



**AMIA** the association of moving image archivists

## **1998 Silver Light Award Winner: Jim Wheeler**

Tribute by Jeannette Kopak and Jim Lindner

Jim Wheeler, one of America's leading advocates of video preservation, is the 1998 recipient of the Association of Moving Image Archivists' Silver Light recognition award, which recognizes special achievements and career contributions to the field of moving image archiving. The award will be presented to Wheeler at AMIA's annual awards luncheon on December 10, 1998 during the association's annual conference in Miami.

Jim Wheeler is truly a pioneer in the world of magnetic media preservation. Although not an archivist himself, he has fought battles on their behalf for years. Before most of us even knew we had problems with tape preservation, he was trying to solve them. He has taken an active role in archival issues for many years. As an engineer with Ampex he understood long before many other engineers the fragility of magnetic media. As an active member of SMPTE he lobbied hard for better storage and handling standards. He also understood long before the rest of his engineering colleagues the dangers of obsolete formats and continues to work within the engineering and archival communities to find the solutions.

Jim is truly a renaissance man. As the inventor of "Instant Replay" and co-inventor of video slow motion while at Ampex, he has changed the way we view television and the technology behind it forever. Jim is also active with the Gorilla Foundation and can tel you some up close and personal stories about Koko. Jim is an expert in rail transit, and has been involved in high speed links and urban planning in Northern California for many years. As an amateur archaeologist, Jim is at home discussing Easter Island, and as a supporter of environmental causes he has worked with the Sierra Club on environmental issues.

Jim Wheeler is amazingly generous with his time, giving advice to archivists on the care and handling of magnetic media. He has actively participated in conferences, the AMIA Newsletter and the AMIA listserv. Jim has always been there for the moving image archive community, with his patience, his wisdom and his knidness.