

In Memoriam

Anne-Marie GONTIER

(1966-2010)



Anne-Marie Gontier, our colleague and friend at Department SYRTE of Paris Observatory, passed away on 24 September, aged only 44, less than two days after the end of the Journées in which she participated.

Anne-Marie was an astronomer at Paris Observatory since 1995 and was responsible for the IVS Analysis Center of Paris Observatory since the beginning of the International VLBI Service for Geodesy and Astrometry (IVS). Anne-Marie was the mother of two young children.

Anne-Marie played a major role in the activities of our Department SYRTE within Paris Observatory, especially on VLBI analysis and processing, the maintenance of the IAU celestial reference frame and the functioning of the IERS and IVS. She was an expert in the field of Earth rotation and on the modeling, analysis and processing of VLBI observations for astrometric and geodetic applications. She was particularly active and effective in the IAU working group that developed the extragalactic celestial reference system and frame which were adopted by the IAU in 1997, as the International Celestial Reference System (ICRS) and Frame (ICRF). She developed VLBI processing and analysis systems, regularly supervising the work of students and young visitors and being involved in various scientific collaborations with astronomers and geodesists. During the period 2006-2009, as a member of the IERS/IVS working group, she actively contributed to the second realization, ICRF2, of the International Celestial Reference Frame, which was adopted by the IAU in 2009. Anne-Marie also invested much time and effort in general interest tasks for our department SYRTE, for Paris Observatory, for the French national astronomy community and more generally for the IERS and IVS communities.

All her colleagues and friends appreciated Anne-Marie for her kindness, her dedication, generosity and dynamism. She had an exceptional sense of duty and always wanted to fulfill her commitments whatever the difficulties. She has been of precious help for the organization of the Journées “Systèmes de référence spatio-temporels” for a long time. She was of great help once again in 2010, being actively involved in the local organization of the “Journées 2010” and attending all the sessions of the first two days of the meeting until Tuesday 21 September, despite her serious health problems.

We all have been shocked by the loss of our precious colleague and friend, we miss her very much and we share the grief of her family. We especially think with great sorrow of the terrible loss that her disappearance represents for her young children.

These Proceedings are dedicated to her memory.

Nicole CAPITAINE and Noel DIMARCQ
Chairs of the SOC and the LOC