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Personalia

50^{th} birthday of Christian von Ferber

On May 15, 2011 Christian von Ferber – member of the Editorial Board of "Condensed Matter Physics" and renowned expert in the fields of soft matter physics and complex systems – celebrated his 50^{th} birthday.

Christian von Ferber was born on May 15, 1961 in Göttingen, Germany. After obtaining a Master's degree in physics (Dipl. Phys.) in 1988 at the University of Bonn, he continued his studies as a Ph.D. student at the University of Essen where he defended his dissertation (Dr. rer. nat., summa cum laude) in 1993. His subsequent research was performed in several leading scientific centers, including Tel Aviv University, where he spent two years as a Fellow of a prestigious Minerva Foundation, and the universities of Düsseldorf and Freiburg where he was a research fellow. He was also Guest Professor at the University of Linz (Austria) and a Marie Curie Fellow at the University of Krakow (Poland). In 2003 he earned his Habilitation (Venia Legendi in Physics) at the University of Freiburg and since then holds a privatdozent position there. Since 2006 he is also Senior Lecturer at the Applied Mathematics Research Centre in Coventry University (UK). The scientific interests of Christian von Ferber mainly concern soft matter physics and complex systems. In the course of deep, systematic and vigorous research he became a recognized expert in the fields of statistical physics, polymers and complex network theory. Subjects of his analyses range from complex polymers, colloids and disordered magnets to transportation networks. A particular feature of his scientific approach is the skilful application of a variety of modern analytical and computational methods. Working in different fields allows him to deploy the methods developed for one branch to another and in such a way to tackle highly complicated problems in sometimes unusual, and always very efficient, ways. Scaling in complex polymer systems, multifractal phenomena, phase behavior of polyelectrolytes and surfractants, network dynamics and attack-vulnerability are only some of the phenomena which have recently become better understood due to his devoted work. His colleagues know and acknowledge his particular skills in capturing the main features of certain phenomena, suggesting appropriate models that explain these features and, finally, treating a problem both numerically and analytically.

Numerous students in different universities of Germany, Austria, Ukraine and the UK gratefully acknowledge Christian von Ferber's pedagogical activity: his perfect knowledge of the subject, his lecturing skills and engagement make his lectures very attractive for audiences. These features together with the high level of his scientific results make him a very desirable participant and speaker at international conferences too. Currenly he is involved as a major partner in several research projects on national and international levels, closely collaborating with research groups in France, Germany, Portugal, the USA, and the UK. His collaboration with Ukraine started some twenty years ago and resulted in numerous common studies and co-supervisorship of PhD students.

All who know Christian personally highly appreciate the charming features of his personality: his openness and readiness to help in different situations, his tact and generosity, his sense of humor, his scholarship and interest in different fields. All these makes communication with Christian so rewarding and desirable.

On the occasion his 50$^{\mathrm{th}}$ birthday, the Editorial board of CMP, colleagues and friends warmy congratulate Christian von Ferber and wish him and his family continuing good health and to enjoy many adventures and discoveries in his future scientific travels.