

# Script: John Nelson Chiasson

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## I. SLIDE 1

My short presentation cannot do justice to this great man, John Nelson Chiasson, who passed away on February 26, 2025.

The title is taken from a Facebook page that I stumbled upon approximately 4 years ago - John Chiasson: An American Treasure. It was such a great description that I printed out a few pictures from this FB page and hung them on the desk he used to work at with his mentee, Mansi, who is also with us today, having travelled from California.

## II. SLIDE 2

I got to know John when I interviewed here at Boise State back in Fall 2016. During my job talk, John noticed a mistake in one of my slides and pointed it out to me.

Much later, I got to meet some of the members of his family; Laura and Tim, in Istanbul. I met his twin brother Bill, about whom I had heard so much, when John sadly passed away. Bill and Laura sent me a bunch of pictures from their stack, which I really appreciated and sprinkled throughout this presentation. This is the phase of John's life I had no idea about. Look how fit and handsome he was in his youth!

Bill mentioned how important this wand was to both him and John. They found this wand during the time they spent in Africa while their father was taking a sabbatical there.

Even though John and I met 8-9 years ago, we shared a lot of fond memories. This picture on the left is taken at Mountain Home, where there is a US air base. We have been working on several projects in collaboration with Pitch Aeronautics, whose CEO, Zach Adams, is also an F-15 pilot! He had invited us for his last flight before he took a sabbatical year from the Air Force.

The picture on the right is from last year, when John invited my wife and me to his house and cooked us a dinner, whose recipe he learned from his Swiss friend, Thomas Keller.

This picture on the left is taken in Stanley, ID, when we visited in 2021, with our research team. We were there just this last Saturday to disperse John's ashes at one of his favorite places to visit.

## III. SLIDE 3

John was, among other things, a brilliant academician. The seeds of this brilliance were planted when he attended the University of Arizona to study mathematics. He used to tell

me that he always liked math because everything was well-defined and there was no room for hand-wavy arguments - one of John's most important traits:

John was a rigorous man - he did not tolerate artificial, phony arguments or opinions.

He then switched gears to become a master engineer at Washington State University, and a doctor of Control Sciences at University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

## IV. SLIDE 4

John went on to produce a brilliant academic career. He was a top 1% scientist according to ...had an h-index of 52!

I had the honor and pleasure to produce his final journal paper, working with him on the topic of state estimation and drone navigation around power lines using the magnetic field produced by the three-phase currents. This was a project we completed in collaboration with Pitch Aeronautics.