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President's Column

J. Craig Wheeler, aaspres@aas.org

Policy, policy, policy. What we mean by that, of course, is expanding fruitful opportunities for federal and other funding of our research. We work in an environment where this is a constant “creative” tension. That is probably healthy at some level, but that tension is what keeps “policy” on everyone’s mind. It is why I have spent a fair amount of my time as President engaged in these issues, why the Council voted in our retreat in Hawaii to make this a high priority, and why most members of the AAS keep a weather eye on these issues. Fall has been an active time in this regard.

The Beyond Einstein Program Assessment Committee (BEPAC) released its report in September. The AAS released a statement commending the process, as we did for the NSF Senior Review, being careful not to comment on the results, *per se*. Even this statement engendered some contention. My personal view is that having community input to such a serious issue is preferable to the contrary, as we witnessed in previous NASA administrations. I think we want to encourage that aspect of NASA decision making, and the AAS statement was commensurate with that aim. There are still issues related to the portions of our community who were disappointed by the BEPAC recommendations (and by those of the NSF Senior Review, for that matter), and attention must be paid to those as well.

As a direct development of the vote of Council in Hawaii to enhance the role of the Council and the Society in policy issues, I appointed a sub-committee of Council, chaired by Chryssa Kouveliotou, to help us consider issues of strategic planning by the Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy (CAPP) in addition to the tactical response at which CAPP has proved effective. We also had a two-day retreat of CAPP in October, with participation by this new Council sub-committee, to consider how to develop strategic as well as tactical planning. My original idea was that the Council sub-committee, with the benefit of being elected, would engage in strategic planning and CAPP would remain the tactical implement. It soon became clear that particular notion was not practical. For one thing, I have made an effort to get experienced, strategic thinkers on CAPP. For another, the lines of authority were confused. At the CAPP retreat, we decided that it made more sense to merge the committees and have all the Council members of the Policy Sub-Committee serve on CAPP. That will temporarily make CAPP somewhat large, but I believe workable, and we can shrink the total body by attrition. This newly expanded CAPP will be charged with considering strategic issues, as well as with schmoozing with staffers and tracking important bills on the Hill (the Mikulski/Hutchison addendum to the NASA budget was passed while we were in Washington, its survival remaining an issue).

Another strong recommendation of the Hawaii Council retreat and the Washington CAPP retreat was that we have a full-time policy person. Kevin Marvel keeps his hand in on these issues and his experience and talents in this area remain invaluable, but he has a great deal on his plate as Executive Officer. Our first Bahcall Policy Fellow, Jeremy Richardson, did an excellent job for the six months of his tenure during Congressional “high season,” but building and maintaining relationships in Washington requires year-round attention. To further this end, we will hire the next Bahcall Policy Fellow as a full-time position (with a tenure of one year, renewable).

In an effort to keep us all apprised of the levers of policy power in the federal government and who has their hands on them, we have created a Policy Ecology Wiki. The intent is to provide an up-to-date tutorial about “how things really work.” You can find this web page by clicking on the Policy link on the AAS main page and then on the link for the Astronomy Policy Ecosystem. The URL is: http://intra.wiki.aas.org/doku.php?id=policy_ecosystem. This wiki will be open to members of CAPP to edit and perhaps eventually to our entire membership. In the meantime if you have

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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.php. Items submitted to the *AAS Newsletter* are not automatically included in the AAS Electronic Announcements or vice versa. Submit electronic announcement items to crystal@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: aastex.aas.org
User Support: aastex-help@aas.org
Journal Homepages/Manuscript Submission: journals.aas.org

AAS Email Policy

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

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From the Executive Office

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

As I write this, many of your executive office staff are in Orlando to support the 39th annual meeting of the Division for Planetary Sciences (DPS). This DPS meeting is likely to be the largest DPS meeting in history, not because of the attractions of Disney World (I hope), but because the field of planetary sciences is very healthy and active. The DPS is our largest Division and it takes just about as many staff to support their meeting as our large winter meeting, but it is a service we are proud to provide.

In addition to running the winter and summer AAS meetings and the annual DPS meeting, the AAS meetings group also supports meetings of the SPD, DDA, HAD and HEAD in one way or another. We provide this service because we can do so in a very cost effective way, because we know the communities very well and because we bring the added value of an integrated abstract processing system and publication in the *Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society (BAAS)*. By supporting our Divisions, I feel we support our Society. Astronomy is a diverse field and the Universe is a big place. Anyone who looks up and out and seeks to understand has a place in our Society and likely a special home in one of our Divisions. It is a good structure that benefits our field significantly.

The deadline for submission of applications for the John Bahcall Public Policy has passed and I look forward to interviewing the finalists here in DC. This year, I am happy to say we will be able to hire the policy fellow at a full time level. We still seek donations to support the fellow and will seek over the longer term to endow this position, which will ensure that the AAS can always have a full time person focused on public policy, an area which the Council recognized at its planning retreat in Hawaii as a significant priority for the Society.

Also fast approaching is the deadline (15 December) for proposals for a new type of session at our summer meeting, the Meeting Within a Meeting (MWM). The idea of the MWM is to allow special topic sessions to last longer than the half or full day limits of the old Topical Session format. Many people are interested in organizing a special topic meeting, but are overwhelmed by the logistical problems. By using the AAS summer meeting as the logistical engine for such a session, the organizers can focus on the science and leave the planning and administration to the professionals. Please consider submitting a proposal to the AAS Meeting Planning Committee for the 2008 summer meeting in St. Louis. We are happy to announce that the Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP), our sister society, will be taking advantage of this new session format in St. Louis, with a multi-day session covering a variety of topics in public outreach and education, with special emphasis on the upcoming International Year of Astronomy (IYA).

On that note, the Executive Committee has voted to seed the International Year of Astronomy effort enough funding to hire a fundraiser, build a website and cover some promotional expenses. The project will be seeking both government funding through grants (mainly for temporary infrastructure, staff and some core program support) and external funding for the various projects selected by the IYA Program Committee and its various subcommittees. I can say from having seen the projects proposed that there are no shortage of exciting ideas and energy out there related to IYA. The AAS, in partnership with ASP and other organizations, will be seeking to provide a lasting impact on our nation's appreciation and understanding of astronomy, not just a one-year flurry of activity. Watch future newsletters and electronic alerts for more information about the IYA activity and how you, your department or your institution can play a part. The US IYA web page is:

www.astronomy2009.us. I think it will be a great year, so get ready and get involved!

Finally, the transition of our Journals to the Institute of Physics (IOP) continues apace. The *Astronomical Journal (AJ)* will see its first issue published by IOP in January 2008 and the first manuscripts have already been accepted for publication for this issue and are currently in production. I am happy to announce here that to highlight the new *AJ* manuscript submission system, we have decided to provide **free page charges to the 100th manuscript accepted for publication in the AJ**. There is still plenty of time for you to get your

paper written up and submitted before the 100th paper is accepted, so get to work! I think you will find the new IOP submission procedure easy to use and highly functional, one of the benefits of our transition. The Publications Board will be meeting in Bristol, England, home of IOP, to visit with the staff, review the facilities and discuss the future of our journals. If you have input on our journals, please submit it to our Publications Board Chair, Mike A'Hearn, our Journals Manager, Chris Biemesderfer or myself. We value your input on our most important function as a Society, the publication and dissemination of peer-reviewed science.

Publication News

Author Charges during the AAS Journals Transition

Chris Biemesderfer, AAS Journals Manager

In September 2007, we took the first visible step in the transition of the AAS' journals to IOP Publishing. The *Astronomical Journal* began accepting new manuscripts in IOP's ATOM system on 1 September.

During the period of transition (September 2007-January 2009), page charges for AAS journals will not be changed; they will remain \$105 per page. We are taking this prudent step during the transition to help us manage the inherent uncertainties in establishing new production schemes for the AAS Journals.

Page charges are reviewed regularly, and may be adjusted down in the future in response to reductions in expenditures. Note that, at the present time (Fall 2007), our page charges are at their historical low point; in inflation-adjusted terms, the AAS' page charges are lower than they have ever been.

The AAS journals rely on revenue from subscriptions and page charges, as do many other association-owned journals in the physical sciences. Page charges reduce the dependence on subscription revenue and help keep subscription rates low. Lower subscription rates in turn help assure a broader distribution that permits more people to read the journals.

AJ Publishing Transition Update

Jay Gallagher
Editor-in-Chief

The Astronomical Journal

The *Astronomical Journal (AJ)* currently is in the midst of the switchover from publication by The University of Chicago Press to the Institute of Physics (IOP) Publishing. During

this time period, that lasts until the end of 2007, papers which were submitted to Chicago are being processed there while as of 1 September new submissions are running through IOP. As *AJ* authors submit new manuscripts they are entering the IOP web-based publishing system. This differs from what you are used to in that communications to authors primarily take place through a web-accessible author home page.

Beginning in 2008 all of the *AJ* publishing support will be provided by IOP. We encourage you to visit the AAS portal at IOP: <http://journals.aas.org/> where you will see a button on the right that will take you to the *AJ* author submission page. This page explains how to access and use the IOP authors services.

The process of transitioning from a publishing system utilized by the AAS for more than a decade to an approach with its own workflow design and unique software platform is not without challenges. That this changeover is proceeding close to the expected schedule is due in no small part to dedicated support from the staffs at Chicago and IOP as well as the AAS Executive Office, where we are aided by the arrival of Chris Biemesderfer, our AAS Journals Manager. During this time the *AJ* editorial staff is processing papers via two software systems while learning and helping to debug the new IOP system. As a result you may notice some delays in communications or processing steps, but these should not significantly retard the time to publish papers. In 2008 we expect to reduce the time to publication in the *AJ* to be faster than what we achieved before the transition.

Papers published via IOP will offer *AJ* authors new capabilities. For example, beginning in 2008 all figures that appear in color online also will be in color in the downloadable PDF files. In addition we are in the process of arranging options for publishing special series of papers. These are first steps towards our goal of making wider use of the possibilities provided by online scientific journals and you will see more innovations in the coming year.

comments, changes, or additions to suggest, please send them to me or to Jack Burns, Chair of CAPP.

In a related area, I want to thank Neta Bahcall for her generous support of the Bahcall Public Policy Fellowship. Neta promises more support in the form of a **matching challenge pledge**. Council selected the Bahcall Fellowship and an expansion of the endowment for the Van Biesbroeck Prize for “unsung heroes” so that it can be awarded annually as the current highest priorities for fund-raising. At our October Executive Committee meeting, I made my own challenge **matching pledge**. I will give \$1000 to each of these areas under the condition that ExCom, collectively, and Council, collectively, each contribute \$2000. I am optimistic that my pledge will be collected. I urge you to do your part as well. Even small contributions to these worthy issues, to our general funds, or to other items that attract you, can be of help in expanding the range and effectiveness of the Society. We have tried to make giving easy, with a button to click on the web page when you pay your dues, or whenever else the mood to be generous is upon you. Please consider giving what you can.

Finally, on a different issue, I have appointed a new Child Care Committee chaired by James Rhoads. This committee will ensure that there is a contact for people inquiring about child care at meetings and will work with us to see if we can provide more concrete support than has been true in the past.

See you in Austin!

Candidate Statements

Vice-President (vote for one)

Christine Jones

Nominated Office: Vice-President

Affiliation: Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

Position: Senior Astrophysicist (Smithsonian), Lecturer (Harvard)

PhD: Harvard University, 1974

AAS positions and dates: AAS Councilor 1989-1992; High Energy Astrophysics Division Executive Committee 1987-1989, 1999-2001, (Secretary-Treasurer) 2005-2008; Shapley Visiting Lecturer 1995-present; AAS Liaison to AAAS 1992-1994; AAS Small Grants Awards Committee 1992; AAS search committee for Executive Officer 1995; Heineman Prize Committee 2000-2002.

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: NASA SEUS Advisory Committee (Structure and Evolution of the Universe) 1996-1999; NASA Senior Review 1998; STScI Visiting Committee 2001-2004; CfA Gender Equity Committee 2003-present; Vice-President IAU Division XI, Commission 44 Space and High Energy Astrophysics 2006-present; member of several NASA (e.g. HST, ROSAT) and NSF Review Panels; member of scientific organizing committees for many conference; PI and Director of NSF SAO REU program 1994-present..

Statement: These are exciting, but stressful times for North American astronomers. The fifty years since Sputnik's launch have witnessed remarkable growth in astrophysical research. Nearly every day brings spectacular images from ground or space-based observatories. Observations across the spectrum, along with theoretical investigations, are bringing a fuller understanding of all areas from the Sun and extrasolar planets to cosmology, along with incredible discoveries like dark energy.

Significant funding has been essential to our scientific accomplishments. But in these turbulent times, budgets at NSF and NASA are strained, a situation likely to continue. The Society must continue as a strong advocate for science in the federal government and funding agencies.

In addition to being Council members, Vice-Presidents are responsible for the scientific content of AAS meetings, including selecting invited speakers. I would work to maintain the highest scientific standards and seek diversity in invited speakers, since women and minority speakers serve as important role models. Thus while we face challenges including adequate funding for missions in our decadal surveys, good employment opportunities for our students, and increasing diversity within our community, our future is full of promise. I am enthusiastic about working with the Council to address the current challenges and to plan meetings that highlight the amazing research done by our members.

Melissa McGrath

Nominated Office: Vice-President

Affiliation: NASA Marshall Space Flight Center

Position: Chief Scientist

PhD: University of Virginia, 1987

Areas of scientific interest: personal research, planetary science; currently oversee a broad spectrum of scientific research from microbiology to high energy astrophysics

AAS positions and dates: AAS Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy (CAPP)

2006-2008; AAS Nominating Committee 2004-2006, Chair 2006; AJ Editor Search

Committee 2003; AAS Division for Planetary Sciences Federal Relations Subcommittee 2006-2008, Chair 2006; AAS Division for Planetary Sciences Secretary-Treasurer 2001-2004; AAS Division for Planetary Sciences Committee (governing body) 1998-2001

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Vice President, IAU Commission 16, 2006-2009; Chair, Solar System Review Panel, HST Telescope Allocation Committee 2008 (Cycle 17); Chair, Cassini Extended Mission Senior Review 2007; Member, Chandra telescope allocation committee 2001 (Cycle 3); Chair, Solar System Review Panel, FUSE Telescope Allocation Committee 1998 (Cycle 2)

Statement: AAS Vice-Presidents have the responsibility for the overall scientific content of the major Society meetings, including review speakers and special sessions, and the responsibility to support and advise the Executive Officer in maintaining the scientific quality of the program. Although my own personal research is in planetary sciences, I have extensive experience in much more broadly-based astronomical activities, including leadership activities within the AAS, 13 years of experience working on a multi-disciplinary space mission (Hubble Space Telescope), service on several astrophysics mission time allocation committees, and my current job of fostering science encompassing all disciplines embodied by the AAS. If elected Vice President of the AAS I pledge to embrace all disciplines of the society and consider innovative new approaches in constructing and maintaining the highest quality scientific program for major Society meetings. I would be pleased to serve the AAS to my fullest ability in this role.

Treasurer (vote for one)

Hervey "Peter" Stockman

Nominated Office: Treasurer

Affiliation: Space Telescope Science Institute

Position: Project Scientist, JWST Project

PhD: Columbia University, 1973

Areas of scientific interest: the Earliest Galaxies, Space Instrumentation

AAS positions and dates: Treasurer 2005-2008

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Vice President, Board of Trustees, Walters Art Museum 2002-present; JWST Mission Head (STScI) 1996-2007; Deputy Director, STScI 1988-1995

Statement: The AAS is responsible for the semi-annual meetings of its members, the *AJ* and *ApJ*, and the support of five divisions. In addition, the Society is committed to improving science education. Funding comes primarily from members in the form of dues, meeting registrations, and page charges. Library journal subscriptions, gifts for prizes, and grants from US agencies complete the revenue stream. Since the Society is a non-profit, the annual challenge is providing our members and other stakeholders with high quality meetings, journals, and education programs without excessive fees or losses. As a member of the Council and Executive Committee, I lend a fiscally conservative view in approving education programs, meeting venues, and journal policies. As Treasurer, I work with the Executive Officer and staff to ensure that appropriate budgeting, accounting and reporting processes are followed. I also chair the Budget and Investment committees. The latter has updated the Societies investment policies and recommended a new portfolio manager for the AAS reserve funds. I am working with the International Year of Astronomy Program Team to ensure that the key AAS-led programs are adequately funded without placing additional financial burdens on our members.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor on current issues of importance to astronomers are welcomed. Letters must be signed and should not exceed 250 words. Send to Jeff Linsky, Associate Editor, Letters, (jlinsky@jila.colorado.edu; 303-492-7838 phone; or 303-492-5235 fax) one week prior to the *AAS Newsletter* deadline. Letters may be edited for clarity/length (authors will be consulted) and will be published at the discretion of the Editors.

Opting Out of AAS Publications

If you would no longer like to receive paper copies of the *AAS Newsletter*, the *AAS Membership Directory*, or the *AAS Calendar*, please send an email to address@aaas.org.

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

Member Spotlight

In each issue, we will feature one member, their research or other work, a bit of their history and their picture. We will accept suggestions for this feature, but no self-nominations. If you know of a fellow member who does interesting research, came to our field through interesting circumstances or is just a fantastic person, consider submitting their story to us for possible publication (500 word limit). We will only publish stories approved by members willing to be featured. Email your suggestion to Crystal Tinch, crystal@aaas.org.

Councilor (vote for three)

Jason Glenn

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: University of Colorado

Position: Associate Professor

PhD: University of Arizona, 1997

Areas of scientific interest: Dusty galaxies, star formation, submillimeter instrumentation

AAS positions and dates: No elected positions, member since 1993

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Dept. of Astrophysics & Planetary Sciences Executive Committee, U. Colo. 2005-06; Center for Astrophysics & Space Astronomy Executive Committee, U. Colo. 2002-2005; ALMA North American Science Advisory Committee 2003-2005; NRAO User's Committee 1999-2002.

Statement: I am delighted to be a candidate for the AAS Council. An important Council function is appointing and electing AAS members to serve on committees and to serve as representatives of the AAS to related societies. The Council also reviews AAS budgets, financial reports, and business plans. Upon inspection of the Council Actions in the *AAS Newsletter*, one can see that meeting agendas have been packed full with these statutory responsibilities, leaving little time for forward-thinking policy discussions. As a Councilor, I will advocate streamlining the statutory functions by performing some of them electronically in advance of meetings so that face-to-face time can be spent discussing policy issues. Two policy questions that I will pose to the Council are: 1) Should the AAS be more proactive as a body to advocate for federal astronomy funding? 2) Should the AAS regularly administer surveys of its members to gather demographic information? For example, employment statistics could be traced by the AAS to inform career choices of young astronomers like the American Institute of Physics does for physicists. If the consensus is that the AAS should do these things, the Council should suggest ways to implement them.

John W. Leibacher

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: National Solar Observatory

Position: Astronomer

PhD: Harvard University, 1971

Areas of scientific interest: Solar and Stellar Structure, Helioseismology and Asteroseismology

AAS positions and dates: Nominating Committee Chair, Member: 1999-2002; Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy 2002-2007; Solar Physics Division Chair, Vice-Chair, Committee Member: 1980-1981, 2000-2006; SPD Nominating Committee Chair 1986-1987; SPD Prize Committee Chair, Member 1995-1999.

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Director, National Solar Observatory 1988-1993; Director, Global Oscillation Network Group Program 1984-2006;

National Research Council-Space Studies Board 1986-1990; NRC-Committee on Solar and Space Physics Chair, Member, 1985-1990; NASA-Space Sciences Advisory Committee 1993-1998; Chair and Member of various NASA and NRC MOWGs, Councils, Decadal Surveys, and Committees; Chair and Member of various US and international visiting committees, Annual Reviews of Astronomy and Astrophysics Editorial Board Member 1990-1996, 1999; Solar Physics Editor, 2005 – present ; Visiting Scientist Observatories de la Côte d'Azur, Nice 1993 Institute d'Astrophysique Spatiale, Orsay 1998, 2005-2006, Observatories de Paris, Meudon 2006; Co-Investigator Orbiting Solar Observatory-8 1976, Solar Maximum Mission 1976, Spacelab II 1983, SOHO 1987.

Statement: I have been privileged to serve the broad astronomical community in a number of capacities, and these opportunities have given me a real appreciation of the contribution of the AAS to our professional lives and to advancing our science. I would work hard to apply this experience in representing the membership in the governance of the AAS. The AAS serves us not only as individuals, but also as members of various communities based on phenomenologies (DPS, SPD), methodologies (HEAD, DDA, HAD), or the status of our members (CSWA, CSMA, Employment), and I encourage recognition of the role of these federated bodies in the governance of the Society. As the membership-based professional society, I encourage the AAS's unique role in advocating the communities' perspective to the NSF, NASA, and other sponsors as well as to the advisory structures at the AAAC and the NRC. Virtually all of our major facilities have become fundamentally international, and all of the Society's activities need to bear this interdependence in mind while addressing our objectives. Finally, we are all concerned with maintaining research support and serving early career researchers to exploit these systems, and I would work to maintain these as priorities of the Society.

Nancy D. Morrison

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: The University of Toledo

Position: Professor of Astronomy; Director, Ritter Observatory; Director, Ritter Planetarium & Brooks Observatory

PhD: University of Hawaii, 1975

Areas of scientific interest: Stellar spectra, stellar winds, instrumentation

AAS positions and dates: Committee on the Status of Women in Astronomy – 19789-1979; Nominating Committee 1981-1984; Chairman 1982-1983; Anne J. Cannon Award Advisory Committee 2002-2005

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Department of Physics and Astronomy, The University of Toledo Graduate Adviser 1990-1992; Chair, Committee on Graduate Students 2000 to present; Astronomical Society of the Pacific Board of Directors 1985-1991; Executive Committee 1987-1991; ASP Awards Committee 1987-1991; Awards Committee Chair 1988-1991; V.M. Slipher Committee on Public Education in Astronomy Member 1979-2001.

Statement: The AAS has done a great deal for me during my career, and I am eager to serve the AAS. I believe that my experiences with the ASP Board, with observatory and planetarium administration, and with graduate education in physics and astronomy will help me to do so.

Patrick O. Slane

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

Position: Astrophysicist, Group Leader – Chandra Mission Planning

PhD: University of Wisconsin, 1988

Areas of scientific interest: Supernova remnants, cosmic rays, young neutron stars, multiwavelength studies of Galactic sources

AAS positions and dates: AAS/HEAD Executive Committee, 2003-2004; Harlow Shapley Visiting Lecturer 2006-date.

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: APS/DAP Whitepaper Team on Status and Future of Ground Based Gamma-Ray Astronomy 2007-present; Science Organizing Committee COSPAR 2002, 2004, 2006 – Deputy Organizer; Co-Organizer, Meeting on ‘Neutron Stars in Supernova Remnants,’ Boston, MA 2001; Member, Science Alliance Committee for UW-Whitewater 2003-date; Postdoc liaison in High Energy Astrophysics Division at CfA 2007-date; Elected Member, SAO Council 2003-2006, Vice-Chair 2004; NASA HEASARC Users Group 2000-2002; US-XMM Users Committee 2000-2005; VERITAS Associate Member; 5 NASA time allocation committees (ASCA, XMM); Reviewer of educational materials for NASA OSS 2001; PI of EPO grant from Chandra to provide educational materials to elementary schools.

Statement: Astronomy prospers under gracious support from citizens who continually show broad interest in our work, all due to our effective efforts in educating the public about science. This public enthusiasm stimulates support for our endeavors through funding guided by carefully-conceived national science policies. Evidence of our success is found in the legions of young people entering the field, including ever-growing numbers of women and minorities, and in broad, well-supported research opportunities at institutions small and large.

Well, we can dream...

Actually, we all know that science education remains under siege, many of our young members struggle, and constant effort is required to help legislators appreciate and support our research. Colleagues who have served the AAS have been proactive on these matters and more, and our field has benefited as a result. I would welcome the opportunity to help repay their efforts with my own. I bring the perspective of a small-school undergraduate, former high-school teacher, and current researcher at an institute where I work with many students and postdocs. This varied background represents a broad cross-section of my colleagues, and I would like to apply it, along with my experience in serving the community, to help realize the dream above.

C. Megan Urry

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: Yale University

Position: Israel Munson Prof. of Physics and Astronomy;

Chair, Department of Physics; Director, Yale Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics

PhD: Johns Hopkins, 1984

Areas of scientific interest: black holes, galaxies, cosmology, high-energy astrophysics

AAS positions and dates: Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy 2007-present; Nominating Committee 1996-1998, Chair 2001-2004; Committee on the Status of Women in Astronomy 1994-1996, 1998-2000, 2000-2003, Chair; Editor of *STATUS* 1998-2005, Contributing editor 2005-present; High Energy Astrophysics Division Executive Committee 1991-1993.

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: NRC Committee on Astronomy and Astrophysics, Co-Chair 2004-present; Board on Physics and Astronomy 2003-present; Association of American Universities Presidential Working Group 2007-present; NRC Committee to Assess Progress Toward the Decadal Vision in Astronomy and Astrophysics, Chair 2004-2005; Space Studies Board 2000-2004; NASA Space Science Advisory Committee 1997-2000; HST TAC Chair 2007, Spitzer TAC Chair 2006, Chandra Fellowship Review Committee 2005, Chair, 2001.

Statement: Even in the present golden age of astronomy, we still have to worry about funding and about the future demographics of our field. The American Astronomical Society plays an important leadership role in these areas. If elected to Council my chief concerns would be: Articulating the value of astronomy to the nation (excitement about science, attracting students to science and technology, competitiveness); Highlighting the value of innovative teaching and outreach; Encouraging broad participation in the field; Facilitating extensive community input to the upcoming Decadal Survey process; Helping sustain joint public-private support for astronomy, a unique hallmark of our field; Continuing and improving the valuable services provided by the AAS to its members (journals, *Job Register*, committees, meetings); Leveraging our small community’s voice through partnerships with other scientific societies.

As an AAS Councilor I would do my best to address these issues and to use my experience to serve the Society’s goals.

Charles “Chick” E. Woodward

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: University of Minnesota, Department of Astronomy

Position: Full Professor

PhD: University of Rochester, 1987

Areas of scientific interest: Dust, Evolved stars, Stellar Populations, Comets, Instrumentation

AAS positions and dates: Member Cmte, Status Minorities

(CSMA) 2000-2004, Chair 2003-2004

Other experiences and positions relevant to service in AAS: Member Space Studies Science Board 2007-present; Member Gemini Board 2002-present; Member NRC Cmte, Astron. And Astrophys. (CAA) 2002-2005; Member NSF Cmte. Of Visitors Astron. Directorate 1995, 2005; Member (Chair) NOAO Users Committee 2000-2003; Member NSF Advisory Rev. Board REU Sites 1993.

Statement: The AAS supports a diverse community of astronomers from the professional to the amateur and serves the nation as an organization at the vanguard of public outreach and education. Its journals, newsletters, subcommittees and taskforces, and website strive to balance the excitement of astronomical discovery with the high standards of peer-reviewed science advancement. Shortly our community faces the task of articulating a vision for the next decade, requiring consensus's regarding large groundbased facilities and path-breaking space missions. Innovative theory initiatives must complement these activities. Aspirations of the astronomical community will be challenged to accommodate programmatic balance, robust life-cycle costing, and adequate data analysis and support resources. A key role of an AAS Councilor is to promote policies and initiatives that preserve the strong tradition of service to and advocacy for the profession. Therefore, the AAS must effectively communicate with agencies and constituencies that support astronomy and astrophysical sciences. At the same time, the AAS Council must foster vitality, encouraging the Society and its members to engage new technologies, methods of outreach, and innovative educational programs to build relationships with the nation's diverse populations and stakeholders. As an AAS Councilor, I would promote such efforts.

USNC/IAU (vote for one)

Frederic Chaffee

Candidacy Withdrawn

Sara Heap

Nominated Office: Councilor

Affiliation: NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

Position: Astronomer

PhD: UCLA, 1970

Areas of scientific interest: exo-planets, stars, galaxy evolution

AAS positions and dates: AAS Councilor 1992-1995

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: I have served on numerous NASA science working groups, telescope allocation committees, and scientific organizing committees. I am presently serving on the AAS Weber Prize Committee.

Statement: Whether you're an observer or theoretician, chances are you benefit from attendance at international meetings, participation in international collaborations, or the use of international facilities. Many of these benefits derive from the IAU, which organizes international meetings and

provides the medium for exchanging ideas and encouraging women and young astronomers worldwide. As a member of the USNC/IAU, I would work to assist the IAU in these programs, and I would report on USNC/IAU activities in the *AAS Newsletter*.

Nominating Committee (vote for one)

Bruce Carney

Nominated Office: Nominating Committee

Affiliation: University of North Carolina

Position: Senior Associate Dean for Sciences; Samuel Baron Professor of Astronomy,

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

AAS positions and dates: AAS Council 2002-2005; AAS Nominating Committee 1987-1990, Chair 1988-1989

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: President, SOAR Telescope Board of Directors. AURA Board of Directors. Astronomy & Astrophysics Advisory Committee

Gemini Observatory Board of Directors, 2002-2005 Chair 2004-2005; ASP Board of Directors 1989-1995, President 1995-1997.

Statement: The AAS has been and is an extremely well-run society, providing its membership with many services, from the *Job Register* to national meetings to highly-regarded professional journals. The role of the Nominating Committee is to identify members who bring several talents to the multi-faceted Society activities. The Committee needs to identify people who are willing to serve, obviously, and who bring innovative thinking, experience, insight, and, frankly, common sense to the various elected offices within the Society. The Committee must nominate candidates from a wide range of backgrounds to make certain many viewpoints are heard, and from which future leaders of the Society will emerge.

George A. Doschek

Nominated Office: Nominating Committee

Affiliation: Naval Research Laboratory

Position: Head, Solar Terrestrial Relationships Branch

PhD: University of Pittsburgh, 1968

Areas of scientific interest: solar physics, x-ray-uv high resolution spectroscopy

AAS positions and dates: AAS/SPD Hale Prize Committee 1989-1993; AAS/SPD Committee 1983-1985; AAS/SPD Vice-Chairperson 1986, 1989; Chairperson 1986-1988.

Other experience and positions relevant to service in the AAS: Many NAS committees

Statement: The Nominating Committee has the important task of preparing slates of candidates for Society Officers and certain representatives to other organizations. Nowadays it is crucial that the AAS understand its relationship to society and government. Therefore, the Officers of the

AAS should not only be outstanding scientists, but should also be knowledgeable and capable at formulating policy positions and affecting decisions that result in increasing the health of the AAS and furthering the advancement of astronomy and astrophysics. My research interests are in solar physics, particularly high resolution spectroscopic observations in the X-ray through EUV regions of the solar atmosphere. I am currently Principal Investigator to NASA for the US contribution to the Extreme-ultraviolet Imaging Spectrometer on the Japanese Hinode spacecraft. Although I pursue basic research in solar physics, I also manage a group

of research scientists, and must deal with all the problems associated with this task, such as representing their work to laboratory management. I therefore have experience at recognizing the types of individuals that would serve well as Society Officers. If elected to the committee, I would do my best to help produce a slate of outstanding candidates for the Society's consideration.

James W. Liebert
Candidacy Withdrawn

News from the Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP)

James Manning, Executive Director

Documenting Conferences

What's that old chestnut? "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" The physics is the same regardless, but this philosophical nugget does make us think about the importance of observation in defining reality.

Likewise, if a scientific conference is held and it's not documented in a proceedings, did it really occur? The answer is yes, of course, but does that matter if the contents are not readily communicable beyond the initial presentations? Hence, the value of bundling the posters and oral sessions and plenary talks into a form that can be referred to beyond the life of the conference itself—for attendees to use as reference and for non-attendees to derive benefit.

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP) takes the second question seriously, and a few decades ago began its Conference Series, publishing the proceedings of astronomical and education conferences as a service to the professional research community in a more economical manner than could be obtained from commercial publishers. Over the years, the Society has received many positive comments for producing these volumes at lower cost and making it possible for scientists and graduate students to have their own copies.

The ASP remains dedicated to providing this service, which thrives with your help in two important ways.

First, if you are planning or involved with a conference, we hope you will consider the *ASP Conference Series* as the proceedings publisher. Contact Dr. J. Ward Moody, Conference Series editor, at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, at 801-422-2111 or aspcs@aspbooks.org who can help you. Or visit the Web site at www.aspbooks.org.

Second, if your university is not currently subscribing to the *ASP Conference Series*, we hope you'll consider asking your astronomy librarian to do so. In an era of information overload, it is often the case that librarians can only purchase those items that the faculty request directly. Your recommendation can help provide your students and faculty with direct access to the recent developments in astronomy and astrophysics contained in these volumes. You or your librarian can find subscription information at www.astrosociety.org/pubs/cs/subscription.html.

The *Conference Series*, as well as the *Publications of the ASP* for refereed research papers, remain important components of the ASP mission to advance science literacy and exchange through astronomy—including exchange among the community of astronomy researchers. It is a way for us to help spread the word about the work you do.

Personally, I do not care so much about the tree in the forest and whether it makes noise or not if I am not there to witness the fall. But the scientific process is as much about communication as it is research, for research not shared is research not heard. With your help, the *ASP Conference Series* can continue to support the research enterprise in astronomy for many years to come.

Committee on Employment

Travis Metcalfe, travis@ucar.edu

An “Anecdotal” Longitudinal Study

The AAS and the American Institute of Physics (AIP) recently sent out the first survey of a planned 10+ year “longitudinal study” that will follow astronomy and astrophysics graduate students registered in 2006-2007 throughout their early careers. The idea is to better understand not only the wide variety of career outcomes, but also the motivations underlying the decisions that lead to each path. This will hopefully allow the study to identify any factors in the culture of astronomy that might discourage some sectors of the initial student population from pursuing long-term careers in the field. Although certainly not as scientific as a formal survey, individual graduate programs could get a sort of “sneak preview” of this longitudinal study by finding everyone from their incoming class of 1996-1997 and asking what they are doing now. I performed an informal survey for one such class, which began with eleven incoming students in a large astronomy graduate program at a major public university. The sample consisted of seven males and four females, including seven domestic and four international students (one of them female).

At the end of the first year of graduate study, one female domestic student was asked to leave the program for academic reasons, and one male international student left the program to pursue a graduate degree in computer science at another university. The current status of these two students is not known, although the absence of recent scientific publications suggests that neither of them are presently doing astronomy research. After finishing coursework in the second year, four students ultimately decided to leave the program with a Master’s degree, including three males (one of them international) and one female. The male international student transferred into the computer science graduate program at the same university and went on to work as a software developer for a local company. One male domestic student immediately obtained a software engineering and management job at a local startup, and eventually took a similar position out of state, closer to his family. Another male domestic student began teaching astronomy at a nearby community college, where he continued working on the tenure track for six years while also earning a Master’s degree in a related science. He was recently given tenure and became chair of the department. The female domestic student stayed in the program for two more years before becoming a high school teacher. She took some graduate courses in mathematics prior to leaving, allowing her to obtain certification in math and physics through an alternative program that ran concurrently with her first year of teaching. She taught math in nearby public high schools for four years, and is now teaching physics at a private high school where she eventually expects to teach an astronomy course as well.

Only five of the eleven incoming students ultimately earned a Ph.D. through the program: three males and two females with one international student of each gender. One male domestic student took a series of postdoctoral fellowships over nearly five years before obtaining a tenure-track research position at a national laboratory. The female international student was awarded prestigious back-to-back postdoctoral fellowships, providing a total of seven years of support, and is currently beginning her sixth year as a postdoc. The female domestic student worked as an associate editor for a popular astronomy magazine and in an instructional support position for an undergraduate program at a private university before recently accepting a non-tenure-track position at a small teaching college. Another male domestic student worked for several years through a postdoctoral fellowship at an international observatory before being hired as a tenure-track instrument scientist with both research and support responsibilities. The male international student worked in a postdoctoral position at a public university for almost three years before becoming a faculty member at a university in his home country, with a continuing adjunct appointment at his postdoctoral institution.

This “anecdotal” longitudinal study suggests that it might be difficult to define a “standard career path” in astronomy, if such a thing even exists. The wide variety of outcomes for this one small sample of students certainly did not reveal any systemic problems in the culture of the field, since both male and female as well as domestic and international students were proportionally represented along each major career path. More than a decade after entering a graduate program in astronomy, the experience appears to have led most of these students to interesting and fulfilling careers that they each shaped through their personal choices. Future students can take comfort in knowing that graduate study in astronomy only seems to multiply their possible career options.

The AAS/AIP longitudinal study will reveal where we are going, but not where we have been. Where did your classmates end up? If you find them outside of academia, encourage them to become part of the non-academic astronomers network (see www.aas.org/career/nonacademic.php). Please join the Committee on Employment at the winter meeting in Austin on Thursday, 10 January for a special session: “What Does It Take to Land a Job Anyway?”. Check out our website (www.aas.org/career/) for additional resources and contact information for the committee members.

News from NSF Division of Astronomical Sciences

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

Upcoming Deadlines for FY2008 funding:

24 January 2008: Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) - A new MRI program solicitation is under development at NSF with substantial changes to the program requirements. Effective FY 2008, the MRI program will require 30% cost-sharing on all proposals submitted by PhD granting institutions and non degree-granting institutions. The latter category includes US independent research museums, US independent nonprofit research organizations and consortia whose members consist of US institutions of higher education and/or US independent research museums. Cost-sharing will *not* be required from non PhD-granting institutions. Contributions towards cost-sharing may be made from any non-Federal source, and may be cash or in-kind. For more information, please see the new solicitation, which will be published in late October and posted at: www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/mri/. We urge all those considering applying to the MRI program to contact Julian Christou (jchristo@nsf.gov) or Andy Clegg (aclegg@nsf.gov) for more information.

CDI Program

NSF has announced its newest multidisciplinary, multi-year initiative: “Cyber-Enabled Discovery and Innovation (CDI).” CDI aims to create revolutionary science and engineering research outcomes made possible by innovations and advances in “computational thinking.” Computational thinking is defined comprehensively as computational concepts, methods, models, algorithms, and tools.

CDI seeks ambitious, transformative, multidisciplinary research proposals within or across the following three thematic areas:

- From Data to Knowledge: enhancing human cognition and generating new knowledge from a wealth of heterogeneous digital data;
- Understanding Complexity in Natural, Built, and Social Systems: deriving fundamental insights on systems comprising multiple interacting elements; and
- Building Virtual Organizations: enhancing discovery and innovation by bringing people and resources together across institutional, geographical and cultural boundaries.

CDI projects are expected to build upon productive intellectual partnerships involving investigators from academe, industry and/or other types of organizations, including international entities in the development of far-reaching, high-risk science and engineering research and education agendas that capitalize

on innovations in, and/or innovative use of, computational thinking.

Although the rapid schedule for this year’s competition means that the deadline for mandatory letters of intent will have passed by the time this newsletter goes to press, this program is a 5-year initiative that will be accepting proposals in future fiscal years. Deadlines are 30 August – 30 September 2008 and annually thereafter for letters of intent, 4 October – 4 November 2008 and annually thereafter for preliminary proposals. For additional information about CDI, including the solicitation and frequently asked questions, see www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/cdi. We urge you to contact Nigel Sharp in AST (nsharp@nsf.gov) for more information or if you are considering submitting a proposal to the program.

New Grant Proposal Guide

NSF has issued a revised version of the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide, NSF 08-1 (www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg) which is effective for all proposals received on or after 5 January 2008. Revisions were made only to the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG); all other parts of the PAPPG, such as the Award & Administration Guide, remain unchanged. Significant changes made to the GPG include:

- revised language to the review criterion on intellectual merit which now specifically includes evaluation of proposals for potentially transformative concepts.
- updated guidance on the designated fonts that may be used when preparing an NSF proposal.

While the changes identified above are effective 5 January 2008, proposers are strongly encouraged to begin complying with the guidance as soon as possible.

NSF Merit Review Website

NSF has launched a new website (www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/meritreview/index.jsp) designed to help the community better understand the NSF merit review process and to identify resources for additional information, including applicable chapters in the Grant Proposal Guide.

Division News

Solar Physics Division

Todd Hoeksema, Chair

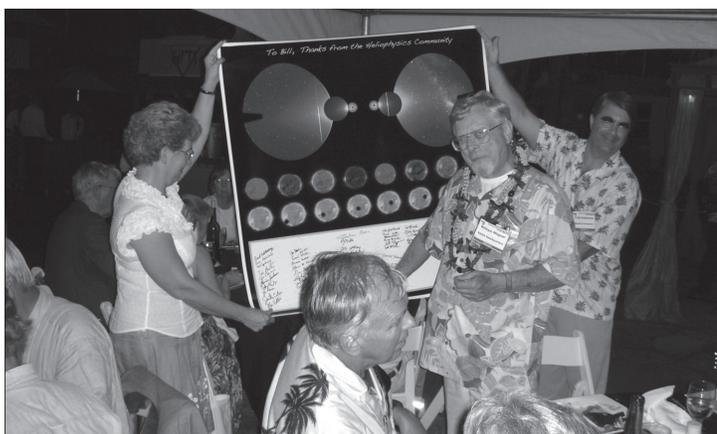
This year the SPD enjoyed the opportunity to meet jointly with the AAS in Honolulu. Some of the many highlights included the awarding of the Hale and Harvey prizes, the recognition of students and retirees, and breathtaking first results from the exciting HINODE and STEREO missions. Not to mention a fantastic banquet at the Honolulu Zoo. Thank you to the AAS staff, the scientific organizers, and all the participants for an exciting and memorable meeting. Thanks to John Leibacher (NSO) for the pictures.



Left: 2007 George Ellery Hale Prize winner Mukul Kundu (U. Maryland). **Right:** The speakers at special session on Women of the Solar Physics Division : Janet Luhmann (UC-Berkeley), Shadia Habbal (U. Hawaii), Andrea Dupree (CfA), Sarbani Basu (Yale), Joan Schmelz (U. Memphis), Pat Knezek (WIYN).



Left: SPD Studentship Honcho for Life Gordon Emslie (Oklahoma State) surrounded by 2007 recipients Jason Kimble (U. Memphis), Lisa Rightmire (U Memphis), Ofer Cohen (U. Michigan), Fana Mulu (Alabama A&M), GE, Silvina Guidoni (Montana State U.), Tom Schad (Notre Dame), Jose Marino (NJIT), and Lewis Fox (Montana State U.). Not in picture: Hui Song (NJIT). **Right:** Harvey Prize winner Jing Xue (U. Montana) receives congratulations from Jack Harvey (NSO) and Chris Coughlin (Springer).



Left: Bill Wagner (NASA HQ) was honored for his many years of service to the heliophysics community by meeting organizers Shadia Habbal (U. Hawaii) and Todd Hoeksema (Stanford). **Right:** Bernhard Fleck (ESA) tries to convince a totally cracked up Karel Schrivjer (LMSAL) that they really have discovered internal gravity waves in the solar atmosphere.

Announcements

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@aaas.org. Please include your member number with your request.

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	2008 Feb 1	2008 Jun-2008 Sep	
VLA	2008 Feb 1	2008 Jun-2008 Sep	*
VLBA	2008 Feb 1	2008 Jun-2008 Sep	

Note: (*) The D configuration with a maximum baseline of 1 km.

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 1 February 2008 for the session in May/June 2008. Also, the NRAO and a set of European observatories jointly handle proposals for VLBI observing time at a wavelength of 3mm; the deadline is 1 February 2008 for the session in October 2008. 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

Seeking Science Researchers with Dyslexia

Investigators from the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics have been funded by the National Science Foundation to study the impact of dyslexia on scientists working in astronomy and astrophysics. Dyslexia is a hereditary neurological disability that impairs reading ability. Despite these impairments, a recently proposed neurological theory predicts that dyslexia may be associated with enhanced capacity for certain types of visual processing. Our study investigates this hypothesis in the context of astronomy and astrophysics.

This NSF study marks the first time the effects of dyslexia on science professionals will be systematically investigated. We expect this work will uncover and document challenges faced by scientists with dyslexia, but perhaps more importantly, lead to an understanding of the strengths these scientists bring to research.

As part of this research this program intends to provide:

- An opportunity for scientists with dyslexia to communicate with one another
- Mentoring for young people with dyslexia interested in astrophysics
- Dissemination of “career survival” tips developed by respondents
- Access to reliable information about dyslexia including suggestions for families

Most of this information would be exchanged confidentially and shared anonymously via email and web. Additionally, a small subset of respondents will be invited to travel to CfA (at the project’s expense) to participate in the image-processing investigation described above.

If you believe you may have dyslexia, and you are a professional working in astronomy or astrophysics or any related field, we would very much like to learn about your experiences and invite you to participate in our study. Please email us at cfa.nsf.study@verizon.net or phone 617-495-7472. (All contacts will be treated as confidential.)

More information can be found at www.cfa.harvard.edu/dyslexia/. Please look for our abstract and presentation at the AAS meeting in Austin, TX.

As people with reading disabilities are less likely to read newsletters such as these, we would appreciate your passing this along to any of your colleagues you feel may find this of interest.

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Matthew Schneps, and Dr. Lincoln Greenhill, Dr. L. Todd Rose, Investigators
Laboratory for Visual Learning
Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics
60 Garden St.; Cambridge, MA 02138

The Making of Sky

Dr. Carol Christian, carolc@stsci.edu, Dr. Alberto Conti, aconti@stsci.edu and Dr. Brian McLean, mclean@stsci.edu

Many astronomers have remarked to us that upon discovering Google Earth, after its release in mid-2005, they speculated on using the technology for browsing astronomical data. We came to the Sky project along separate trajectories, but by January 2006 we had joined forces and engaged the Google Earth team in Mountain View, CA in a speculative dialog to make “Google Sky” a reality. We had an opportunity to do a tag team presentation at Google covering Hubble data, astronomical archives including the Virtual Observatory, and the tremendous outreach success of HST.

After the initial high energy meeting with Google, we began experiments using the Google Earth technology and protocols, specifically Keyhole Markup Language (KML), and designed a mechanism for placing HST press release images and ancillary information into the Google Earth interface. We also engaged in a collaboration with colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh and the new Google Pittsburgh facility. One of the areas of interest for Google Pittsburgh was to bring Sky to fruition and specifically create the background basemap through a merge of Sloan Digital Sky Survey data and Digitized Sky Survey material.

Our primary roles were to provide the HST Press Release images and supplementary information on the images for the Sky interface. We created a database with first order coordinate information for the images along with all the other information related to the images such as links to the appropriate location of images, press release textual information, and a “catchy” title that would be engaging to the public.

In addition, we have tagged all the press images with metatags that conform to the Virtual Astronomy Multimedia Project (VAMP: www.communicatingastronomy.org/repository/) recommendations and agreed upon by the International Virtual Observatory Alliance. This database will be used to update the HST press release collection in the Virtual Observatory registry.

The alignment of the images relative to the basemap was no mean feat, and involved many hours, days and weeks of tedious adjustment, checking and rechecking. Subsequent to our alignment efforts, the images were merged with the basemap at Google and ingested into the Sky interface at Google for the Google Earth 4.2 release.

We have many plans for new features related to HST data and are delighted to share our experience with other observatories. We also are working with our other colleagues to improve the ease of delivering imagery and other data through the Sky interface for public users, educators, students, amateurs and the scientific community. More information about our effort can be found at hubblesite.org/explore_astronomy/gsky/ and papers in progress.

Collaborators: A. Connolly and S. Krughoff (U. Washington), R. Scranton and J. Brewer (Google Pittsburgh), C. Soisin, C. Roat and many others (Google Mt. View)

New Benefit for AAS Members

Computing in Science & Engineering (CiSE) is a bimonthly publication that brings computational tools and methods to the 21st century science. For the first time, CiSE subscriptions are reduced for AAS members--\$45 for print and online (\$55 outside the USA). Two issues in 2008 will cover the Sloan Digital Sky Survey Archive and Computational Astrophysics. Subscribe at www.aip.org/ecom/cise/g_info_nuser.jsp?promo_cd=AASCS08.

Washington News continued from back page

column, or by special email communication and, of course, on the AAS web page.

Also taking place this fall was the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF www.cnsfweb.org) fall visits day. The AAS had good representation at this event, with seven participants. The goal of the coalition is to enhance the funding for the NSF. They accomplish this goal through regular monthly meetings, where information is shared and strategy is developed and through two events on the Hill, one in the fall, which involves direct visits with Congressional offices and one in the summer, which is an exhibition of NSF funded science. The AAS participates in both activities. Contacts have been developed, projects featured (ALMA, Antarctic balloons, etc.) and I know we have had a positive impact.

As always, we can have a larger impact if more of our members participated in the policy process. In order to participate, you have to educate yourself a bit first. Both on how the system works and how to interact with the system positively. President Wheeler and I developed an Astronomy Policy Ecosystem wiki, which is now available for review under the public policy web page link off of the AAS homepage. As we finalize the initial content, we anticipate opening up the wiki for others to edit and enhance. The goal is to provide—in one location—all the information necessary to understand the organizations, institutions and individuals who have a role in guiding, setting or implementing astronomy policy. Check it out and let me know what you think (marvel@aaas.org).

Calendar

AAS & AAS Division Meetings

AAS 211 Meeting

8-12 January 2008, Austin, TX
Contact: Kelli Gilmore (gilmore@aas.org)
www.aas.org

HEAD 2008 Meeting

30 Mar-3 April 2008, Los Angeles, CA
www.aas.org/head/

Other Events

The Evolving Interstellar Medium in the Milky Way and Nearby Galaxies

2-5 December 2007, Pasadena, CA
Contact: A. Noriega-Crespo & K. Sheth (kartik@astro.caltech.edu, alberto@ipac.caltech.edu)
http://ssc.spitzer.caltech.edu/mtgs/ismevol/

2007 NASA Ames Meeting - Formation, Composition and Early Evolution of Outer Giant and Dwarf Planets and of their Satellites

6-7 Dec 2007, Moffett Field, CA
Contact: Ignacio Mosqueira (mosqueir@cosmic.arc.nasa.gov)
space.science.arc.nasa.gov/agu/

IAU Symposium No. 250 Massive Stars as Cosmic Engines

10-14 December 2007, Kauai, HI
Contact: Paul A. Crowther (Paul.Crowther@sheffield.ac.uk)
www.ifa.hawaii.edu/iau250/

Miami 2007

13-18 Dec 2007, Ft Lauderdale, FL
Contact: Thomas Curtright (curtright@physics.miami.edu)
http://server.physics.miami.edu/~cgc/Miami2007.html

Surveys and Simulations of Large-Scale Structure: A Celebration of Marc Davis' 60th Birthday

16-18 January 2008, Berkeley, CA
Contact: Michael Strauss (strauss@astro.princeton.edu)
http://deep.berkeley.edu/davisfest/

*The Evolution of Galaxies through the Neutral Hydrogen Window

1-3 February 2008, Arecibo Observatory, Puerto Rico
Contact: Robert Minchin (rminchin@naic.edu)
www.naic.edu/~astro/hiconference/

*The First Two Billion Years of Galaxy Formation: The Reionization Epoch and Beyond

11-15 February 2008, Aspen, CO
Contact: Rychard Bouwens (bouwens@ucolick.org)
www.ucolick.org/~gdi/AspenWinter08

*2008 Meeting on Dynamical Astronomy in Latin America

Reunion 2008 Astronomia Dinamica en Latino America
12-16 Feb 2008, Mexico City, Mexico
Contact: Christine Allen (chris@astroscu.unam.mx)
www.astroscu.unam.mx/congresos/adela/

*Practical Semantic Astronomy

18-21 February 2008, Pasadena, CA
Contact: Matthew Graham (mjg@cacr.caltech.edu)
www.cacr.caltech.edu/semast

*Galactic structure and the structure of galaxies

17-21 March 2008, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico
Contact: Hector Velazquez (hmv@astrosen.unam.mx)
www.galaxiesconf.org/

The Cosmic Agitator - Magnetic Fields in the Galaxy: 60 Years of Studies of the Interstellar Magnetic Field

26-29 March, 2008, Lexington, KY
Contact: Gary Ferland (gary@pa.uky.edu)
http://thunder.pa.uky.edu/magnetic/

Second Workshop on 'Titan - Observations, Experiments, Computations, and Modeling'

24-26 March 2008, Miami, FL
Contact: mebela@fiu.edu
www.chem.hawaii.edu/Bil301/Titan2008.html

Transits: Exoplanet and Stellar Astrophysics

7-11 April 2008, Pasadena, CA
Contact: Andrew F. Boden (bode@ipac.caltech.edu)
http://msc.caltech.edu/conferences/2008/transits/

*2008 Astrobiology Science Conference

15 - 17 April 2008, Santa Clara, CA
Contacts: Ariel Anbar (anbar@asu.edu)
Carl Pilcher (cpilcher@mail.arc.nasa.gov)
Tori Hoehler (thoehler@arc.nasa.gov)
Pascale Ehrenfreund (pascale@strw.leidenuniv.nl)
abscicon.seti.org

*The Local Bubble & Beyond II
21-24 April 2008, Philadelphia, PA
Contact: Randall Smith (Randall.K.Smith@nasa.gov)
lbb.gsfc.nasa.gov

*The Fifth Harvard-Smithsonian Conference for Theoretical Astrophysics, "21cm Cosmology?"

12-15 May 2008, Cambridge, MA
Contact: Lisa Rowan (lrowan@cfa.harvard.edu)
www.cfa.harvard.edu/events/2008/cos2008/

*IAU Symposium No. 253: Transiting Planets

19-23 May 2008, Boston, MA
www.cfa.harvard.edu/IAUS253

*Gravitational Wave Astronomy

25 May-13 June 2008, Aspen Center for Physics
Contact: Matthew Benacquista (benacquista@phys.utb.edu)
http://aspen08.gravity.psu.edu/

*Observing with ALMA: A Workshop

26-27 May 2008, University of Calgary
Contact: Rene Plume (almainfo@ras.ualgary.ca)
www.phas.ualgary.ca/alma

*Eleventh Synthesis Imaging Workshop

10-17 June 2008, Socorro, NM
Contact: Amy Mioduszewski (amiodusz@nrao.edu)
www.aoc.nrao.edu/events/synthesis/2008/

*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 cadcwww.hia.nrc.ca/meetings.



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Washington News

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The progress of the appropriations bills through Congress has slowed. Some initial talk of having the process wrapped up before the end of the fiscal year faded quickly as 30 September approached. Among other things, there is a threat from the President to veto any spending bill that exceeds his proposed budget, causing Congress to delay their submission of the appropriations bills to the President. The situation is akin to a game of chicken, where the winner gets to say they are the most fiscally responsible and the loser does too. Not a good situation for rapid progress. Additionally, the political parties are gearing up for the election year and want to position themselves well from the point of view of the average voter. Passing spending bills would seem to be one way to accomplish this, but the new requirements that all earmarks be clearly identified have decreased the overall total level of earmarking, leaving little to crow about in the home districts. As always in Washington, it is an interesting year.

As we await the outcome of the appropriations process, the Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy (CAPP) met

in Washington on 4-5 October to discuss their committee and its role. Present too, was President J. Craig Wheeler and myself.

The CAPP is a Presidential appointment committee with a one-year term. Each President can build the CAPP to their liking, focusing mainly on enhancing the impact of the AAS in the public policy arena and giving the Council the best possible pool of advisors on policy issues. The current charge to CAPP is felt to be overly broad by CAPP members and their role unclear. In addition, Council's conclusion from their retreat in Honolulu that after Journals and Meetings, the next highest priority of the Society should be enhancing our impact in the policy arena, led President Wheeler to appoint a subcommittee of the Council to think about our long-term policy agenda. One consequence of the CAPP retreat was that the committees will be combined (actually, the council members will simply be new presidential appointees to the extant CAPP). Additionally, the CAPP undertook a lengthy discussion of its roles and, more importantly, the operating principles for the committee. As these are finalized, they will be shared broadly with the membership, either in this

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