

EDITORIAL

This special issue of the *Journal of Automata, Languages, and Combinatorics* is dedicated to

Professor Dr. Detlef Wotschke

on the occasion of his 65th birthday on April 14, 2009.



AFL 2008 – Photo by György Vaszil

Detlef Wotschke studied mathematics at the University of Technology in Brunswick (Germany). In 1974, he obtained the Ph.D. in Engineering from the University of California at Los Angeles. His thesis on *Boolean Operators on Languages* was supervised by Sheila Greibach. He started his academic career as an Assistant Professor at the Computer Science Department of the Pennsylvania State University. In 1980, he got the position as a Full Professor for Programming Languages and Compilers (Formal Languages and Automata) at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt am Main, which he still maintains. He was a visiting scientist at the University of California (Berkeley), University of

Paris VI, Pennsylvania State University, University of Rochester, Bell Laboratories, AVAYA Labs Research and Stevens Institute of Technology (all three in New Jersey).

As a scientist, Detlef Wotschke is well-known for his work on closure properties of formal languages, concepts on measures and degrees of nondeterminism of automata and languages, as well as on descriptional complexity aspects of machines, parsers and languages.

Detlef Wotschke is very active in different computer science organizations to promote the topics related to descriptional complexity. We mention here only some of them:

- Chairman of the Working Group 1.2 *Descriptional Complexity* of the International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP) in 1997–2004,
- Member of the IFIP Technical Committee on *Foundations of Computer Science* in 1997–2004,

- Initiator of the series of workshops on *Descriptive Complexity of Automata, Grammars, and Related Structures* (nowadays *Descriptive Complexity of Formal Systems* after unification with the workshop series *Formal Descriptions and Software Reliability*); he was a co-chairman of the program committee of ten workshops in these series and is the co-chairman of the steering committee of the series.

Detlef Wotschke also held some functions in the academic self-government. For instance, he was dean, vice-dean and member of the senate.

The various authors and their contributions to this special issue are related to Detlef Wotschke and his work, especially within his activities in IFIP and the workshop series. They document his high international reputation. Each contribution has passed the standard reviewing process of the journal.

We would like to thank all those who helped to produce this special issue, especially the authors and referees for their timely cooperation as well as Bianca Truthe and Bernd Reichel for their editing work.

Dear Professor Wotschke, we all wish you a Happy Birthday and many more healthy and successful years to come.

Jürgen Dassow and Andreas Malcher
Magdeburg and Gießen, April 2009