARTO), an organization of some 300 scientists and engineers. Responsible for achieving the technical goals of High Energy Laser Program of the Air Force, he directed all laser research and development within ARTO. From 1983 to 1988 he was Technical Director in Advanced Radiation technology Office, (AFWL).

In November 1988, Dr. Avizonis joined Rockwell International Corporate Offices as Director of Defense Systems Analysis on the Research and Engineering corporate staff. He had oversight responsibility for several defense related projects and business opportunity evaluations including potential new acquisitions.

In December 1989, Dr. Avizonis was reassigned as Director, Scientific Applications, reporting to the President of Strategic Defense Systems. In 1991 he was formally appointed as Chief Scientist, Strategic Defense Center.

Dr. Avizonis is a member of the American Physical Society, American Optical Society – Fellow, and SPIE (International Society for Optical Engineering). Foreign Member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (1994).

Honors and Awards

AFSC (Air Force Specialty Code) Award for Scientific Achievement, 1966 and 1969. Arthur S. Fleming Award for One of Ten Outstanding Young Men and Women in the Federal Service, 1972. Fellow of American Optical Society, 1974. Senior Executive Service Meritorious Executive Rank, 1983.

Publications

He has published about 200 scientific papers. Here are just a few of them:

Effect of Piston and Tilt Bias Errors in Multiple Wave fronts Interference (1989);

Interference of diffracted multiple Wave front in the geometric shadow of the Fresnel region (1989);

The Chemically Pumped Oxygen-Iodine Laser (1990);

Small Signal Gain in the Oxygen-Iodine Laser, (1990);

Passively Q -switched transverse-diode-pumped Nd^{3+} :YLF laser oscillator (1992).