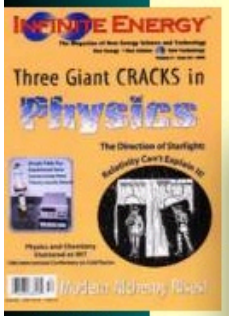
INFINITE ENERGY
The Magazine of New Energy Science and Technology



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Review of the Tenth International Conference on Cold Fusion (ICCF10)

Eugene F. Mallove

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The Return of Steve Jones

Those who recall the history of cold fusion understand the major role played by physics Professor Steven E. Jones of Brigham Young University. It was he and his colleagues at BYU who had long had an interest in the generic possibility of "cold fusion" occurring within the body of Earth, and in so-called muon-catalyzed "cold fusion," which had even been the title of a Scientific American article by Jones in July 1987. Jones et al., in parallel with Drs. Fleischmann and Pons at the University of Utah (only some 45 miles away), had performed electrochemical experiments that led in the spring of 1989 to public reports of scientific anomalies from electrochemical cells, after the somewhat pre-emptive announcement by the two University of Utah professors of excess thermal energy production. Whereas Fleischmann and Pons had focussed their attention on precise calorimetric measurements of excess heat from pristine heavy water-LiOD cells with Pd/Pt electrodes (though they had also announced neutron and tritium measurements), Jones at that time was using a "Mother Earth Soup" of materials in a Pd/Pt electrolytic cell in an effort to mimic conditions within the Earth. He dealt exclusively then with nuclear measurements, specifically the signatures of neutrons emanating from his cells. Neither Jones nor Fleischmann and Pons were believed by most mainstream physicists— then or now, but Jones' claim being the "more believable," fared better in the press in the early days. Bitter rivalries emerged and Jones, in particular, became an outspoken opponent of excess heat findings, but he never went back on his belief that his cells were giving off low-level neutrons. It turns out that both Utah groups were basically initially on the right track.

It was thus an honorable form of "closure" that Steve Jones attended ICCF10, after a long absence (since roughly 1993) from such gatherings. He was given the great privilege of giving the first plenary session talk at ICCF10, and he did not disappoint us. He produced what appear to be nearly unassailable scientific evidence of nuclear emanations from presumptively chemical systems. Even these very low-level nuclear radiations— charged particles as well as neutrons— are still regarded as impossible by establishment physicists. Later during ICCF10, as others presented their astonishing work to complement that of Jones and also of Fleischmann and Pons, it was evident from Jones' generous statements about the entire conference that his horizons had been expanded. He remarked, "I am learning that there can be many miracles. . ." Perhaps his full public acceptance of excess heat results, in the context of his own results, will eventually occur.