

exploration systems and instruments. The USSSTSC includes the U.S. SALE ExCom and the Committee chairs.

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The U.S. SALE Science and Technology Steering Committee includes the U.S. SALE ExCom and Stefan Vogel (Northern Illinois University), Slawek Tulaczyk (University of California, Santa Cruz), Brian Lanoil (University

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The committee chair leads the committee, recruits committee members, and communicates with the broader community. The topical committees will operate relatively autonomously, responding to requests for advice, organizing workshops and meetings as appropriate to set the U.S. SALE agenda in each focus area, and coordinating activities in each area.

The chair will also identify funding opportunities and lead, or assist, community responses to them. The chair will be the liaison with other

SALE committees and organizations to develop cross-disciplinary connections and promote venues to consider common issues.

Those interests in SALE research and exploration may contact the SALE Program Office (m-kennicutt@tamu.edu, <http://salepo.tamu.edu/>). Statements of interest will be sent to the appropriate contact within the U.S. SALE Program.

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# GEOPHYSICISTS

## Paul Melchior (1925–2004)

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On 15 September 2004, Paul Melchior passed away. He was 78 years old. Melchior contributed immensely to the development of geophysics and geodesy, in particular in the field of Earth tides. During his long and fruitful scientific career, Melchior had been director of the International Center for Earth Tides (1958–1995), president of the Commission of Earth Rotation (1958–1995) of the International Astronomical Union (1967–1970), and president of the International Council for Science's Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA) (1974–1978).

He began measuring Earth tides in 1957 with the Verbaandert-Melchior Quartz tiltmeters. In 1973, his skillful and accurate interpretation of Earth tide gravity observations led the U.S. Air Force to entrust his team to carry out Trans World Tidal Gravity Profiles. A to-



tal of 127 tidal stations were installed worldwide for observing the tides at least six months. This exceptional data set was used to assess the precision of the oceanic tidal models derived from TOPEX-Poseidon (the TOPography EXperiment

for ocean circulation, Joint U.S.-French orbital mission), launched in 1992 to track changes in sea-level height with radar altimeters ago. Always seeking more precise observations in gravimetry, Melchior succeeded in raising funds to install the first superconducting gravimeter in Europe, in Brussels in 1981.

From 1973 to 1991, Melchior served as secretary general of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG). He was nominated to be director of the Royal Observatory of Belgium in 1981, and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1990. He was a professor at the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium. During his life, Melchior was bestowed with numerous international honors and distinctions. Notable among these were the title of baron, awarded in 1993 by the King of the Belgians, and his status as Fellow of the AGU since 1978.

His motto was "In omnibus terris amicus," A friend in the whole world."

—VERONIQUE DEHANT, Royal Observatory of Belgium, Brussels; and OLIVIER FRANCIS, European Center for Geodynamics and Seismology, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg