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OBITUARY

ELIZABETH THEMSEL
1937–2006

Elizabeth Themsel, our long-time Editorial Secretary, passed away on Friday, July 28, a victim of complications resulting from cancer. Her death was a great sorrow for all of us here at the Astronomy Institute.

Elizabeth joined our Institute back in 1974, and very soon became involved with the *Revista Mexicana de Astronomía y Astrofísica*. She was trained as a bilingual secretary, and in her first jobs acquired a considerable experience. She was proficient not only in English, but also in French, German and Italian. But apart from her linguistic abilities, she was musically gifted. To pursue her musical interests, she first completed her pre-university studies while already working full-time at our Institute, and then obtained her Bachelor's degree in Music from the National University, Mexico. She had a potent and beautiful soprano voice, and she was often called to participate in concerts and recitals with several choirs, both as a chorister and as a soloist.

The history of the *Revista Mexicana de Astronomía y Astrofísica* is inextricably linked with Elizabeth. She joined us almost from the beginning, indeed, with the second issue of the very first volume. At first, the manuscripts were prepared for the printer's using an electric typewriter. The next stage was to employ a composer, and so on until the present time, the era of electronic publishing and Latex templates. Each stage implied an arduous learning process for Elizabeth, but she never despaired, and courageously learned every new technology. Indeed, she audited several introductory Astronomy courses to become familiar with the terminology and subject matter of the papers submitted for publication.

Her great sense of responsibility, dedication and commitment to our *Revista Mexicana de Astronomía y Astrofísica* was greatly appreciated by the various Editors as well as by the authors. She took upon herself a very careful and painstaking revision of each and every typescript, and was feared by the authors for her pointed remarks about sloppy references –she was, of course, usually right!

Elizabeth was a very warm and generous person, always ready to listen and help. Having a very small family herself, she adopted the entire staff of our Institute as her "extended family" –witness the sense of loss and bereavement prevailing among us after she left. We shall sorely miss her both as an invaluable collaborator and as a true friend.

Christine Allen and Silvia Torres-Peimbert