

December 2006
Issue 133

2
2007 AAS/AAPT
Joint Meeting

3
AAS Election

4-10
Candidate
Statements

10
Honored
Elsewhere

17
Education
News

Back Page
Washington News



The American
Astronomical Society
2000 Florida Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 328-2010
aas@aas.org
www.aas.org

AAS NEWSLETTER

A Publication for the members of the American Astronomical Society

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

J. Craig Wheeler, aaspres@aas.org

I am becoming aware of the pitfalls of trying to write a column two months in advance that will have some relevance, but not be overtaken by events by the time it is published. I mentioned in my last column that we were planning to submit, under the auspices of CAPP, another set of questions to NASA Administrator Griffin. By the time you read the October Newsletter, those questions had been submitted and promptly answered. The exchange was posted electronically to AAS members and I hope you all had a chance to read and ponder it. The AAS submitted a press release with comments by officers along with the questions and answers. Here is my quote from the press release: "President Wheeler said, 'The Columbia disaster put the state of NASA, its science programs, and the human space flight program under a bright focus. As a result, NASA has been tasked to do too much with too few resources. Astronomers have been traumatized as plans on which they have built their careers and planned the careers of their students have been constricted or cancelled. Astronomers do not do these things because they will lead to immense riches. They do them because their hearts and souls are captured by the wonder at the Universe they are privileged to explore. That is why they leap to the defense of projects, long in the planning, and consuming of their scientific passions, that are threatened with cut-backs and cancellation. This dialog with Administrator Griffin is one means by which NASA and the astronomy community can work together to accomplish the most exciting, productive science with the most efficient use of taxpayers dollars.'"

In my last letter, I also mentioned concern about adequate community input into NASA decisions. Hours after I emailed that off, three senior members of the NASA Advisory Council, comprising most of the Science Committee, either resigned or were asked to resign. The point of contention was just how advice will flow from the community, to NAC and the NASA Administrator, and thence to the Science Mission Directorate. Administrator Griffin thinks that the old system resulted in cacophonous, conflicting advice. Astronomers are concerned that (among other things) the new system will not provide sufficiently flexible and expert advice in changing circumstances. Everyone is concerned that NASA does not have the budget to complete its charge. There have been multitudinous exchanges on this issue and I believe it is fair to say that it has not been resolved.

Administrator Griffin gave a speech at the Goddard Space Flight Center on September 12 addressing these and related issues. That speech was also widely circulated and I urge you to read it if you are interested in trying to divine the NASA tea leaves. Many astronomers, including the AAS administration, are still trying to parse what it means to say that astronomers are suppliers to NASA. I think most of us view our relation to NASA as much more of an integrated enterprise engaged in common goals, neither "suppliers" nor "customers." We will have a CAPP session at the Seattle meeting to explore these issues.

Another piece of reading you might find worthwhile is the rather pointed article in *Nature* regarding past Decadal Surveys that raised issues of how the next one should be handled. Plans are just now getting underway for this very important process. A special session in Seattle is scheduled.

By the time you read this, the results of the NSF Senior Review should be public. That is also a process that will deeply impact our community, will be a topic in Seattle, and will affect the Decadal Survey.

We live in interesting times.

AAS Executive Office Staff

Kevin B. Marvel, Executive Officer
Wayne Bird, Education Assistant
Susana E. Deustua, Director of Education
Kelli Gilmore, Director of Meeting Services
Scott Idem, Network & Systems Administrator
Judith M. Johnson, Publications Manager
Laura Kay-Roth, Manager, Finance & Administration
Natalie F. Patterson, Financial Assistant
Faye C. Peterson, Manager, Membership Services
Crystal M. Tinch, Publications Specialist

The **AAS Newsletter** (ISSN 8750-9350) is published in March, June, August, October, and December by the American Astronomical Society, 2000 Florida Avenue, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20009-1231;
Tel: 202-328-2010, Fax: 202-234-2560,
aas@aas.org; www.aas.org.

The \$125.00 annual membership dues for the American Astronomical Society include \$3.00 that is applied toward a subscription to the **AAS Newsletter**. Periodical postage paid at Washington, DC.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to AAS, 2000 Florida Avenue, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20009-1231.

Items of general interest to be considered for publication in the **AAS Newsletter** should be sent to crystal@aas.org. Appropriate pictures are welcome. For information about deadlines and submitting articles, see www.aas.org/publications/newsletter.html. Items submitted to the **AAS Newsletter** are not automatically included in the AAS Electronic Announcements or vice versa. Submit electronic announcement items to ela@aas.org.

Judith M. Johnson, Editor
Crystal M. Tinch, Associate Editor
Jeff Linsky, U. Colorado, Associate Editor, Letters

Manuscript Submissions Using AASTeX

The *AJ* and *ApJ* accept manuscripts electronically that are prepared using the AASTeX manuscript package. Following are some important addresses for obtaining information about AASTeX and electronic submission.

AASTeX Homepage:

www.journals.uchicago.edu/AAS/AASTeX

User Support: aastex-help@aas.org

Journal Homepages/Manuscript Submission:

AJ, *ApJ*, *ApJL*

www.journals.uchicago.edu/ApJ/information.html

AAS Email Policy

To unsubscribe from AAS emails, contact address@aas.org

For address changes email address@aas.org



2007 AAS/AAPT JOINT MEETING

Get ready for some excitement this coming January when the AAS meets with the Historical Astronomy Division, and the High Energy Astrophysics Division, and the American Association of Physics Teachers in Seattle, WA from 5-10 January 2007.

The meeting days are shifted compared to normal AAS meetings to accommodate AAPT and scheduling constraints with the convention center in Seattle. **Please note that the opening reception is on Saturday evening, 6 January, and scientific sessions begin Sunday, 7 January.** We apologize for the inconvenience of this date shift to our members.

The program is jam-packed with exciting lectures, special sessions, town hall meetings and evening events. The lovely city of Seattle hosts our joint meeting with a range of activities and attractions (from pool halls to opera halls to museums and harbor boat tours) that will be sure to delight and inspire you during your time away from the meeting. Intrepid hikers and skiers can combine a few extra days to enjoy their pastimes in the lovely (but chilly) northwest as well.

The preliminary meeting schedule is now online at the AAS homepage. AAPT workshops (AAS members may register for these online when registering for the meeting at additional cost) begin Friday, 5 January and continue on Saturday, 6 January. The AAS Career Workshop takes place on Saturday as well and provides excellent advice and insight for job seekers.

In addition to a wide range of contributed scientific sessions, invited speakers include: Kathryn Thornton (NASA), Julianne Dalcanton (U. Washington), Rachel Somerville (STScI), Wick Haxton (U. Washington), Andrew Westphal (UC, Berkeley), Michael Brown (Caltech), Chris Quigg (Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory), Eric Wilcots (U. Wisconsin) and Warren Brown (CfA).

Prize lectures include: the Pierce Prize (Bryan Gaensler, U. Sydney), the Warner Prize (Re'em Sari, Caltech), AIP's Gemant Award (Marcia Bartusiak), the Heineman Prize (Marc Davis, UC Berkeley), the Richtmyer Memorial Lecture (Alexei Filippenko, UC Berkeley), the Cannon Award (Lisa Kewley, U. Hawaii) and the Oersted Medalist Lecture (Carl Wieman, JILA)

The AAS meeting continues its important role as an opportunity to spotlight policy-related activities with town hall meetings for NASA, NRAO, and NSF, a special JWST reception and exhibition of a full-scale satellite mock-up, an AAS-organized session on the future of science at NASA, a special NSF session on the recommendations of the senior review, an initial session on the upcoming Decadal Survey, a meeting on the EPP2010 report and a number of other activities.

Finally, the High Energy Astrophysics and Historical Astronomy Divisions will be meeting with the AAS. Special HEAD sessions include: the HEAD business meeting, GLAST Science Opportunities and Short Gamma Ray Bursts (in addition to the ROSSI prize lecture mentioned above). HAD sessions include a session on how 20th Century Observatory Directors Get Chosen (ladder-climbers pay attention!), the annual HAD business meeting and a HAD contributed session.

We promise a great meeting in a great location. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate. Thanks to each and every contributor, special session organizer and especially our abstract sorters. Without your hard work and assistance, AAS meetings would not be possible.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kevin Marvel, marvel@aes.org

Fall is a very busy time at the AAS Executive Office. This year was busier than most. Not only are we preparing for an exciting meeting in January 2007 with the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT), but we also helped organize the record-setting Division of Planetary Science meeting and handled the abstracts for the High Energy Astrophysics Division meeting, both held in October.

As part of our core mission, the AAS seeks to promote astronomy and closely related sciences in any way possible. One way is to take care of the logistical planning for meetings and another to handle the abstract publishing for meetings. We continue to try and enhance the way we provide both these services, striving always for cost-effective solutions that work smoothly.

One substantial change made recently to our service provision is the transition from one abstract submission system to a new one. Our old abstract processing system was developed by the AAS and represented a significant improvement over the old blue-line submission forms (if you don't know what I'm talking about here, ask your more senior colleagues).

The old system walked members through a submission form, gathering key author information and allowing the uploading of an abstract formatted using LaTeX. The old system was composed of a front-end submission system and a back-end set of scripts for processing. Once submitted, abstracts had to be sorted by hand requiring us to print out all abstracts and bring local DC astronomers into the AAS Executive Office to sort. Errors often happened, but many were caught by AAS staff. Some still slipped through to the final published version. The scripts took some expertise to run and, when our talented developer moved on to other career goals, modifications became prohibitively expensive.

The new system, used by the Optical Society of America, the American Heart Association and many other organizations, uses an online submission system to accept abstracts into a sophisticated database system that allows us greater control over the abstracts. A nice feature of the new system is the ability to use a wider geographic range of volunteers to sort the abstracts using the online functionality of the database. The High Energy Astrophysics Division already took advantage of this functionality to sort the abstracts from their home offices located across the country. Meeting attendees can build their own personal itinerary and download it to their PDA or laptop.

One feature we lost, that many members enjoyed, was the ability to fully control the layout of their abstract using LaTeX. In fact, much staff time was spent in the old system removing incorrect LaTeX formatting or undoing formatting not allowed in the *Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society*. The new system focuses on the information content of the abstract. Full functionality for symbols is provided in the new system as well. Perhaps the best feature of the new system is that the service provider actively updates the software and its features, letting us, the user, focus on other things.

Any change brings problems as issues are worked out. The new abstract submission system is no exception. Publications Manager Judy Johnson is working actively with the service provider to smooth out the difficulties and enhance the existing features. The success of the new system has had so far is due in large part to her dedicated efforts. Bob Milkey and I made the decision to move to the new system to save money through saved staff time. We knew the first year would be a bit rough and through Judy's efforts, the transition has been easier than we expected. All the bells and whistles aren't there yet, but we are well on our way to having a better, less expensive abstract system. Please be patient as we bring this new service up to the level of performance we demand for our members.

AAS ELECTION

The AAS will be conducting its elections using an electronic ballot again this year. When the balloting opens each AAS eligible member for whom we have an e-mail on file will receive an e-mail request to vote. Voting will be accomplished through the "members-only" area of the AAS web site which requires your ID and password.

Members for whom we do not have e-mail addresses will receive a paper ballot by first class mail.

Any other member wishing to use a paper ballot may request one by fax to (202) 234-2560 or by e-mail to ballot@aes.org. Please include your member number with your request.

AIP/APS CONGRESSIONAL SCIENCE FELLOWSHIPS

Experience a unique year in Washington, DC! Make a personal contribution to U.S. policy while learning how the legislative process operates.

The AIP Fellowship is open to qualified members of AAS and other AIP Member Societies; the APS Fellowship is open to APS members. These programs benefit the government, the science community, and the individual Fellows.

Qualifications include U.S. citizenship; appropriate society membership; and PhD or equivalent in physics-related field, and interest or experience in S&T policy. All ages and career levels welcome to apply.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 15, 2007 (postmarked).

For details on the AIP and APS Fellowships, please visit <http://www.aip.org/gov/cf.html>.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

President (vote for one)

Roger D. Blandford

Nominated Office: President

Affiliation: Kavli Institute for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology, Stanford University

Position: Pehong and Adele Chen Director, KIPAC, Luke Blossom Professor in School of Humanities and Science Professor, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center

PhD: University of Cambridge, 1974

Areas of scientific interest: High Energy Astrophysics, Cosmology

AAS positions and dates: Councilor, 1999-2002; High Energy Astrophysics Division; Executive Committee, 1982-2003, 2002-07; Vice Chair, 2002-03, Chair, 2004-05; Warner-Pierce Prize Committee, 1999-2000; Dannie Heineman Prize Committee, 2002-03; Henry Norris Russell Prize Committee, 2004-05; Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy, 2002-06

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: NRC Space Studies Board, 1986-89, 2002-06; Committee on Astronomy and Astrophysics Co-chair, 2002-06; Space Science Advisory Committee, 1996-2009; Structure and Evolution of the Universe Subcommittee Chair, 1996-99; High Energy Astrophysics from Space Panel Chair, 1999-2000; Executive Office for Astronomy, Caltech, 1992-2005; Palomar Observatory Council Chair, 1994-2005; NSF MPS Advisory Committee, 2001-04; ARAA Associate Editor, 2002-04, Editor 2005-present; NRAO Visiting Committee, 2003-05; NSF Senior Review, 2005-06; NVO Advisory Committee, 2005-present.

Statement: Scientifically, there has never been a better time than the present to be an astronomer. The remarkable and well publicized discoveries of the past decade are a source of pride to AAS members and the public. Tremendous opportunities exist for further progress over all subfields for the next decade. All this is in unsettling contrast to the news from the Federal agencies that no credible level of research support will suffice to finance our collective aspirations. Painful choices are having to be made between existing facilities and among future projects and it is vital that astronomers be engaged in these decisions. A challenge to the AAS is to marshal and communicate the views of its membership effectively to those charged with strategic planning so as to maintain a balanced and optimized program of astronomical research. Additional challenges to the AAS over the next five years include communicating the results of the next decadal survey, deciding how the AAS participates in larger programs to promote awareness and understanding of science and helping the journals to continue to adapt in an area of electronic publishing. If elected I will endeavor to represent the interests of the membership to the best of my ability as, I am confident is true of my colleague, John Huchra.

John P. Huchra

Nominated Office: President

Affiliation: Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

Position: Professor

PhD: CalTech, 1976 (Degree awarded 1977)

Areas of scientific interest: Observational cosmology; stellar populations, AGN

AAS positions and dates: Publications Board Chair 1986-1989; Councilor 1998-2001; Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy 1998-2003

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: AIP Publications Policy Committee 1988-95; AIP Committee on Information Technology 1988-90; USNC IAU 1994-06; 2000-07; Chair 2005-07; AURA Board of Directors 1996-04, Chair 2001-04; NRC/NAS CAA 1994-01; co-chair 1987-01; NRC/NAS Board on Physics & Astronomy 1997-03, Chair 2000-03; NSF MPS Advisory Committee 2003-06; USNCIAU 2000-2007, Chair 2004-2006

Statement: Astronomy in America is at a crossroads. We have just completed what is perhaps the most exciting decade the field has ever seen, starting with the refurbishment of Hubble and running through both the launches of NASA's remaining Great Observatories and incredible discoveries like the acceleration of the Universe, large numbers of extrasolar planets, magnetars and neutrino oscillations. On the other hand, both public funding for science, in particular basic research, and public confidence in scientists are flat if not in decline. Astronomy is well known to be one of the best ways to attract both young and old people to science. But we are not now viewed as a critical field for America, despite small positive gains in NSF funding, as evidenced by the lack of "Space" in the American Competitiveness Initiative and the general move away from science at NASA. The AAS is the key organization to press the case both for astronomy and basic research, and if elected, this is what I would emphasize. My second priority is to improve both cooperation among US organizations involved in the ground-based "system," and international cooperation, to optimize both the scientific return from our combined facilities and also the opportunities for astronomers at all levels.

Vice-President (vote for one)

Stefi A. Baum

Nominated Office: AAS Vice-President

Affiliation: Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science, Rochester Institute of Technology

Position: Director and Professor

Areas of scientific interest: Active Galaxies, Clusters of Galaxies

AAS positions and dates: AAS Committee on Employment, 2006

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: American Institute of Physics, US State Development Fellowship, 2002-03; JWST/NIRCAM Science Team, 2002-present; Trustee, Universities Space Research Association (USRA), 2006-

present; VP Board of Directors, Society for Imaging Science and Technology (IS&T) 2005-present; Board of Governors, Great Lakes Research Consortium, 2006-present; National Radio Astronomy Observatory Visiting Committee, AUI, 2005-present; Advisory Board, Program for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, RIT, 2006-present; NASA Excellence Award, Hubble Space Telescope Servicing Mission 3A, 1999; Rolex Achievement Award (1999) given annually to one female and one male college lacrosse player for career achievements supporting society; Annie Jump Cannon Award, 1993.

Statement: I am grateful for the opportunity to run for the position of AAS Vice President. In the midst of politics and budget wars, it is easy to forget the enormous advances that technology has brought to astronomy and that, in turn, astronomy has brought to the world. A new generation of advanced ground-based and space-borne telescopes makes this decade, as was the last, a golden age for astrophysics. The universe has become the laboratory in which our fundamental understanding of the laws of physics is tested, we are revealing in unprecedented detail how and where planets and galaxies form, and robotic missions have opened new windows into our solar system. It is little wonder that the public at large and K-12 students the world round have been inspired and educated by the discoveries of our community.

The AAS is the means by which we, as a community, inform ourselves of the state of our science, meter our progress towards our goals, and formulate consensus around our future. The AAS meetings are the venue where we come together, reinvigorate ourselves through exposure to the scientific and technological advances achieved in the previous six months, and share with the world our achievements.

Lee W. Hartmann

Nominated Office: AAS Vice-President

Affiliation: University of Michigan

Position: Professor

PhD: University of Wisconsin, 1976

Areas of scientific interest: Star and planet formation

AAS positions and dates: Councilor, 6/2005-present

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: IUE User's Committee, 1980-82; National Solar Obs. User's Committee, 1983-85; NASA Astronomy Relativity MOWG, 1985-88; NASA Origins of Solar Systems Steering Committee, 1992-95; Vice-Chair, Chair, Gordon Research Conference on Origins of Solar Systems, 2005, 2007.

Statement: Vice-Presidents have important responsibilities in serving on the AAS Council and on the Executive Committee. I have learned much in my time on the Council which can help me better serve the astronomical community at this time of particularly strong budget stresses. Through this difficult period we need to do what we can to support the careers of young scientists who represent the future of our discipline.

The low attendance at some of the recent summer meetings has raised questions about the scope and/or format of these meetings, questions which are particularly relevant to the

role of Vice-Presidents in planning the overall scientific content of meetings. One wonders whether the low summer attendance reflects a dwindling interest by the community, especially given the proliferation of conferences. On the other hand, eliminating the summer meetings could have a significant financial impact on AAS office operations, and may not be desirable from a scientific point of view. Restricting summer meeting venues to easily accessible sites has been suggested as a means to improve summer attendance. I think it would be useful to sound out the AAS membership, possibly through a web-based survey, on the value of summer meetings and the ways in which they might be improved.

Secretary (vote for one)

John A. Graham

Nominated Office: AAS Secretary

Affiliation: Carnegie Institution of Washington (DTM)

Position: Staff Member (Emeritus)

PhD: Australian National University, 1964

Areas of scientific interest: Star formation, structure of galaxies

AAS positions and dates: Vice-President, 1984-86; Secretary 2004-07; Warner-Pierce Prize Committee, 1982-83

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Staff Astronomer, Cerro Toldo Inter-American Observatory, 1968-85, International Astronomical Union, US National Committee 1995-97, 2005-07 (Secretary), President, Commission 25, 1979-82, Program Director NSF, 2000-01, American Institute of Physics, Governing Board, 2004-07, Executive Committee 2006-07, Astronomical Society of the Pacific, Director, 1988-91

Statement: I would be honored to serve a second term as Secretary of the American Astronomical Society. During my first term, I have been able to work with Officers, Councilors, and AAS members in improving the way our Society functions on a day-to-day basis. I have been able to take advantage of my location to work closely with the staff at the AAS Executive Office. It has been a pleasure to make contacts with many members and to hear their opinions about the operation of the Society. With the many new programs and initiatives being planned, I look forward to helping to make the AAS an even more effective organization as a representative force for astronomy in North America and in the world at large.

Publications Board Chair (vote for one)

Richard F. Green

Nominated Office: Publications Board Chair

Affiliation: Large Binocular Telescope Observatory

Position: Director

PhD: CalTech, 1977

Areas of scientific interest: Active Galactic Nuclei and Supermassive Black Holes

AAS positions and dates: Publications Board: January 1, 2004-present; Search Committee, *ApJ* Managing Editor – February 10-November 21, 2005

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: I would bring to the chairmanship 11 years of experience as a director within NOAO and a year as Director of LBTO. Those positions have included direct responsibility for budgets at the \$10M/year level, execution and oversight of contracts, personnel issues, and active engagement with the community.

I served on the AAAS Council (1995-1999) as representative, then chair of the Astronomy Division. That group provided cross-disciplinary feedback to the editor of *Science Magazine*, and was therefore given briefings on technology, editorial policy, peer review, and market position in scientific publishing.

Statement: Service on the Publications Board has made me truly appreciate the vital role the Society plays through stewardship of the integrity of publishing refereed articles. We have been fortunate to attract teams of editors that are committed to maintaining the highest standards. Forward looking policy decisions have led to leadership for astronomy in electronic publishing and a balanced revenue stream that has facilitated that transition.

My goal for the Board would be to continue the success and stability of the publishing process in a time of change in public policy and technology. I see three known challenges for the Board to address in the near future. One is the high profile issue of open access to the scientific literature. We must support an approach to access that is responsive to Congress and the funding agencies while carefully preserving our ability to support refereeing and capable scientific editors. Second is the evolving impact of electronic publishing. For example, with the ability to link datasets the separate identity of the Supplements will be an issue that merits periodic re-examination. Finally, there is the desire to give clear policy guidance and procedures to the editors for their dealing with conflicts, ethical and, in worst case, legal issues. We trust their good judgment; they need the firm backing of the Society to confront the trying aspect of an otherwise satisfying job.

Bo Reipurth

Nominated Office: Publications Board Chair

Affiliation: University of Hawaii

Position: Professor

PhD: University of Copenhagen, 1981

Areas of scientific interest: Star formation, HH jets, young stellar objects

AAS positions and dates: Member-Publications Board, 2006-09

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: President, IAU Division VI, 2000-03; Organizer and lead-editor of Protostars and Planets V, IAU Symposium No. 182, and ESO Star Formation Workshop.

Statement: With the editorial functions of the AAS journals in good hands, the Publications Board can now focus on adapting to the rapidly changing environment of electronic publishing. In

particular, the AAS must be closely monitoring congressional policies on open access to government funded research. While most can agree that free and rapid availability of research results is in principle desirable, in practice it also has unwanted consequences. Specifically, the independent peer review process is a cornerstone for the quality of and respect surrounding our journals, but it is complex and costly to maintain. These and other costs must somehow be covered, and should be borne not only through page charges, but also by subscriptions. While the AAS policy is to make the journals self-sustaining rather than sources of revenue, we must ensure that bills like the Federal Research Public Access Act are being shaped to protect sufficient income so publication does not become more expensive to individual researchers.

Councilor (vote for three)

Gloria Koenigsberger

Nominated Office: AAS Councilor

Affiliation: UNAM – Centro de Ciencias Físicas

Position: Researcher

PhD: The Pennsylvania State University, 1983

Areas of scientific interest: Massive stars, binary systems, stellar winds

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: AURA Board of Directors, 1992-96; 1997-99; 2001-07; Solar Observatory Council, 2000-01

Statement: My research is centered on the study of interaction effects in binary systems. I use mainly optical, UV and FUV spectroscopic data, combined with numerical simulations of theoretical models. The objective is to understand how the interactions affect the observational properties and the late phases of evolution in massive stars. I have been a user of space observatories over the past 26 years, and of the smaller telescopes of KPNO, and have served on numerous U.S. panels and telescope time allocation committees. During the late 1980's, I helped establish Mexico's first Internet connection through a satellite link between UNAM and NCAR. As Director of the Instituto de Astronomía, I participated during the 1990's in the initiative to develop an Optical/IR large aperture telescope for the San Pedro Martir site. Our interaction with the U.S. and European groups who were then building 3.5m-8.4m telescopes provided an exceptional insight into the technical, political and financial challenges posed by constructing the new facilities. In the early 1990's UNAM became one of the first foreign members of AURA, where I have served as a member of the Board of Directors and the Solar Observatory Council, and I chaired the subcommittee that conducted a review of educational activities that involve and train students in astronomical instrumentation projects. I believe I can make a positive contribution to many of the issues that the AAS membership will be facing over the next few years, and would be eager to work with the AAS in fulfilling its goals.

Chryssa Kouveliotou

Nominated Office: AAS Councilor

Affiliation: NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center

Position: Astrophysicist

PhD: Technical University of Munich 1981

Areas of scientific interest: X-and Gamma Ray transients especially Gamma-Ray Bursts and highly magnetized Neutron stars (magnetars); multi-wavelength observations of transients

AAS positions and dates: Member of the HEAD Executive Committee (1994-1996)

Other experiences and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Member of NASA, High Energy Astrophysics Management Operations Work Group (HEAMOWG), 1993-95; Member of HEASARC Users Group (HUG), 1993-2000; Vice Chair of the Division of Astrophysics of the APS, 2001-02; Chair of the Division of Astrophysics of the APS, 2003; Member of the Committee on Astronomy and Astrophysics of the National Academy of Sciences, 2003-06; Chair of the US Integral Users Group, 2005-present; Member and/or Chair of numerous Review panels since 1993, including the NASA Senior Review Committee, 2000.

Statement: The AAS is the main conduit through which the astronomy/astrophysics community can interact with and constructively influence government policy and public opinion. Its past success has established the society as a force to be reckoned with and listened to. We need to maintain and expand the engagement of the society members to include our youngest and our less active members. We need to actively involve the membership in major actions and positions taken by the society — e.g., through email polls and forums during meetings—to mitigate a perceived impression of a top down decision policy.

The two major sources for research funding in our community are NASA and the National Science Foundation. It is important for the AAS to maintain open and frequent links with both agencies and coordinate these interactions with the AAS members and with interested groups of sister societies, such as the Division of Astrophysics of APS, to accomplish higher impact. My last year at NASA HQ has taught me among other things, how important it is to establish a continuous presence at the center of power. Our Councilors should interact often with the leadership in key agencies, as champions of the interest of our members.

Felix J. Lockman

Nominated Office: AAS Council

Affiliation: National Radio Astronomy Observatory, Green Bank, WV

Position: Green Bank Telescope Principal Scientist

PhD: University of Massachusetts 1979

Areas of scientific interest: Galactic Structure, ISM

AAS positions and dates: Shapley Lecturer 1997 -; Van Biesbroeck Prize Committee 2003-07, Chair 2006-07

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: NRAO Green Bank Observatory Site Director 1993-98. AAS

Special Session Organizer, June 1987 meeting. Have attended about half of all AAS meetings in the last 15 years. Served on various NSF and NASA panels. Organized several scientific workshops (e.g. Gaseous Halos of Galaxies 1985; Warm Ionized Gas in Galaxies 1999). DRAO and Arecibo Users Committees; typically give 6-10 public lectures a year. Supervise numerous REO students.

Statement: It's amazing. Our science, which has virtually no practical uses, profoundly influences culture, art, and philosophy. The Big Bang and dark matter are part of popular imagination, even among school kids. And yet, during an AAS-sponsored visit to a small college, I was challenged by local public school teachers to explain why the US should spend money on astronomy when their schools can't afford chalk.

Exposure to astronomy—sometimes simply being around telescopes—can stimulate people to think about science, and imagine a world beyond their personal circumstances. Few rural Appalachian students who visit Green Bank become astronomers, but all get a glimpse of a larger universe. In these times when science seems more and more hitched to politics and commerce, our work of discovery and education is especially needed. That, I told the impoverished teachers, is why astronomy is important.

The AAS meetings are more than a platform for our egos: they are a brawling sea of discovery for researchers, students, educators and the press. The AAS connects employers with job seekers; it functions between science and society. Our members are creative, earnest and sometimes unruly, but the AAS must continue to be steady and professional, and prepared for change.

George Sonneborn

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

Position: Astrophysicist

PhD: Ohio State University, 1980

Areas of scientific interest: Massive stars, supernovae, interstellar gas

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: IUE Science Operations (1982-88), FUSE Project Scientist (1988-present), JWST Operations Scientist (2005-present)

Statement: Astronomy is increasingly a discipline of large international facilities with long development times. The construction of JWST, ALMA, 20-30m optical telescopes, Sofia, SKA, and other projects promises an exciting future for astronomical research, and the public that follows our discoveries. The funding requirements of these projects, however, are straining the resources of the responsible Federal agencies and other programs have been delayed or scaled back. There have been real dollar funding losses for many programs that support students, post docs, and scientists. Grant funds have become more difficult to earn each year, usually with lower funding levels. I support strong AAS efforts in the areas of science education and advocacy, women and minority career opportunities and advancement, and public understanding and support of astronomy. I welcome the opportunity to advocate the interests of the Society's membership and address your concerns as one of the AAS Councilors.

Nicholas B. Suntzeff

Nominated Office: AAS Councilor

Affiliation: Department of Physics, Texas A&M University

PhD: University of California at Santa Cruz, Lick Observatory, 1980

Areas of scientific interest: Observational cosmology, supernovae, stellar populations, Magellanic Clouds, astronomical site testing, instrumentation

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: IAU Commissions 29, 30, 37, 50; CTIO User's Committee 1984-6; HST Panels 1993, 1996, 1997, 2005; Gemini Science; Operations Working Group 1997; CTIO TAC 1990-8; NOAO TAC 1999-2003; Chile Gemini TAC 2004-6; Associate Director for Science, NOAO 2004-6; Dark Energy Task Force 2005/6

Statement: I have seen US astronomy from many locations: the Carnegie Observatories, the US National Observatory at Cerro Tololo, and now a physics department at a public university, Texas A&M. Our Society provides important services to our community in the form of AAS meetings, the Job Register, newsletters, and journals. But it also furnishes a unified voice of our community of astronomers and physicists. We rely on the AAS to form a consensus public policy for issues ranging from federal science budgets to the support of our science against the vicious attacks by anti-science special interest groups.

As councilor, I will work inside the AAS to promote the goal of maintaining a unified voice in support of astronomy. The AAS needs to be aggressive in the promotion of our science both in Washington, DC and at the grassroots level. We should increase our support for an energetic Congressional Internship program to connect young astronomers with Congress and the funding agencies in Washington. At the grassroots level, we should increase support for a strong Education Office with the goal of promoting astronomy as a core physical science in high schools across the US.

The AAS also needs to be more aggressive in canvassing its membership to find out what the problems are in our community. Astronomy faces real social issues such as the progress of historically excluded groups and fair labor practices applied to graduate, postdoctoral, and soft-money positions. We also need to ensure that the large national and international projects are funded without sacrificing excellent research on a smaller scale typically done at universities.

If elected, I will maintain a Web site with my own view on what the AAS is doing, and what the issues are that face us. With comments gathered through this Web site, I can better represent the community before the Council.

Jill C. Tarter

Candidacy Withdrawn

USNC/IAU (vote for one)

Edward B. Churchwell

Nominated Office: USNC/IAU Committee

Affiliation: University of Wisconsin

Position: Professor Emeritus

PhD: 1973, University of Indiana, 1970

Areas of scientific interest: Star Formation, Radio & IR Astronomy

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: I have served on numerous NASA, NSF, NRAO, NAIC and other observatory advisory committees, science steering committees, users groups, telescope allocation committees, scientific organizing committees, funding peer reviews, etc. I was co-organizer with Peter Conti of IAU Symposium 227 in 2005 which took place in Sicily. I was also the chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the Millimeter Array (MMA), before it became the international ALMA project. My committee, whose membership was international, recommended that the MMA should become the ALMA telescope.

Statement: Astronomy is an international endeavor. Most of us collaborate with colleagues from other countries and work on problems that require observations with telescopes operated by other countries. In fact, many large telescope facilities are operated by international consortia. It is essential that the US astronomy community maintain a close working relationship with the global astronomy community; this is best done through the IAU. The IAU sponsors international symposia that bring experts together from around the world in settings that make formal and informal, face-to-face exchanges of ideas possible. The IAU also provides financial support for young astronomers to attend its symposia and the General Assembly, thereby making it possible for students and post docs to meet and interact with their international peers and leaders in their chosen field. As a member of the USNC/IAU, I would endeavor to represent US astronomy programs and astronomers to the IAU, represent the interests of the American Astronomical Society to the IAU, endeavor to assist the IAU in continuation of its programs as need arises, and to represent the IAU programs to the US astronomy community.

Robert L. Millis

Nominated Office: USNC/IAU, Category I

Affiliation: Lowell Observatory

Position: Director

PhD: University of Wisconsin, Madison

Areas of scientific interest: The Kuiper Belt

AAS positions and dates: Chairman AAS Division for Planetary Sciences 1994-95.

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Chairman, NOAO Observatory Council 2006-2007, Chairman NASA Keck-IRTF Mgmt. Operations Working Group 2001-04.

Statement: Contemporary astronomy is an international enterprise. The IAU, as the leading international astronomical organization, plays an important role in fostering global scientific discourse and in facilitating mutually agreed protocols regarding naming conventions, coordinate systems, etc. As we have seen in the most recent General Assembly, the IAU can also take steps that are controversial within the astronomical community and confusing to the public. Nonetheless, the IAU provides an invaluable forum for the ultimate resolution of issues important to astronomy.

Nominating Committee (vote for two)

W. Miller Goss

Nominated Office: AAS Nominating Committee

Affiliation: National Radio Astronomy Observatory

Position: Astronomer

PhD: University of California, Berkeley - 1967

Areas of scientific interest: Interstellar medium; interstellar masers; radio astronomy techniques; history of radio astronomy

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Council of Astronomical Society of Australia 1975-1977, Chair Westerbork Synthesis Radio Telescope Program Committee 1981-1986, Director Very Large Array – Very Long Baseline Array 1988-2002, Executive Committee IAU Working Group on the Status of Women 2005, Chair CfA Visiting Committee 1997.

Statement: The American Astronomical Society fosters the interests of astronomers through publication of its journals, organization of twice yearly scientific meetings, a program of activities to encourage science education and public awareness of astronomy, and representation of the AAS membership to the public and to the United States government on issues of concern. Diversity in the Society's elected offices is essential to the goals, management, and success of these programs. As a member of the Nominating Committee, I would work to assemble officer's election slates that are representative of the broad diversity of the AAS membership.

Tod R. Lauer

Nominated Office: AAS Nominating Committee

Affiliation: NOAO

Position: Associate Astronomer

PhD: University of California, Santa Cruz 1983

Areas of scientific interest: Extragalactic Observational Astronomy, Black Holes, Large Scale Structure, Image Processing

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Hubble Space Telescope WFPC1 IDT (1985-96); Hubble Space Telescope Users Committee Chair (1994-06); Aaronson Prize Search Committee (1996-02); Hubble Fellow Review Panel

(1999); Gemini Observatory Staff TAC Chair (2003-04); Joint Dark Energy Mission Science Definition Team (2004-)

Statement: The American Astronomical Society has been highly effective at bringing our community together. This role is especially important, given the dynamic changes in how we do research and the political environment in which we function. The success of the AAS is due in no small part to the hard work of those who have been chosen to serve as officers and members of its committees. As a member of the nominating committee I would respect the opportunity to help identify a diverse set of good candidates to continue the ongoing work of the AAS.

David L. Meier

Nominated Office: AAS Nominating Committee

Affiliation: Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology

Position: Senior Research Scientist

PhD: The University of Texas at Austin, 1977

Areas of scientific interest: theoretical astrophysics, jets, winds, black holes, AGN, x-ray binaries, supernovae, galaxy formation

AAS positions and dates: None

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Chaired and/or served on numerous NASA & NSF review and advisory committees, as well as various steering and facilities allocation committees; served on and/or chaired several technical project committees; served on several scientific organizing committees.

Statement: These are unprecedented times in astronomy. While we see tremendous advancement in many areas across the field, we also see budgets and projects being reduced drastically, or eliminated, just at the time when they are needed the most. The AAS is one of the chief advocates for astronomers in the U.S. political arena, and as such, has the potential to inform and educate those public officials who make critical decisions that affect many of its members. The society, therefore, must continue to field candidates, and elect officers, who represent the breadth of the membership and who will put the interests of all astronomers above that of any one area. Keeping the AAS aware, active, and united is the best way to keep astronomy the healthy and exciting field that the U.S. public, and other areas of science, have come to expect.

Mercedes T. Richards

Nominated Office: AAS Nominating Committee

Affiliation: Penn State University

Position: Professor of Astronomy & Astrophysics

PhD: University of Toronto, 1986

Areas of scientific interest: Interacting binaries, hydrodynamic simulations of mass transfer, Doppler tomography, magnetic activity in cool stars

AAS positions and dates: AAS Committee on the Status of

Minorities in Astronomy, 1997-1998, 1998-2001; Harlow Shapley Visiting Lecturer, 2004-present

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Board of Advisors for the Caribbean Institute of Astronomy (CARINA), University of the West Indies, 2002-present; Chair of the SOC for IAU General Assembly XXV Joint Discussion No. 9 on Astrotomography, held in Sydney, Australia, July 17-21, 2003.

Statement: I have been a member of the American Astronomical Society for 20 years, and I am proud to be associated with this organization. During this time, the AAS has had a major influence on the development of new astronomical instruments and techniques, as well as the public perception of astronomy. Our society consists of astronomers from all walks of life and from all over the world, and it has been influential in international matters related to astronomy and science in general. Given this important role, it is crucial that we continue to choose the right people to guide us. As a member of the Nominating Committee, my goal will be to select members for our AAS committees who will continue to make me proud to be a member of this organization.

Faith Vilas

Nominated Office: AAS Nominating Committee

Affiliation: MMT Observatory

Position: Director

PhD: University of Arizona, 1984

Areas of scientific interest: Origin of Solar System objects from surface mineralogical and chemical composition, astronomical instrumentation

AAS positions and dates: Committee on Light Pollution, Radio Interference and Space Debris, 1991-97; Committee on Public Policy, 1998-2001; Division for Planetary Sciences: Nominating Subcommittee, 1988-91 (Chair 1991); Secretary-Treasurer, 1992-95; Vice-Chair, 1995-96; Chair, 1996-97; Prize Committee Chair, 1997-98; Status Editor, 1993-95

Other experiences and positions: NASA HQ Discovery program scientist, NEAR DAP discipline scientist, 2001-02; IRTF TAC, 2001-03; NASA Terrestrial Planets SWG, 1994- 96; Icarus Editorial Board, 2000-03; participant or chair for multiple NSF, NASA review panels; member AIAA Technical Advisory Comm. on Space Sci. and Astronomy, 1991-93; Vatican Observatory Foundation Board of Directors, 1996-present.

Statement: During times of marked decreasing funding for astronomical and space science research contrasting with increasingly exciting astronomical discoveries, the AAS serves its members in many ways. These encompass the long-standing organization of scientific meetings that draw representation from across our field, scientific journal publication, and recently increased participation in communication and education of our political and organizational representatives in Washington about the value of astronomical research. In order to implement the goals laid out by our decadal surveys, the AAS must continue to be a vigilant and strong advocate for our profession. We, as scientists, also face challenges to the basic scientific method from organized, determined special interest groups. As a member of the

Nominating Committee, I will use my knowledge cross-cutting the astronomical community to seek candidates for AAS positions who will support our professional scientific exchange and persist in engaging and educating the public and government. I have served on the DPS Nominating Subcommittee, and understand what this service entails.

HONORED ELSEWHERE

Jenet Awarded Prestigious Grant

AAS Member Frederick A. Jenet (physics professor at the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College) has received a prestigious \$620,460 National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development grant that will bring access to the world's largest radio telescope to Brownsville.

The largest radio telescope in the world is the 1,000-foot Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. This is one of the telescopes that will be used by ARCC and will be controlled by UTB/TSC students.

The grant supports early career development activities of scientists who most effectively combine education and research into their work. Jenet's grant, from NSF's Division of Astronomical Sciences, is the first CAREER grant received by a professor at UTB/TSC. Nationwide, only about five CAREER grants from this division were awarded this year.

2006 Nobel Prize Award to Mather

John C. Mather of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center has won the 2006 Nobel Prize for Physics, awarded by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Mather shares the prize with George F. Smoot of the University of California for their collaborative work on understanding the Big Bang.

Dr. Mather joined the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland to head the Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE) Mission as Project Scientist. He has been a Goddard Fellow since 1994 and currently serves as Senior Project Scientist and Chair of the Science Working Group of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) Mission. He is also working on the SAFIR, SPECS, GEST, and WISE missions. Dr. Mather's numerous awards include the John C. Lindsay Memorial Award, National Air and Space Museum Trophy, AIAA Space Science Award, Aviation Week and Space Technology Laurels for Space/Missiles, Dannie Heinemann Prize for Astrophysics, Rumford Prize, the Benjamin Franklin Medal in Physics, and membership in the National Academy of Sciences. He has been elected to the American Astronomical Society Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NSF/ATM Solar Facilities Assessment Gets Started

The National Science Foundation Atmospheric Division (ATM), in collaboration with the National Center for Atmospheric Research Earth Observing Laboratory (NCAR/EOL), is performing an inventory and assessment of all US facilities that are relevant to NSF/ATM sponsored researchers. This includes all solar assets: “facility-class”, space and ground-based, and occasionally-run experimental public and private facilities. The result of this effort will be a public document available to all researchers in solar and atmospheric physics. This document will assist the NSF/ATM’s strategic planning process as it anticipates the future needs of these research communities. (See www.eol.ucar.edu/dir_off/FacAssess/.)

The NSF/ATM and NCAR/EOL have established a solar measurements subcommittee (SMS) consisting of Jeff Kuhn, Hector Socas-Navarro (co-Chairs), K.S. Balasubramaniam, Doug Biesecker, Frank Hill, Terry Kucera, Bill Livingston, and Dave Turner to help achieve these goals. The SMS is charged with compiling such an inventory and formulating a summary report. This inventory and report is expected to be completed by 30 June 2007. The SMS seeks input from the solar (and relevant atmospheric) physics communities. A web-based survey aimed at assessing solar facilities and solar facility users will be announced soon. The SMS requests that researchers who have used solar facilities or data, or who have implemented instrumental and/or data archival capabilities, respond to the soon-to-be-available electronic questionnaire by 15 January 2007. A draft report is expected to be available in April 2007 and a community workshop to review the report will follow.

Questions, comments or concerns should be sent to the committee co-chairs (kuhn@ifa.hawaii.edu or Navarro@ucar.edu).

NSO Observing Proposals

The current deadline for submitting observing proposals to the National Solar Observatory is 15 February 2007 for the second quarter of 2007. Information is available from the NSO Telescope Allocation Committee at P.O. Box 62, Sunspot, NM 88349 for Sacramento Peak facilities (sp@nso.edu) or P.O. Box 26732, Tucson, AZ 85726 for Kitt Peak facilities (nsokp@nso.edu). Instructions may be found at www.nso.edu/general/observe/. A web-based observing-request form is at www2.nso.edu/cgi-bin/nsoforms/obsreq/obsreq.cgi.

Users’ Manuals are available at <http://nsosp.nso.edu/dst/> for the SP facilities and <http://nsokp.nso.edu/> for the KP facilities. An observing-run evaluation form can be obtained at ftp://ftp.nso.edu/observing_templates/evaluation.form.txt.

Proposers are reminded that each quarter is typically oversubscribed, and it is to the proposer’s advantage to provide all information requested to the greatest possible extent no later than the official deadline. Observing time at National Observatories is provided as support to the astronomical community by the National Science Foundation.

Hubble Space Telescope Cycle 16 Call for Proposals

Release Date: 13 October 2006

Proposal Deadline: 26 January 2007

NASA and The Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) are pleased to announce the Cycle 16 Call for Proposals for Hubble Space Telescope (HST) Observations and funding for Archival Research and Theoretical Research programs. Participation in this program is open to all categories of organizations, both domestic and foreign, including educational institutions, profit and nonprofit organizations, NASA Centers, and other Government agencies.

This solicitation for proposals will be open through 26 January 2007 8:00pm EST. The Astronomer’s Proposal Tools (APT), which is required for Phase I Proposal Submission will be made available/released for Cycle 16 Phase I use during the 1st week of December 2006. Results of the selection will be announced in early April 2007.

All programmatic and technical information, as well as specific guidelines for proposal preparation, are available electronically from the STScI World-Wide Web site at the Announcement Web Page with URL: www.stsci.edu/hst/proposing/docs/cycle16announce.

In Cycle 16, we will be offering the opportunity to take advantage of two new proposal types: Collaborative HST-Spitzer proposals, which will allow proposers to apply for substantial time allocations on both HST and Spitzer; and Survey proposals, which are designed for statistical programs and will be subsidised at a higher level than standard GO proposals.

For further details, see www.stsci.edu/hst/proposing/docs/cp16-newopps

Questions can be addressed to the STScI Help Desk (email: help@stsci.edu; phone: 410-338-1082).

Call for Regular NRAO Observing Proposals

Astronomers are invited to submit regular proposals for observing time on the NRAO Green Bank Telescope (GBT), Very Large Array (VLA), and Very Long Baseline Array (VLBA):

Instrument	Deadline	Observing Period	Note
GBT	2007 Feb 1	2007 September only	*
	2007 Jun 1	2007 Oct - 2008 Jan	
VLA	2007 Feb 1	2007 Jun - 2007 Sept	+
VLBA	2007 Feb 1	2007 Jun - 2007 Sep	
	2007 Jun 1	2007 Oct - 2008 Jan	

Notes: (*) The GBT will be executing the Track Refurbishment during 2007 May - Aug. We anticipate that the 2007 1 February 2007 call for proposals will be for the month of September only; any changes will be described when that call for proposals is announced.

(+) The A configuration with a maximum baseline of 36 km. The Pie Town Link will not be available.

For the VLA configuration cycle in 2007/2008, there is presently considerable uncertainty about the duration of each configuration as well as about the ordering of the configurations. This is because of the possibility of increased observing time for large proposals and because of the requirements of EVLA commissioning. Upcoming AAS newsletters will keep the community informed about configuration cycle plans.

Users of NRAO instruments from most U.S. institutions may request travel support for observing and data reduction trips, as well as page charge support. In addition, a program to support research by students at U.S. universities covers student stipends, computer hardware purchases, and student travel to meetings to present observing results. Applications to this program are tied to observing proposals. Awards of up to \$35,000 are possible. For details, see wiki.gb.nrao.edu/bin/view/Observing/NRAOStudentSupportProgram

The NRAO and the European VLBI Network jointly handle proposals for observing time on the Global VLBI Network at centimeter wavelengths; the deadline is 2007 Feb 1 for the session in 2007 May/June (note that the GBT will NOT be available for the 2007 May/June session). Also, the NRAO and a set of European observatories jointly handle proposals for VLBI observing time at a wavelength of 3mm; the deadline is 2007 Feb 1 for the session in 2007 Oct. The NRAO also handles proposals for the VLBI High Sensitivity Array at the same deadlines as for the VLBA; this Array includes the VLBA, VLA, GBT, and Arecibo in the U.S., plus Effelsberg in Germany.

Further information on NRAO instruments, proposal submission routes, and user support is available via the NRAO website at www.nrao.edu.

Pluto/Planet Roundtable Now On Line

If, like many educators, you are not quite sure what to do in your own work about the recent planet definition by the International Astronomical Union, you may want to read what 14 experts on planetary science and education think.

A roundtable in the on-line journal "Astronomy Education Review" (AER) looks at the science, politics, and educational implications of the controversy. It also includes a historical timeline and a guide to educational resources concerning the definition of a planet.

See it at the web site: <http://aer.noao.edu>—where it begins the tenth issue of the journal.

Ninth Issue of AER Complete:

As an on-line journal, AER is continuously updated as new contributions are refereed and accepted. Twice a year, an issue is closed and is ready for announcement. The newly-closed 9th issue includes the following papers and articles:

Research and Innovation:

- *Astronomy Podcasting: A Low-Cost Tool for Affecting Attitudes in Diverse Audiences* by Pamela Gay (Harvard U.), Aaron Price & Travis Searle (AAVSO)

- *A History and Informal Assessment of the Slacker Astronomy Podcast* by Aaron Price (AAVSO), Pamela Gay (Harvard U.), Travis Searle (AAVSO) and Gina Brissenden (U. of Arizona)
- *Effectiveness of Collaborative Ranking Tasks on Student Understanding of Key Astronomy Concepts* by David Hudgins (U. of S. Africa), Edward Prather (U. of Arizona), Diane Grayson (U. of Pretoria) and Derck Smits (U. of S Africa)
- *Astronomy in the K-8 Core Curriculum: A Survey of State Requirements Nationwide* by Stacy Palen and AmyJo Proctor (Weber State U.)
- *Astronomy for the Blind and Visually Impaired: An Introductory Lesson* by Bernd Weferling (U. of Dortmund)
- *Clickers: A New Teaching Aid with Exceptional Promise* by Douglas Duncan (U. of Colorado)
- *The Design and Development of a Simple Spreadsheet-Based Tool that Enables Students to Make Measurements on Astronomical Images* by Richard Beare (U. of Warwick)

Resources:

- *The Music of the Spheres in Education: Using Astronomically Inspired Music* by Andrew Fraknoi (Foothill Coll.)
- *Resources for Making Astronomy More Accessible for Blind and Visually Impaired Students* by Noreen Grice (You Can Do Astronomy)

Opinion and Commentary:

- *Textbooks as Intellectual Activity? Supporting Textbooks without Outlawing Used Books* by Robert Knop (Vanderbilt U.)
- *Getting Unstuck: Strategies for Escaping the Science Standards Straitjacket* by Sandra Laursen (U. of Colorado)

Plus announcements of conferences, awards, and other opportunities.

When you go to the AER site, you can find the full 9th issue by clicking on "back issues" and then on "vol. 5, no. 1". AER actively solicits interesting papers and articles on all aspects of space science education and outreach. The site gets between 200,000 and 250,000 hits per month from 91 different countries.

Sidney Wolff and Andrew Fraknoi
Editors

NRAO Newsletter

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) publishes a free quarterly newsletter (January, April, July, and October). The *NRAO Newsletter* includes articles describing recent science, construction projects, research facilities, instrumentation, and outreach. Current and past editions of the Newsletter are available on-line at: www.nrao.edu/news/newsletters/.

Please contact our Newsletter Editor, Mark Adams at mtadams@nrao.edu, if you would like to receive the *NRAO Newsletter* in hardcopy format.

If you have an interesting new research result obtained using NRAO facilities that could be featured in future issues of the Newsletter, please contact our Newsletter Science Editor, Tim Bastian at tbastian@nrao.edu.

NEWS FROM...

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Eileen D. Friel, efriel@nsf.gov
Executive Officer, Division of Astronomical Sciences

Upcoming Deadlines for FY2007 funding:

20 January 2007: Program for Research and Education with Small Telescopes (PREST) - See program solicitation NSF 04-557.

25 January 2007: Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) - See program solicitation NSF 05-515. Please note that cost sharing is no longer required for the MRI program.

Although the general Astronomy and Astrophysics Research Grants program (AAG) has an annual proposal deadline of November 15th, there are other programs within NSF of relevance to astronomers that have earlier or later deadlines. In addition, programs at NSF come and go, which means that other support options may appear throughout the year. Interested parties are advised to contact us or to check the NSF web pages for funding opportunities. If in any doubt at all, please ask, and if unsure who to ask, start with Nigel Sharp, nsharp@nsf.gov, 703-292-4905.

Town Meetings for the Senior Review at the AAS Meeting

In addition to the regularly scheduled NSF town meeting at the January AAS meeting in Seattle, we will be holding a special session devoted entirely to the AST Senior Review. We will present the recommendations and findings of the report, and discuss the development of an implementation plan with the community. Both AST staff and the Chair of the senior review committee will be available at the meeting. Please check the AAS program for time and location of the special session. Contact Eileen Friel at efriel@nsf.gov for more information.

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF THE PACIFIC

Mike Bennett, Executive Director, mbennett@astrosociety.org

Electronic Subscription to ASP Conference Series Now Available

Starting in January 2007, the ASP is offering an electronic-only institutional subscription to its highly successful Conference Series. Rates vary according to institution size. We will soon be adding the option to purchase electronic versions of individual articles from books as well. For further details please go to our web site at <http://aspbooks.org> or contact Enid at aspcs@byu.edu or (801) 422-2111.

Classic CCD Reference Reprinted

If you or someone you know is new to CCD data or are in need of a refresher on the fundamentals of taking and using it, we recommend that you obtain a copy of ASP Conference Series

Volume 23, *Astronomical CCD Observing and Reduction Techniques*, Steve Howell, ed. This volume is the proceedings from a very successful CCD school held in Tucson Arizona in 1991. One of our most requested volumes, it is filled with accessible explanations of the fundamentals of CCD data reduction, photometry, imaging, astrometry, spectrophotometry, IR arrays, and more. Copies can be purchased at <http://astrosociety.org/> under the "AstroShop" link.

Latest Volumes from the ASP Conference Series

Volume 353: *Stellar Evolution At Low Metallicity: Mass Loss, Explosions, Cosmology*, by H. Lamers, N. Langer, T. Nugis and K. Annuk eds. Proceedings from the 15-19 August 2005 meeting held in Tartu, Estonia. An excellent reference on the important ingredients for understanding and modeling the first stars at zero or very low metallicities.

For a complete listing of volumes since 2004 please go to <http://aspbooks.org>. To purchase individual volumes go to <http://astrosociety.org/> and click on "AstroShop."

PASP Continues PhD Theses and Conference Highlights

From PASP, a reminder to new PhDs and conference organizers that a good way to advertise a completed thesis or conference is with a 1-2 page dissertation summary or conference highlights paper in PASP. For complete information go <http://astrosociety.org> and click on "Publications."

Symposium on Teaching Introductory Astronomy

In early August 2007, the ASP (with the support of the AAS Education Office) is sponsoring a 3-day national hands-on symposium on teaching Astronomy 101. Entitled "Cosmos in the Classroom 2007", the symposium will be held at Pomona College in Southern California.

The aim is to bring together those who teach the beginning astronomy course at institutions ranging from community colleges to research universities. The plan is to exchange ideas, techniques, materials, and curricula for improving the course, and to discuss the challenges instructors face regarding student preparation, lack of budget support, and sometimes unrealistic administrative demands. Much of the meeting will be devoted to hands-on, small-group sessions where mentor instructors will help participants practice ways to make their courses more effective. Graduate students and post-docs who expect to have teaching responsibilities are also encouraged to attend.

Bryan Penprase of Pomona College will head the Local Organizing Committee and Andrew Fraknoi of Foothill College and the ASP will chair the Program Organizing Committee. Co-sponsors and underwriters are being sought to help defray conference expenses and allow a broad cross section of astronomy instructors to attend. Organizations interested in cosponsoring can contact either of the above.

If you would like to be on the mailing list for information about this conference, visit <http://astrosociety.org> and click on "Events."

COMMITTEE NEWS

STATUS OF WOMEN IN ASTRONOMY

Patricia Knezek

CSWA Chair, WIYN Observatory, knezek@noao.edu

CSWA and the IAU

As noted in the June *AAS Newsletter*, the CSWA has begun a dialog with the new IAU Working Group on the Status of Women in Astronomy. CSWA committee member Francesca Primas is also a member of the IAU Working Group, and both she and I were present at the IAU in Prague to represent the CSWA. We attended the Working Group's business meeting, and I discussed some of the ways that the CSWA works, both as a committee (e.g. talking via email and telecons), and how we communicate with the broader community (e.g. the weekly AASWOMEN electronic newsletter, and STATUS, our bi-annual magazine). The IAU Working Group is in the process of determining how best to organize itself so that the entire IAU community has access and input, but still maintain a core group that will ensure activities take place, etc.

Francesca and I also attended the IAU lunch session on Women in Astronomy. There were two speakers, and then a discussion session." I would like to thank the IAU Working Group for inviting me to be one of the two speakers. The theme for the discussion section was "career development for women.

The first speaker was Dr. Sunetra Giridhar, of the Indian Institute of Astronomy in Bangalore, India. She spoke of the situation for women in astronomy in India, revealing that the situation is complex there, and each individual's experience can be heavily influenced by her locale and/or by the local scientific community. In the question section afterwards, it became very clear that there are no uniformly recognized countrywide guidelines, and that that is one area that could be beneficial, if they could identify a way to proceed.

I then spoke about the situation in the United States, and emphasized the recent efforts of the astronomical community represented by the AAS to heighten awareness of issues that can affect the progress of women at all stages of their careers in astronomy. In particular, I spoke to the Baltimore Charter and the Pasadena Recommendations, highlighting the broad goals of each. I mentioned how the CSWA as a committee was working to promote gender equity, primarily through three focus areas: (1) promoting endorsement of the Pasadena Recommendations, and their enactment by institutions; (2) connecting to the international community, particularly through the IAU Working Group on the Status of Women in Astronomy, and (3) establishing reliable, well-understood statistical information on career paths. I then discussed how, at least within the United States, in my view, the astronomical landscape is changing in the sense that more and more astronomy is being done by large teams of people. I indicated that I thought it would be important for the young astronomers to consider "thinking outside of the box," both in the sense of looking at possible career paths that may lie outside the traditional astronomical trajectory of "grad school – postdoc – university

professorship" and trying to identify skills they may have that will allow them to "stand out from the crowd" if they are involved in one of these large team projects.

There then followed a lively discussion session, where each table looked at the situation for women in the countries represented, and identified two or three key things that could help women pursue careers in astronomy. The individual tables reported out at the end, and many useful ideas and suggestions were collected by the IAU Working Group.

To learn more about the IAU Working Group on Women in Astronomy, check out the website: <http://astronomy.swin.edu.au/IAU-WIAWG/index.html>.

STATUS and AASWOMEN

I mentioned AASWOMEN and STATUS above as the CSWA's primary means of communicating with the astronomical community. We would like to encourage people to subscribe to both STATUS and AASWOMEN, and to consider making submissions. In particular, alert your new students and staff of their existence, and encourage them to subscribe! All of the past issues of both are available from the CSWA website, see: www.aas.org/~cswal.

Previous issues of STATUS will give you ideas of the type of articles we publish – biographies of women astronomers, articles on women in science (not just astronomy), opinion pieces, policy issues, advice to young scientists, book reviews, "snippets", artwork and, last but not least, Notes from a Life - a short piece describing an incident (preferably with some lesson learnt) in the writer's life (published anonymously). We try to include as much original material as possible. But if you see a good article that you think the STATUS readership may have missed, please suggest it to the Editor. Deadlines: initial submissions are due March 1st and October 1st for June and January issues respectively. If you would like to make a submission to STATUS, contact the Editor, Fran Bagenal, bagenal@colorado.edu. If you would like a paper version of STATUS, please email membership@aas.org.

AASWOMEN is a weekly electronic newsletter that focuses on information on the situation of women in science and engineering, with particular emphasis on astronomy. It is often a forum for discussion of issues of interest, such as career versus family, re-entering the field after an extended absence, etc. If you want to subscribe, unsubscribe, or submit something to AASWOMEN, the directions are as follows:

To submit to AASWOMEN: Send email to aaswomen@aas.org. All material sent to that address will be posted unless you tell us otherwise (including your email address).

To subscribe to AASWOMEN: Send email to majordomo@aas.org with message in the BODY; subscribe aaswlist yourusername@youraddress.

To unsubscribe to AASWOMEN: Send email to majordomo@as.org with message in the BODY; unsubscribe aswlist.yourusername@youraddress

The January 2007 AAS Meeting

The CSWA will be holding a session at the Seattle AAS Meeting. The session is still being organized, but one focus will be the continuing work to encourage implementation of the Pasadena Recommendations. In particular, we will discuss the progress on the longitudinal study of the career paths of astronomers. Details will be provided in AASWOMEN Newsletters as the date approaches.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Submitted by Rolf Danner, Committee Member

You are looking for your first job or that next job. You have gone through the AAS Job Register with a fine-tooth comb and have come up empty. Where do you go from here? Shouldn't someone from the AAS be there to assist you? Who can you turn to with questions?

You are not the first to ask these questions—and the AAS does have someone to help you! The Committee on Employment (EC) is charged with “study[ing] the problem of unemployment and job placement in Astronomy and suggest ways to expand the job placement service of the society.” The career paths of EC members are as varied as those of the AAS membership as a whole. The committee is currently chaired by Anita Krishnamurthi at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. The other eight members appointed by the council for three years are: Stefi Baum (Rochester Institute of Technology), David Bazell (Eureka Scientific), Rolf Danner (Northrop Grumman), Michael Fanelli (Texas Christian University), Travis Metcalfe (National Center for Atmospheric Research), Frederic Rasio (Northwestern University), Lisa Storrie-Lombardi (Caltech), and Barbara Whitney (Space Science Institute). Our website URL is <http://members.aas.org/comms/employ.cfm>.

In addition to the Job Register, the AAS offers a range of resources on the Society's website. Follow the Career Services link to explore a wide variety of resources. However, your most effective tool for career options outside of academia might be the non-academic network (www.aas.org/career/nonacademic/). This is a listing of AAS members in non-academic careers who have made themselves available for questions. This is your opportunity to talk to a colleague who has taken a career path you are considering. Take advantage of it. If you are not looking for a job, but would be interested in being a mentor to a younger colleague, please sign-up and become a network member. All it takes is a short email.

In general, networking is probably the best approach when it comes to any job search. It might sound obvious – but if you

see someone in a job that is attractive to you, ask them how they got there. If you are changing career directions, this will most likely mean that you'll have to call people you don't know and who don't know you. This can be challenging, but you'll find that most people enjoy sharing their experience. Don't be shy. Prepare a set of questions before you call. This will help you get the conversation going and will make sure you don't forget something really important.

Of course, AAS meetings are an excellent way of connecting with people outside of their regular obligations. If you are headed for the 2007 winter meeting in Seattle, make sure you attend the session sponsored by the Committee on Employment and go to the receptions. Get to know the EC members and talk to them about the issues you are facing or would like help with. Call or email the EC chair or any of the EC members if you need some help making connections or are looking for guidance. We are here to help you and look forward to working with you in the coming year.

ASTRONOMERS PARTICIPATE IN COALITION FOR NATIONAL SCIENCE FUNDING FALL VISITS DAY



L to R: Barbara Mattson (AAS), John Aiello (AAS), Luis Kun (IEEE-USA), Greg Cutter (AIMBE), John Debes (AAS), and Gerald Miller (AIMBE) wrap up a busy day of visits at Rep. Thelma Drake's office.



L to R: Greg Cutter (ASLO), Gerald Miller (AIMBE), John Aiello (AAS), Barbara Mattson (AAS), and John Debes (AAS) visit Rep. Tom Davis' office.

DIVISION NEWS

HISTORICAL ASTRONOMY DIVISION (HAD)

Don Yeomans, Chair

As is our custom, the HAD will meet in Seattle in conjunction with the January 2007 AAS meeting. Morning and afternoon HAD sessions will take place on Sunday, 7 January bookending the always exciting HAD business meeting in the early afternoon. The Sunday afternoon special session has as its theme “Case studies in how 20th century observatory directors were chosen” with talks by Joe Tenn (speaking about the Lowell Observatory in 1954-58), Virginia Trimble (Yale in 1965-68), Ken Kellerman (NRAO in the 1950’s and 1960’s), and Rudi Lindner (Michigan in the 1940’s); David DeVorkin, the session organizer, will be speaking on Harvard in Shapley’s wake (1952-54) and Karl Hufbauer will chair this session. The Sunday morning session will include an invited talk by Don Osterbrock on Frank Ross’s early orbits of the then newly discovered irregular satellites of Saturn and Jupiter. Contributed papers will continue on Monday with sessions likely in both the morning and afternoon.

New HAD officers will begin their terms at the January 2007 HAD meeting with Sara Schechner (Harvard) replacing Don Yeomans (JPL) as HAD Chair. Tom Hockey (U. Northern Iowa) becomes the new Vice-Chair while Gene Milone (Calgary) and Jay Holberg (U. AZ) replace Peter Abrahams (OR) and Dan Green (Smithsonian Obs.) as Committee members. Ron Brashear (Chemical Heritage Foundation) will continue his term as HAD Secretary-Treasurer.

SOLAR PHYSICS DIVISION (SPD)

James Klimchuk, SPD Chair

SPD Annual Meeting and Summer School

The 37th annual meeting of the Solar Physics Division was held at the University of New Hampshire in Durham from 25-30 June 2006. A total of 249 attendees gave 98 talks and presented 160 posters on a wide variety of topics, including the solar interior, atmosphere, corona, eruptions, heating, and particle acceleration. Peter Gilman’s Hale Prize lecture described his “42 Year Quest to Understand the Solar Dynamo and Predict Solar Cycles,” and Steve Cranmer’s Harvey Prize Lecture elucidated the importance of “Turbulence and Wave Dissipation in the Chromosphere, Corona, and Solar Wind.” Joe Hollweg, Merov Opher, Mark Rast, and David Smith educated us all with their highly informative tutorials as part of the ongoing Parker Lecture Series. Social events included a Sunday evening reception, a traditional New England clam bake and lobster feast, and many informal “mini symposia” at local bars (where most of the important things happen!). Studentship awards were presented to 25 worthy recipients, which included financial support for attending the meeting (but not the bar tab, despite its importance). The week was a huge success, due in large part to the heroic efforts of SPD

Vice-Chair Ed DeLuca and his SOC and Jim Ryan and his LOC. The accompanying photos are courtesy of John Leibacher and David Hathaway.

The second annual SPD Summer School took place immediately preceding the main science meeting, also at UNH. This year’s topic was High Energy Solar Physics. The 11-day program put 50 graduate students, undergrads, and recent post-docs through their paces, and even included the writing of mock SR&T and Explorer proposals. By all accounts, it was an intense, yet highly enjoyable and rewarding experience. The dedication of lead organizer Jim Ryan and the rest of the summer school faculty really paid off.





Photo 1: Peter Gilman receives the Hale Prize certificate from SPD Chair Jim Klimchuk. **Photo 2:** Steve Cranmer receives the Harvey Price certificate. **Photo 3:** Merav Opher gives her Parker Lecture on “Surprises from the Edge of the Solar System: Voyager at the Final Frontier.” **Photo 4:** Jasper Schou and Jeneen Summers tell AAS Executive Officer Kevin Marvel about the Helioseismic and Magnetic Imager on the Solar Dynamics Observatory. **Photo 5:** SPD Treasurer Joan Schmelz and Mitzi Adams anxiously await their clams and lobster at the banquet. **Photo 6:** David Smith and Bill Thompson get down on the bass drum and wash tub base fiddle (who said solar physicists aren’t hip?).

EDUCATION NEWS

Susana E. Deustua, Director of Education

Astronomy Education Board

The Astronomy Education Board is nearing completion of its strategic planning process for education for the next three years, consistent with the AEB mission statement. The five goals identified by the AEB are to promote and support 1) training the next generation of astronomers to be successful researchers, 2) training the next generation of astronomers to be successful educators, 3) research on the teaching and learning of astronomy, 4) increasing scientific literacy and sharing the excitement of astronomical discoveries, and, 5) increasing participation of underserved populations in astronomy. As part of this process, the AEB and the Education Office are examining the existing programs and identifying areas where the AAS can significantly contribute to improving astronomy education.

AAS/AAPT Joint Meeting

Education workshops and sessions at the upcoming Winter Meeting in Seattle, held jointly with the AAPT (American Association of Physics Teachers), promise to be quite interesting and informative. There are too many to list in this limited space, but you can find them online and in the printed program. They will also be listed in the January issue of SPARK, the Education Newsletter. You may subscribe to SPARK when you renew your AAS membership for 2007, or by sending email to membership@as.org.

International Year of Astronomy 2009

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 celebrates the 400th anniversary of Galileo’s use of the telescope to study celestial objects. In 1609 Galileo made several critical discoveries: the Moon’s surface has peaks and craters, Jupiter has orbiting moons, and the sky is filled with stars fainter than the eye can detect. These discoveries revolutionized scientific thought and established astronomy as an observational science. The AAS formed two committees to coordinate US participation in the IYA. The Program Committee consists of diverse members of the astronomical community and is charged with coordinating national programs. Its members are Timothy Slater (Chair), Michael Bennett, Doris Daou, Chris De Pree, Susana Deustua, Mary Dussault, Rick Fienberg, James Hesser, Omar Lopez Cruz, Terry Mann, Franco Pacini (IAU Liaison), Aaron Price, and Denise Smith. The Development Committee’s charge is to seek resources to support the Program Committee’s activities, and its members are: Peter Stockman (Chair), Mark Adams, Kelly Beatty, Michael Bennett, Rolf Danner, Susana Deustua, Jay Frogel, Debbie Goodwin, and Terry Mann. US contact for IYA is Timothy Slater.

Wanted: Volunteers to Judge Student Posters

Through the generosity of C. Chambliss, the AAS established the Astronomy Achievement Student Awards to recognize exemplary research by undergraduate and graduate students who present posters at the semi-annual AAS meetings. Graduate and undergraduate posters are considered separately. If you will attend the AAS/AAPT Joint Meeting in 5-10 January 2007 in Seattle, WA, we welcome your participation as a judge. Contact Susana Deustua, deustua@as.org. There will be a meeting on Saturday afternoon, 6 January, 2007 for judges.

CALENDAR

AAS & AAS Division Meetings

209th AAS Meeting (joint with AAPT)

6-10 January 2007, Seattle, WA
Contact AAS Executive Office
www.aas.org

DDA 2007 Annual Meeting

6-10 May 2007, Ann Arbor, MI
Contact: Fred Adams (fca@umich.edu)
<http://dda.harvard.edu/>

Other Events

NAS Sackler Colloquium: Evolution and Exploration of Solar Systems

5-6 January 2007, Irvine, CA
Contact: Dave Stevenson (djs@gps.caltech.edu)
www.nasonline.org/site/PageServer?pagename=SACKLER_solarsystems

*Rethinking Gravity: From the Planck Scale to the Size of the Universe

22-24 January 2007, Tucson, AZ
Dimitrios Psaltis
(gravity@physics.arizona.edu)
www.physics.arizona.edu/gravity

*Titan - Observations, Experiments, Computations, and Modeling

5-7 February 2007, Honolulu, HI
www.chem.hawaii.edu/Bil301/Titan2007.html

*The First GLAST Symposium

5-8 February 2007, Stanford, CA
Contact: Steve Ritz
(ritz@milkyway.gsfc.nasa.gov)
<http://glast.gsfc.nasa.gov/science/symposium/2007/>

Supernova 1987A: 20 Years After Supernovae and Gamma-Ray Bursters

19-23 February 2007, Aspen, CO
Contact: Richard McCray
(supernova1987a@milkyway.gsfc.nasa.gov)
<http://universe.gsfc.nasa.gov/conferences/supernova1987a/>

*Twenty Years after SN1987A: What did we learn, what will the next SN tell us?

23-25 February, Waikoloa, HI
Contact: Masayuki Nakahata
(sn1987a@suketto.icrr.u-tokyo.ac.jp)
<http://sn1987a-20th.physics.uci.edu/>

Probing Gravity at All Scales: From the sub-mm to the Size of the Universe

5-7 March 2007, Tucson, AZ
Contact: Dimitrios Psaltis
(gravity@physics.arizona.edu)
www.physics.arizona.edu/gravity

2007 Planetary Defense Conference

5-8 March 2007, Washington, D.C.
Contact: William Ailor
(william.h.ailor@aero.org)
www.aero.org/conferences/planetarydefense/index.html

IAU Symposium No. 242 Astrophysical Masers and their Environments

12-16 Mar 2007, Alice Springs, Australia
Contact: Jessica M. Chapman
(Jessica.Chapman@csiro.au)

IAU Symposium No. 243 Star-Disk Interaction in Young Stars

1-5 April 2007, Grenoble, France
Contact: Jérôme Bouvier
(jbouvier@laog.obs.ujf-grenoble.fr)

From Stars to Planets: Connecting our Understanding of Star and Planet Formation

11-14 April 2007, Gainesville, FL
Contact: Jonathan Tan
(starstoplanets@astro.ufl.edu)
<http://conference.astro.ufl.edu/STARSTOPLANETS/>

*Microstructures in the Interstellar Medium, A meeting in honor of Bob O'Dell's 70th birthday

22-24 April 2007, Lake Geneva, WI
Contact: Gary Ferland (gary@pa.uky.edu)
www.yerkes.uchicago.edu/meeting

Multiplicity in Star Formation

16-18 May 2007, Toronto, Canada
Contact: Prof. Ray Jayawardhana
(msf@astro.utoronto.ca)
www.astro.utoronto.ca/msf

*Third Summer School in Statistics for Astronomers

4-9 June 2007, University Park, PA
Contact: Eric Feigelson (edf@astro.psu.edu)
<http://astrostatistics.psu.edu/su07>

*Transformational Science with ALMA: Through Disks to Stars and Planets

22-24 June, 2007, Charlottesville, VA
Contact: Crystal Brogan (cbrogan@nrao.edu)
www.cv.nrao.edu/naasc/disk07/disk07.html

*Extreme Solar Systems

June 24-29, 2007, Santorini, Greece
www.astro.northwestern.edu/Santorini2007/

IAU Symposium No. 244 Dark Galaxies and Lost Baryons

25-29 June 2007, Cardiff, UK
Contact: Jonathan I. Davies
(jid@astro.cf.ac.uk)

*First Stars III

16-20 July 2007, Santa Fe, NM
Contact: Brian O'Shea (bwoshea@lanl.gov)
www.firststars3.org/

*Bioastronomy 2007: Molecules, Microbes and Extraterrestrial Life

16-20 July 2007, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Contact: Karen Meech (LOC)
meech@ifa.hawaii.edu
Bill Irvine (SOC)
irvine@fcrao1.astro.umass.edu
www.ifa.hawaii.edu/UHNAI/bioast07.htm

IAU Symposium No. 245 Formation and Evolution of Galaxy Bulges

16-20 July 2007, Oxford, UK
Contact: Martin Bureau
(bureau@astro.ox.ac.uk)
www-astro.physics.ox.ac.uk/~iaus245/

Nuclear Astrophysics: Beyond the First 50 Years

24-28 July 2007, Pasadena, CA
Contact: Stan Woosley
(woosley@ucolick.org)
www.na2007.caltech.edu/

40 Years of Pulsars: Millisecond Pulsars, Magnetars and More

12-17 August 2007, Montreal, Canada
Contact: Vicky Kaspi
(vkaspi@physics.mcgill.ca)
www.ns2007.org

*Star Formation through Cosmic Time 13-17 August 2007, Santa Barbara, CA

Contact: Paolo Padoan (ppadoan@ucsd.edu)
www.kitp.ucsb.edu/activities/auto2/?id=800

IAU Symposium No. 246 Dynamical Evolution of Dense Stellar Systems

5-9 September 2007, Capri, Italy
Contact: Enrico Vesperini
(vesperin@physics.drexel.edu)

IAU Symposium No. 247

Waves and Oscillations in the Solar Atmosphere: Heating and Magneto-Seismology

17-21 September 2007, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela

Contact: César A. Mendoza-Briceño
(cesar@ula.ve)

IAU Symposium No. 248

A Giant Step: from Milli- to Micro-arcsecond Astrometry

15-19 October 2007, Shanghai, China

Contact: Imants Platais (imants@pha.jhu.edu)

IAU Symposium No. 249

Exoplanets: Detection, Formation and Dynamics

22-26 October 2007, Suzhou, China

Contact: Ji-Lin Zhou (zhoujl@nju.edu.cn)

12th Latin-American Regional IAU Meeting (LARIM-2007)

26-30 Nov 2007, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela

Contact: Gustavo A. Bruzual (bruzual@cida.ve)

IAU Symposium No. 250

Massive Stars as Cosmic Engines

10-14 December 2007, Kauai, HI

Contact: Paul A. Crowther
(Paul.Crowther@sheffield.ac.uk)

* New or revised listings

Note: Listed are meetings or other events that have come to our attention. Due to space limitations, we publish notice of meetings 1) occurring in North, South and Central America; 2) meetings of the IAU; and 3) meetings as requested by AAS Members. Meeting publication may only be assured by emailing crystal@aas.org. Meetings that fall within 30 days of publication are not listed.

A comprehensive list of world-wide astronomy meetings is maintained by Liz Bryson, Librarian C-F-H Telescope in collaboration with the Canadian Astronomy Data Centre, Victoria, BC. The list may be accessed and meeting information entered at <http://cadwww.hia.nrc.ca/meetings>.

Washington News continued from back page

After I presented information on how to proactively lobby Congress on behalf of Astronomy and Planetary Science several questions were asked. Some wondered how they could build a relationship with Hill staffers if their districts kept getting gerrymandered. Someone wondered whether the full cost of the Vision for Space Exploration was something that people on the Hill truly grasp. Some detailed questions about NASA programs were asked as well. One postdoc asked how someone at his career level could participate effectively and Sean Solomon pointed out that he always took younger researchers with him to the Hill as they made good connections with the staffers and members of Congress too.

The DPS NASA night has a long tradition and serves as a public airing for community input. I want to thank the DPS for inviting me to participate and want to remind all AAS and AAS division members of my final phrase while closing the panel, "Stay united and get active!"

Budget Outlook

The outlook for the budget for FY2007 is bleak. It is now expected that no Congressional budget action will take place until well after the election, perhaps not even until just before the President's budget is released in February. Also, instead of passing individual bills, which allows some degree of attention to be paid to the details, all appropriations bills will be passed in a single omnibus process. The omnibus process wraps everything into one bill. Details get lost. Earmarks can grow in number. Other policy items can be included with little or no discussion. It is not a pretty process.

The good news is that the Mikulski-Hutchison amendment, which would add \$1B to NASA's budget in FY2007, is likely to survive the omnibus process and will bring several hundred million dollars to the Science Mission Directorate. We continue to try and find ways to actively advocate for astronomy at NASA without being perceived as a whining entitlement community. Stay tuned and stay active. There is nothing wrong with advocating for NASA to fulfill its science mission through adequate funding for basic research.

NSF

The NSF Senior Review will be released before this newsletter goes to press. The AAS has endorsed the Senior Review process and eagerly awaits the release of the recommendations. No matter what they might be, there will be some facilities that will see budget decreases or even closures. It is hard to say that closures of instruments are a good thing, especially when they are scientifically productive.

However, in a limited budget environment, we have to decide as a community if it is better to maintain old facilities or build new. The worst thing that can result from the release of the Senior Review recommendations would be organizations working through Congress to avoid implementation of the recommendations. As a community, our reputation would be tarnished and a free-for-all environment where advocacy on the Hill dictates scientific priorities is but a short slippery slope away.

I urge all of our community to read the Senior Review recommendations and the full report explaining how they were developed and think deeply about the future of our field. Do we want to be a field of lobbyist-astronomers fighting it out on Capitol Hill for funding and letting Congress set our priorities or do we want to stick with a revised Decadal Survey process and set our priorities ourselves? I think the second option is superior. I hope the community does too.



American Astronomical Society
2000 Florida Avenue, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20009-1231

Periodical
Postage
Paid
Washington DC

Newsletter 133 December 2006



Printed with Soy-Based Inks on
20% Postconsumer, 70% Recycled Paper

WASHINGTON NEWS

Kevin B. Marvel, Executive Officer
marvel@aaas.org



DPS NASA Night

At each Division of Planetary Science meeting a NASA night is held. This well-attended evening usually begins around 7:30 and can last into the wee hours, depending on the energy of the attendees and the current situation with NASA science. At the most recent DPS meeting in Pasadena more than

400 people attended a 2-hour panel session that included Colleen Hartman, Deputy Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate; Jim Green, the acting director of the Planetary Science Division; Sean Soloman, a member of the NASA Advisory Council and myself (via telephone).

Colleen discussed the NASA Advisory Committee (NAC) structure, how NASA avoids conflict of interest on its advisory committees, the planetary science community's role in lunar science, new opportunities using data from the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, the schedule of announcements of opportunity including opportunities for the Mars scout program and the planetary science research program. Of particular interest, she said the Discovery selections would be announced soon (likely out by the time this is read).

Jim Green introduced himself in his new role and highlighted his long history in trying to land proposals from NASA, with mixed success. He is truly a part of the planetary science community and his open attitude and helpful nature will serve the planetary science community well in his new role. He announced that Stan Warner is now his deputy, that he is starting some new programs including New Horizons Jupiter data analysis and lunar science R&A, both of which represent new program lines and new money and will not negatively impact the extant programs. Of particular interest, he announced new openings at HQ for a Discovery program executive and program scientist, which will be announced soon. He encouraged young people to be proactive and reiterated what Colleen said, everyone should feel welcome to communicate directly with NASA HQ staff. They are there to help.

Sean Soloman, the chair of the Planetary Science subcommittee of the Science subcommittee of the NAC (I suppose that makes it a sub-subcommittee) presented a detailed presentation on the revamped advisory committee structure at NASA and described the advisory groups system.