Memorial Service for Jerry Marsden

Opening Remarks

Ares Rosakis

Friday, January 28, 2011

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Caltech on this sad day. For those of you whom I have not met yet, I am Ares Rosakis, Chair of the Division of Engineering and Applied Science here at Caltech.

I was not Jerry Marsden’s close personal friend and never had the chance to meet his wonderful family before November when I first met some of them during the ASME conference in Vancouver where we presented his sister Judy and his niece Cindy with the Caughey Award in nonlinear dynamics which he was unfortunately never able to receive in person.

I had the great pleasure to work with Jerry very closely as a colleague in the Division, and he truly touched me with his depth in so many ways. As a faculty member, Jerry was the perfect academic colleague. He was positive, open-minded, and absolutely brilliant. As a Division elder, he was compassionate, wise and always ready to endorse any new idea with true intellectual merit. In his own work, he made enormous impacts on many fields through his books and intellectual contributions, and served as a very thoughtful mentor to many, many students and younger colleagues throughout the world. We will hear from some of these individuals this afternoon.

Jerry captured the spirit of this small, but enormously influential place called Caltech—and we are so
fortunate that he made Caltech his home for several decades.

When we lose a great friend, our grieving for his loss can perhaps be balanced by our celebration of
the qualities that we most loved and cherished. Jerry was the consummate scholar and gentleman, and
friend to many. I know he lives on in our hearts.

I would now like to introduce a close friend and colleague of Jerry's, Professor Richard Murray, who
will also serve as our Master of Ceremony today.

Ares J. Rosakis, Pasadena, CA