Over the past few years, the rare earths went from being a mostly ignored part of the periodic table to being at the forefront of the conversation for a number of commercial, technical, political and strategic reasons. Starting with some historical background, this talk will explain what has happened, how these elements inconspicuously connect to our daily lives, why they are important to us and where things are likely to go in the future.

**Stan Trout, Ph.D.**

Stan’s professional life, almost forty years, has been almost evenly divided between the permanent magnet and rare earth industries. For the last twelve years, he has run a consultancy called Spontaneous Materials serving clients in these industries on a wide variety of technical and commercial projects.

Dr. Trout is a registered professional engineer, holds a B. S. in Physics from Lafayette College and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in Metallurgy and Materials Science. He is a member of the UK and IEEE Magnetics Societies.