I regret having to begin this column by announcing another sudden passing in the IEEE Microwave Theory and Techniques Society (MTT-S) community: Dr. Larry Whicker. He passed away shortly after returning home from the June MTT-S Administrative Committee (AdCom) meeting, which was colocated with the IEEE MTT-S International Microwave Symposium (IMS) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

I cannot remember an AdCom meeting without Dr. Whicker’s presence. Having served as MTT-S president in 1977, he demonstrated great dedication to the MTT-S and its members up to his last AdCom meeting. Over the many years, he served as administrator for several AdCom committees and, in particular, the Education Committee when I was chair. I commend his extensive patience when dealing with the recipients of student fellowship and scholarship awards. Explaining U.S. tax documents to international recipients required a calm and constructive communication manner, which Dr. Whicker had mastered very well.

Among his other duties, he managed the Distinguished Microwave Lecturer (DML) program; DMLs are excellent speakers on emerging topics that Chapters can invite for their seminars. Larry, you will be greatly missed by the MTT-S community.

New Initiatives for Membership Value
As I mentioned in my previous “President’s Column,” membership value will be a strong focus during my term. AdCom subcommittees are brainstorming about new initiatives in an attempt to increase the membership experience. One such initiative, which was approved at the June AdCom meeting, is to offer reduced conference registration fees to MTT-S members, compared with registration fees for IEEE Members.

A pilot program involving a handful of MTT-S-owned conferences is running this fall. By the time you read this column, it is expected that the AdCom will have made a decision on rolling this reduced conference registration rate out across most of the MTT-S-owned conferences in 2019. Let me repeat that each MTT-S member is welcome to send me suggestions for enhancing MTT-S membership value.

RWW 2019
This current magazine issue focuses on the 2019 IEEE Radio & Wireless Week (RWW 2019). RWW 2019 is not just a single event; rather, it encompasses a number of one- to two-day topical
conferences. As in recent years, RWW 2019 will host five topical conferences:

- IEEE Radio and Wireless Symposium
- IEEE Topical Conference on RF/Microwave Power Amplifiers for Radio and Wireless Applications
- IEEE Topical Meeting on Silicon Monolithic Integrated Circuits in RF Systems
- IEEE Topical Conference on Wireless Sensors and Sensor Networks
- IEEE Topical Workshop on the Internet of Space.

You can find more information about these meetings in the magazine.

New in 2019 is the colocation of the Automatic RF Techniques Group (ARFTG) conference with RWW 2019. The ARFTG is a non-profit organization, independent from the IEEE and MTT-S. It is mostly known for its conference on microwave (and beyond) measurement techniques, but it also is a strong contributor to metrology standardization efforts with the IEEE. The ARFTG also has a student program, the ARFTG Roger Pollard Student Fellowship in Microwave Measurement. In addition, the ARFTG organizes two annual conferences, of which the spring conference has been colocated with IMS over many years. The fall symposium, which also hosts a short course and workshops, has usually been organized as a stand-alone event. This year, the ARFTG symposium is moving to January 2019 to be colocated with RWW. It is expected that having a combined event will be attractive to both RWW and ARFTG attendees and exhibitors.

Finally, I am honored that the MTT-S Women in Microwaves (WiM) Committee invited me for their first interview in the magazine’s “Women in Microwaves” column.