

June 2005
Issue 125

AAS NEWSLETTER

A Publication for the members of the American Astronomical Society

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Robert Kirshner, aaspres@as.org

Inside

3
AURA Selects New
STScI Director

4
Committee News

4
Division News

13
AAS Observatory
Reports – Discontinued

13
Announcements

14
Honored Elsewhere

17
Congressional
Visits Day

Back cover
Washington News



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

Many AAS members teach astronomy. This is an honorable calling and we are all lucky to know something that other people want to learn. Understanding how the Sun shines, or being able to explain the evidence for dark matter is much better than having a fool-proof scheme for real estate investment. When we say “Come to my seminar!” it carries a genuine ring.

Here at Harvard, the end of the term is drawing nigh, which means that the entire campus is given over to horticultural miracles. Every year, the ravages of harsh New England winter (our graduates know full well this is due to the inclination of the ecliptic, or at least something astronomical) are repaired by the energetic application of grass seed, fertilizer, and water. I believe this has something to do with illustrating the anthropic principle: It is only because we cultivate the grass that the alumni are so generous that we can afford to live in a Universe(ity) with cultivated grass. More pointedly, if the cosmological constant were large, there would be no alumni.

I have a gaggle of graduate students to help teach my course, aimed at English majors who are compelled by our current Core Curriculum to take something from the general category of “Science with Numbers.” Although the mathematical level in “Science A-35: Matter in the Universe” is rudimentary, even the graduate students learn some science from such an elementary course because it knits together the sweep of ideas that are explored separately, though in vastly greater detail, in graduate courses, or even in the *Astrophysical Journal*. Although you need to leave out an awful lot of good stuff to do it, you can honestly approach the big questions of astronomy in an elementary course. Where are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? And how do we know all this based on encrypted clues in ancient light?

Of course our real goal is not so much to teach a particular body of knowledge (how many AU in a parsec?), but somehow to nourish a desire to learn more. Students are in an astronomy course for a semester, but they live long and interesting lives. If we can ignite an interest in something bigger than themselves, use numbers to express ideas, and get them to think about how the world works, I think

we’ll have done quite a lot. Looking over last year’s final exam, I’m not sure if I tested these ideas. It’s a lot easier to ask how many AU in a parsec. Maybe that’s a test that comes only with time.

The actual modes of instruction are sometimes vaguely comic. In my course, in addition to lectures and hazardous demonstrations, I invent and pass out to the students a homework assignment every week. Then I help run a problem-solving session for students the night before the homework is due, and then we hand out solutions and grade the homework the students hand in. If we could cut the students out of this loop, we could save a tremendous amount of time and effort—just grading the solutions would be easier. We’d still have to change the questions as our subject progresses: you won’t find too many questions about dark energy or extrasolar planets on an exam from 15 years ago. This is unlike economics, where they face the same questions every year, but give different answers.

Every once in a while (every two decades at our place), we go through an exercise of re-examining the curriculum. I don’t know exactly where our curriculum review will come out, or when. Once the committee started meeting during my class time, I lost the thread of the discussion. At least I know enough never to miss a class for a committee meeting. But I hope we will keep a special place for courses aimed at the non-scientist. Science is too important to let people slip out into the world without giving our best shot at showing them a rational world where ideas are tested by evidence. And most science departments are unlikely to do a really good job for non-concentrators without some encouragement. I mean, most other science departments.

We certainly have our work cut out for us. The recent brouhaha concerning IMAX movies in science centers revealed the reluctance of the Fort Worth marketing people to lose out on an audience that might be offended by hearing about evolution or an ancient universe. We need to convince those science centers that speaking the truth is more important than marketing pabulum. A good statement of the evidence for a 14 billion year-old Universe that has changed over time is sketched in the AAS booklet “An Ancient Universe.” You can take a look at <http://education.aas.org/publications/ancientuniverse.html>.

And you can get lots of copies for any good purpose from the AAS Education office. It won’t end the discussion, but it is a place to start.

AAS Executive Office Staff

Robert W. Milkey, Executive Officer
Kevin B. Marvel, Deputy Executive Officer
Kelli Gilmore, Meetings Manager
Susana E. Deustua, Director, Educational Activities
Judith M. Johnson, Publications Manager
Shantice Jones, Membership Services Specialist
Debbie L. Kovalsky, Information Systems Manager
Natalie F. Patterson, Financial Assistant
Dennis W. Renner, 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@aaas.org; www.aas.org.

The \$115.00 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@aaas.org. Appropriate pictures are welcomed. For further 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@aaas.org.

Judith M. Johnson, AAS Publications Manager
Robert W. Milkey, 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@aaas.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@aaas.org

For address changes contact address@aaas.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Critical Importance of ADP and LTSA

I write on behalf of the High Energy Astrophysics Division of the American Astronomical Society (HEAD) regarding the recent cancellation of the solicitations for the Astrophysics Data Program (ADP) and Long Term Space Astrophysics (LTSA) as well as the cuts to many mission data analysis programs. These programs lie at the core of NASA's scientific enterprise. They allow the public to receive a large return on the investment it makes in space missions and are vital for maintaining the support for NASA from the public and Congress alike. Furthermore, these programs fund a large fraction of the young researchers who will eventually carry out the new missions that NASA is currently planning and are a source of much innovation. These cancellations and cuts have raised significant concern in the community about NASA's commitment to supporting its existing and future science infrastructure.

HEAD recognizes the increasing budget pressures faced by the Science Mission Directorate, particularly as it is undertaking an ambitious set of future missions, while responding to pressures to support the Vision for Space Exploration. We are also grateful for your statement to the SScAC that the LTSA/ADP cuts only applied to this year. However the high energy astrophysics community is very troubled by the precedent that these cuts set.

Several HEAD members have pointed out that if you were to allow an additional, no-cost extension on ADP and LTSA existing grants as well as grants in the affected mission and data analysis program, then this would make it easier for them to plan for the future. I bring this suggestion to your attention.

HEAD is strongly committed to working with NASA to maintain the extraordinary run of high energy astrophysics discoveries from space. It looks forward to restoration of the solicitations for the ADP and LTSA programs and full support for mission data analysis programs next year.

Roger Blandford
Chair, HEAD
rdb3@stanford.edu

Let's Keep Coordinated Universal Time

A letter from McCarthy, et. al. in the *March 2005 Newsletter* supports the redefinition of Coordinated Universal Time to be neither coordinated nor universal. For several years, the notion of discontinuing the issuance of leap seconds has been furtively batted about in the precision timing community. No coherent proposal has ever been circulated for comment to the many other communities who would be affected. A workshop in Torino, Italy in May 2003 is the only public meeting that has taken place. The consensus at that workshop was that leap seconds should continue to be issued. Further, the consensus was reached that if a civil time scale is ever constructed without leap seconds (thus disconnecting all clocks from the spinning Earth), that such a new civil time scale should NOT be called UTC, but rather "TI" for International Time.

We support the goal of improving the facilities for providing accurate time signals around the world. This is not the way to reach that goal. The definition of UTC—like all types of Universal Time such as UT1 and UT2—as a general purpose approximation to the familiar concept of Greenwich Mean Time is critical to astronomical projects,



software, and image and catalog data. The history of the redefinition of the term GMT in 1925 attests that a redefined UTC would likewise result in ambiguity and confusion, with the inevitable need for astronomers and society at large to bear the costs of analyzing and replacing all references to UTC in operational and legal systems. This is a mistake we need not repeat.

What should we do instead? Literally—take our time. The current UTC standard is designed to have a life span of hundreds of years. Most systems are not adversely affected by leap seconds since resetting a clock is a common function. Systems that need atomic time are new and specialized and their designers should respond to their own requirements, not transfer them to others. In any event, atomic time is already widely available, for example via GPS. Contrary to the letter in the March Newsletter, the historical and legal reality is that time has always meant Earth rotation because civil time has always been a subdivision of the calendar.

Rob Seaman
seaman@noao.edu
Steve Allen
sla@ucolick.org

Note: 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.

SECRETARY'S CORNER

John Graham, aassec@as.org

AAS Prizes

Nominate someone for a prize this year! To be considered for an AAS prize, a person must be formally nominated. However, the nomination procedure, which can be viewed at the AAS website, is not arduous.

In recent years, the AAS prize committees have often noted the small slate of worthy candidates from whom they may choose. This particularly applies to the junior prizes. Bear in mind that it is not only the monetary amount but also the honor and distinction that can mean so much to a young astronomer's career. The award of a prize also adds luster to her/his department or institution in the eyes of the academic community.

Nominations and letters of support must be received in the Secretary's office by 1 October 2005. Shortly after that date, they are distributed to the prize committees. Late submissions cannot be accommodated.

MEMBER DEATHS

Since the 2005 March *AAS Newsletter*, the Society is saddened to learn of the deaths of the following members, former members and affiliate members:

Hans Bethe **Geoffrey Gardner Douglass**

A. Keith Pierce **Philip Morrison**

Richard L. (Dick) Walker

AURA SELECTS NEW STSCI DIRECTOR

The Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA) formally requested NASA approval for the appointment of **Dr. Matthias (Matt) Mountain** as Director of the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI). Mountain, currently the Director of the Gemini Observatory, would succeed Dr. Steven Beckwith who will end his term in September.

During the course of AURA's search, over 100 potential candidates were considered. From the applicants, a short list of candidates was selected for interview. Following AURA policy, the Search Committee submitted a ranked list to the Space Telescope Institute Council (STIC), AURA's oversight committee for the STScI. The STIC interviewed all the candidates forwarded by the Search Committee and submitted to the AURA Board of Directors its strong recommendation to appoint Dr. Mountain as the new Director of the STScI.

At the meeting of the AURA Board of Directors on 13 April 2005, the Board unanimously agreed with the unanimous recommendations of the Search Committee and the STIC. AURA's request must receive approval by NASA up through the NASA Administrator, Michael Griffin.

In making this selection, Rolf Kudritzki, Chair of the Board of Directors, said "I look forward to Matt's leadership of STScI. With his experience as Gemini Director, Matt is well matched to the future challenges of completing the mission of the Hubble Space Telescope and beginning the James Webb Space Telescope era." William Smith, President of AURA, said "AURA, NASA and the scientific community have always been extraordinarily fortunate to have had STScI Directors of such quality and leadership ability. Matt is inheriting a strong organization poised to take on the responsibility of making the JWST a success."

Coincident with this announcement, AURA will also begin the search process for a new Gemini Observatory Director. Dr. Larry Ramsey, Chair of the AURA Oversight Council for Gemini, will manage that process. AURA will appoint Dr. Jean-Rene Roy as acting Director of Gemini upon the termination of Mountain's term and until such time as a new Gemini Director is in place.

COMMITTEE NEWS

STATUS OF WOMEN IN ASTRONOMY

Patricia Knezek

CSWA Chair, WIYN Observatory, knezek@noao.edu

Planned CSWA Activities at the June 2005 AAS Meeting

We would like to invite everyone to attend the special session entitled "Institutional Solutions to the 'Two-Body' Problem" on Thursday, 2 June 2005, from 10:00-11:30 a.m. We are sponsoring this session in conjunction with the Employment Committee (EC). The session will focus on institutional approaches to solving the "two-body problem." In step with the national employment trend, for the majority of astronomers with partners, those partners work outside the home. This is particularly true for female astronomers, who generally are married to professionals (and often to other astronomers). Academic and professional institutions that employ the majority of astronomers are now beginning to recognize the importance of addressing what has come to be known as the "two-body" problem in order to attract and retain the best scientists. A few of those institutions are making pioneering efforts to create pro-active approaches to the issue of dual-career couples. The special session will feature a NSF representative to describe the NSF's ADVANCE program. The goal of the ADVANCE Program is to increase the participation of women in the scientific and engineering workforce through the increased representation and advancement of women in academic scientific and engineering careers. The session will follow with speakers involved with the administration at institutions with pro-active policies, including institutions with ADVANCE awards. The speakers will be Dr. Tammy Smecker-Hane, U. California-Irvine, Dr. Roberta Humphreys, U. Minnesota, and Dr. Ellen Zweibel, U. Wisconsin - Madison. Dr. Karen Bjorkman will chair the session.

The CSWA will then hold its usual lunch session from 1:00-2:00 p.m., and follow on the theme of the "two-body problem." This session will focus on the other side of the issue—how dual-career couples have successfully approached the issue at institutions that do NOT have proactive policies. We will hold a panel discussion with invited panelists. These panel members will represent various approaches dual-career couples have taken. Included in the panel discussion will be time for questions and comments by the audience. Dr. Andrea Schweitzer will chair the session. We hope you'll attend both sessions!

Equity Now: The Pasadena Recommendations for Gender Equality in Astronomy

With the Pasadena Recommendations endorsed, the CSWA is now actively working on ways to implement the various recommendations. In addition to the special session and subsequent panel discussion on the "two-body problem" during the June 2005 AAS meeting, we are working towards some practical methods for implementation of some of the Recommendations. Some of the methods under discussion include exploring options for funding a longitudinal study, contacting individual institutions

about endorsing the Recommendations, and contacting other groups focused on women for information on what has and hasn't worked in the past. While these discussions are underway, the CSWA is re-vamping its website and looking at how best to provide information and links to resources to help institutions and individuals proceed with implementing the Recommendations. This process is expected to take some time, but look for more information about this website in upcoming AAS newsletters! As a reminder, the endorsed version of the Recommendations can be downloaded from the CSWA website in either pdf or word format, see: www.aas.org/~cswa. We encourage everyone to download the document and read through it.

The June 2005 issue of STATUS

The CSWA would like to encourage everyone to check out the June 2005 issue of *STATUS*. A significant fraction of the magazine will focus on the subject of reasons for the gender gap in science, a topic that recently came to the forefront of the public's attention with the publication of remarks by Harvard President Larry Summers in January 2005. The issue also includes a look at the American Institute of Physics 2005 report *Women in Physics and Astronomy*, among other interesting features. If you currently do not receive a paper copy of *STATUS* but would like to do so, please email Dennis Renner, renner@aas.org. Otherwise, you can access issues of *STATUS* on the web from the CSWA website. See www.aas.org/~cswa/pubs.html.

DIVISION NEWS

SOLAR PHYSICS DIVISION (SPD)



2005 Hale and Harvey Prize Winners

The Hale Prize was awarded to **Spiro Antiochos** (left) for his work on the thermodynamics and stability of coronal magnetic fields and for his outstanding public service to the solar research community.

The Karen Harvey Prize was awarded to **Sarah Gibson** (right) for her research on the role of helical magnetic fields in the structure and dynamics of the solar corona.



HISTORICAL ASTRONOMY DIVISION (HAD)

Don Yeomans

Chair, HAD, hadchair@aas.org

The AAS-Historical Astronomy Division (HAD) celebrated its 25th year in 2005 and the HAD continues to grow and prosper.

The incoming HAD officers are Donald Yeomans (Chair), Sara Schechner (Vice-Chair), Ronald Brashear (Secretary/Treasurer) and committee members Peter Abrahams and Daniel Green. Thomas Williams (ex-Chair) serves as the current Chair for the Doggett Award Committee. HAD Newsletters, published by Ron Brashear, were issued in June and October 2004 and in February 2005 (see www.aas.org/~had/hadnews.html).

Meetings: The HAD met in San Diego on 9-10 January 2005 as part of the larger AAS 205th meeting. Two themes of this meeting were the Centennial of the Mount Wilson Observatory and the 25th anniversary of the founding of HAD. Talks included one by George Preston (Carnegie Observatories) on "Mount Wilson Staff Reaction to Light Pollution" and one by Brenda Corbin (USNO) entitled "Twenty-five years of history as revealed in the H.A.D. Newsletters." Brad Schaefer reported on his investigation into the *Farnese Atlas*, a Roman copy of an earlier Greek statue now a museum holding in Naples, Italy. By comparing various attributes of the statue's celestial globe with ancient records, he was able to date the original statue to about 125 BC and attribute its constellation figures to the lost star catalog of Hipparchus. This result was widely reported in the popular press, including a front page story in the *Los Angeles Times*.

The next scheduled HAD meeting will occur in Cambridge, England in conjunction with the DPS meeting there on 4-9 September 2005. HAD will participate in four DPS plenary sessions by sponsoring an historical talk on the theme of the sessions. On Monday, for a DPS session on the Cassini mission, HAD will feature a paper by Albert Van Helden on the Saturn observations by Cassini and Huygens. On Tuesday, for a DPS session on the Mars Explorer, there will be a HAD paper by Richard McKim on the history of observations of Martian dust storms. On Wednesday, prior to a DPS session on Deep Impact, Michael Hoskin will speak on Caroline Herschel's comet observations and on Thursday, the DPS will have a session on the SMART-1 mission and HAD plans to feature a talk by Peter Schultz on the development of the impact hypotheses for lunar cratering. The HAD paper sessions on Monday through Wednesday will all start with a joint plenary session. All in all, there will be the potential of having up to 27.5 hours' worth of historical astronomy papers at the Cambridge meeting. In addition, poster papers will be on display for the entire three days of the HAD meeting. There will be oral sessions on the history of radio astronomy, cosmology, and planetary science. After the HAD plenary session on Thursday morning, the group will engage in a tour with possible sites being the Whipple Museum of Scientific Instruments and the Greenwich Observatory Archives (www.dps2005.org).

Preservation of Historical Sites (UNESCO/ICOMOS Project): The AAS recently received a request from UNESCO for funds to support their world astronomical heritage initiative. The initiative is a plan to designate astronomical sites around the world as important and obtain funds for their preservation. At a recent UNESCO meeting on the matter, the RAS donated \$10,000 toward the initiative. AAS asked HAD if AAS should contribute as well. After some discussion among HAD members, HAD said that the initiative should not be funded at this time. HAD felt that the program is poorly defined, it has no principal investigators, its objectives are vague, and the time period and objects involved are a bit fuzzy. HAD advised the AAS that there is some need to identify, designate, and preserve historically important objects. Steve McCluskey and David DeVorkin have agreed to co-chair a HAD committee to begin looking into what we should be doing along these lines. Tom Williams will organize a workshop at the upcoming Notre Dame meeting (7-10 July 2005) to discuss the various issues of identifying, designating, and preserving historic astronomical sites. Panelists for this discussion include Harry Butowsky of the National Park Service, Richard Kron, emeritus director of Yerkes Observatory, and Clive Ruggles, archaeoastronomer from the University of Leicester, UK.



Don Osterbrock, past Director of Lick Observatory, discusses the Mount Wilson – University of California Connection from Hussey and Seares to Mayall and Olin Wilson



George Preston, of Carnegie Observatories, presents a lively talk on the Mount Wilson Staff Reaction to Light Pollution



Sir Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal, Owen Gingerich, Research Professor of Astronomy and of the History of Science at Harvard University, and Andrew Young, from San Diego State University seem to be discussing the merits of Ben and Jerry's Cherry Garcia ice cream bars at the HAD Ice Cream Social.

DIVISION ON DYNAMICAL ASTRONOMY (DDA)

Marc Murison

Secretary, DDA, ddasec@aaas.org

2006 Brouwer Award

The 2006 Brouwer Award was announced at this year's annual DDA meeting. The winner of the 2006 Brouwer Award is James Williams (JPL), for his many outstanding contributions to celestial mechanics. Perhaps the best practitioner of ultra-precise celestial mechanics in the world, Williams has used lunar laser ranging, now accurate to about 2 cm, to measure a 0.2 arcsec offset of the average position of the lunar spin axis from the Cassini state. This offset is indicative of the dissipative processes in the Moon's interior and led to the discovery that the Moon has a small molten liquid core. Williams's work has also been instrumental in placing limits upon the possible time variations of the gravitational constant and other general relativistic parameters. Early in his career, he helped pioneer the study of asteroid evolution by developing proper orbital elements and then applying them to establish a number of dynamical asteroid families.

2005 Annual Meeting

The 2005 meeting of the DDA was held at the Radisson Hotel Santa Barbara, in Santa Barbara, CA, 10-14 April. The meeting was superbly organized by Al Harris, Stan Peale, and Roy Laubscher (Local Hosts), and the program was assembled by Tom Statler (Program Chair). The venue was pleasant, the weather was fine, and the beach was relaxing. This was a perfect example of the friendly, unstressed atmosphere that makes DDA meetings so enjoyable and fruitful.

The 2005 Brouwer Award was formally presented to the quiet and generous John Papaloizou (Cambridge University, London), for his major contributions in areas such as the radial-orbit instability in anisotropic stellar systems, toroidal modes in rotating stars,

thermal instability in accretion disks, and the collapse and fragmentation of gas clouds. His two seminal contributions have been to the stability of accretion tori (he remains famous for the Papaloizou-Pringle instability) and the evolution of protoplanetary disks. His recent work has included topics such as criteria for gap formation by massive planets and the effects that interactions with the disks have on the evolution of a planet's semimajor axis and orbital eccentricity. Papaloizou's invited lecture at the 2005 meeting was entitled "Instabilities and Transport in Differentially Rotating Rings and Disks."

Invited papers at the 2005 meeting included dynamical delights caught by cassini's cameras (Joe Burns, Cornell), the dynamics of planet formation (John Chambers, DTM), Spitzer observations of debris disks: trouble in the habitable zone? (Chas Beichman, Caltech), stellar orbits and the supermassive black hole at the center of our galaxy (Andrea Ghez, UCLA), and milky way gas dynamics (Peter Englmaier, Basel). This year's "Things Every Dynamicist Ought to Know" review talk was on stellar orbits in galaxies, given by Luis Aguilar (UNAM).

The eleventh annual Student Stipends were awarded to two outstanding students. Ruth Murray-Clay (UC-Berkeley, advisor Eugene Chiang) spoke on "A Signature of Planetary Migration: The Origin of Asymmetric Capture in the 2:1 Resonance," and Ke Zhang (University of Maryland, advisor Doug Hamilton) spoke on "Dynamics of Neptune's Small Satellites."

DDA Student Stipend Program

To increase student participation at DDA meetings, the Division makes available up to two student stipends of \$550 each. Any full or part-time student presently enrolled in an academic program at a college or university is eligible and encouraged to apply. For next year's Halifax meeting, submit an abstract of a paper for presentation, along with a letter of recommendation from an adviser, to: Dr. David Merritt, Rochester Institute of Technology, Dept. of Physics, 54 Lomb Memorial Dr., Rochester, NY 14623, merritt@astro.rit.edu.



Left to right - Louis Aguilar, Wayne Hayes, and Peter Englmaier. (Photo: Alice Monet.)



James Hilton caught in tourist mode (Photo: unknown, using James's camera)



Don Yeomans (right) and 2006 Brouwer Award winner Jim Williams (left) (Photo: Alice Monet)



Student Stipend winner Ke Zhang receives his award from DDA Chair Phil Nicholson (Photo: James Hilton)



Student Stipend winner Ruth Murray-Clay receives her award from DDA Chair Phil Nicholson (Photo: James Hilton)



Bill Newman and friends discussing a poster (Photo: Alice Monet)



2005 Brouwer Award winner John Papaloizou receives his award from DDA Chair Phil Nicholson (Photo: James Hilton)



A Meeting of the Chairs: incoming DDA Vice Chair Steve Unwin (left) and outgoing Chair Phil Nicholson (right) (Photo: Alice Monet)

Call for Brouwer Award Nominations

The Brouwer Award Selection Committee (BASC) of the DDA invites nominations from any member of the AAS for an award competition. The Brouwer Award has been established to recognize outstanding contributions to the field of dynamical astronomy, including celestial mechanics, astrometry, stellar systems, and galactic and extragalactic dynamics. It is open to candidates of any age or nationality, occupation, or specific field of interest. The Award consists of an honorarium of \$2000 plus an appropriate certificate.

Letters of nomination should cite the achievements in or contributions to dynamical astronomy that might appropriately be recognized by the Award. Nominations should be supported by copies of the vitae and bibliography of the nominee and by letters of recommendation from three knowledgeable people testifying to the long-term impact of the nominee's contributions to dynamical astronomy. Nominations and supporting documentation should be sent to the BASC Chair (from whom further information may be obtained) so as to be received not later than 31 December 2005: Dr. Robin Canup, Southwest Research Institute, 1050 Walnut St., Boulder, CO 80302-5143, robin@boulder.swri.edu. Additional information regarding the Brouwer Award may also be found at the DDA web site.

The DDA on the Web

The DDA web site, where all the latest news and information about the DDA is posted, is at <http://dda.harvard.edu/> (you can also get there through the AAS homepage at <http://www.aas.org>).

Future DDA Meetings

The next DDA meeting will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in June, 2006. The local host will be Joe Hahn, and the program committee will consist of Hahn, Stephen Unwin (Vice Chair), and Marc Murison (Secretary). The 2007 meeting is scheduled for Ann Arbor, Michigan, with Dan Scheeres serving as local host.

Officers and Membership

The Officers and Committee of the DDA that will be serving during 2005-2006 are:

Officers:

- Tom Statler (Ohio University), Chair
- Stephen Unwin (JPL/Caltech), Vice Chair
- Phil Nicholson (Cornell), Past Chair
- Marc Murison (USNO), Secretary
- Pete Shelus (U. Texas at Austin), Treasurer

Committee:

- First Year:* Alice K B Monet (USNO Flagstaff)
- Alessandro Morbidelli (Nice Observatory)
- Patrick Seitzer (University of Michigan)
- Second Year:* Martin Bureau (Columbia)
- Douglas P. Hamilton (U. Maryland)
- Stephen L.W. McMillan (Drexel U.)

The Division has continued to grow, reaching 299 regular and affiliate members.

FROM THE EDUCATION OFFICE

Susana E. Deustua
deustua@aaas.org

Before we all get caught up in the summer whirl of conferences, workshops, and even vacations, here are some tidbits of education news.

AAS Booklet Responds To Claims That the Universe Is Young

The American Astronomical Society has published *The Ancient Universe, How Astronomers know the Vast Scale of Cosmic Time*, an illustrated guide explaining how astronomers know that the cosmos is old and that it changes with time.

In several U.S. states there have been demands that discussions of the Big Bang and the vast age of the universe be excluded from science curricula in K-12 classrooms. In response, a subcommittee of the Astronomy Education Board of the AAS wrote an article on the Ancient Universe that was first published in a newsletter for teachers on the Astronomical Society of the Pacific web site.

This article has now been expanded and updated into a booklet designed for school boards, principals, parents, astronomy students and anyone who wants to see the scientific perspective on the age of the Earth and the physical world. The authors explain the evidence showing that we live in a universe that is between 10 billion and 15 billion years old and that both the universe and its contents undergo evolutionary change. A list of written and web resources is also included.

The 20-page non-technical booklet is available as a PDF for downloading at <http://education.aas.org/publications/ancientuniverse.html>. It is also available in bulk quantities from the AAS Office, just email aas@aaas.org for ordering and price information.

Thanks to Andrew Fraknoi, Bruce Partridge, John Percy, George Greenstein and Chris Impey for writing and revising the booklet.

The Harlow Shapley Visiting Lectureships in Astronomy

A.G. D. Philip is stepping down as Director of the Harlow Shapley Visiting Lectureships program in June 2005 after ably running the program for eleven years. Under Dave's management, the Shapley Program expanded to more than 80 visits per year, and achieved sound financial footing. I would like to thank Dave Philip on behalf of the Education Office and the Society for his dedicated stewardship of the Harlow Shapley Visiting Lectureships Program.

Subsequently, the Shapley Program will be run out of the Education Office, with the advisement of a subcommittee of the Astronomy Education Board. The new website is at www.aas.org/shapley.

The Harlow Shapley Visiting Lectureships provide any host undergraduate institutions including community colleges, liberal arts colleges and regional universities, and institutions not offering an astronomical degree with a program of two day visits by professional astronomers. Visiting lecturers can contribute to the host institution's academic program and intellectual environment in many different ways from teaching a variety of classes in physical, mathematical and general sciences, as well as astronomy to giving popular public addresses. The level of these presentations range from the elementary and non-mathematical to the advanced and technical. In informal discussions, the visitors can advise students on possible future scientific careers and can discuss teaching and curriculum problems with faculty members, deans and administrators. Talks at local secondary schools are also encouraged as part of the visit.

If you are interested in becoming a Shapley Lecturer please send email to shapely@aaas.org.

The Tenth Annual Workshop for New Faculty in Physics and Astronomy

Department chairs are invited to nominate faculty members who are in the first few years of their initial tenure-track appointment to attend the tenth Annual Workshop for New Faculty in Physics and Astronomy, 10-13 November 2005, at the American Center for Physics in College Park, Maryland. The workshop is intended for faculty in the first few years of their initial tenure-track appointment at a four-year college or university. This workshop is sponsored by the American Association of Physics Teachers, the American Physical Society, and the American Astronomical Society and is funded by the National Science Foundation's Division of Undergraduate Education. More information and the 2004 Program and Presentations are at <http://www.aapt.org/Events/newfaculty.cfm>.

Eligibility: The ideal nominee has been teaching for a year or two and is beginning to realize that good teaching may be a more difficult enterprise than he or she originally thought. We are confident new faculty will use what they learn at this Workshop for the improvement of their instruction. By providing examples of well-tested paths to successful teaching, the Workshop will allow greater time to focus on research and scholarship, thereby offering benefits to the individual and to the department.

Costs: Our grant pays for housing, meals and other local expenses connected with the Workshop. Participants pay their transportation costs (e.g. airfare, ground transportation to/from the airport) to the American Center for Physics.

Deadlines: Letters of nomination should be received at the AAPT office by 16 September 2005, for primary consideration, though they are accepted in the order received. The nomination letter should indicate date of initial tenure-track appointment and primary teaching duties, along with a statement of the chair's willingness to support the cost of his or her transportation. Email nominations to Ken Krane (kranek@physics.orst.edu) and to Maria Elena Khoury at AAPT (mkhoury@aapt.org).

The AstronomyCenter

Looking for that neat simulation? Want a place to share your interactive, self-paced tutorial on stellar atmospheres? Haven't reviewed enough material? Then, you might want to cruise over to the AstronomyCenter at astronomycenter.org.

AstronomyCenter.org is a web-based databank that provides faculty with links to a wide range of teaching and learning resources for the Undergraduate Introductory Astronomy course. All materials are classified by their topic and activity type, and have descriptions outlining their content. Information about authors, publishers, costs, and copyright is also provided. Instructors can use this collection to find curriculum materials, images, classroom demonstrations, labs, online learning resources, evaluation instruments, and articles about approaches to astronomy education. The collection can be searched by keyword or browsed by topic or type of resource.

Users of the AstronomyCenter.org are encouraged to actively participate. They may suggest materials for the editors to include in the collection, share comments, and build personal collections of materials. Although anyone may use the database, participation requires the creation of a user account so that contributions can be connected to the user. Account creation is free and requires only a name and email address. If you are willing to serve as a reviewer, please contact either the editor, Marc Gagne (mgagne@wcupa.edu) or Susana Deustua (deustua@aaas.org).

AstronomyCenter.org is a service provided by the American Astronomical Society in collaboration with the ComPADRE (Communities in Physics and Astronomy for Digital Resources in Education) project. ComPADRE is supported by the National Science Foundation and the American Astronomical Society, American Association of Physics Teachers, American Institute of Physics/Society of Physics Students and the American Physical Society.

Further information about the AAS education projects can be found at <http://education.aas.org>, or contact Susana E. Deustua, Director of Educational Activities at deustua@aaas.org.

NEWS FROM...

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF THE PACIFIC

Mike Bennett, mbennett@astrosociety.org
Executive Director

ASP Announces 2005 Bruce Medal, Other Awards

The 2005 Catherine Wolfe Bruce gold medal, honoring an individual for a lifetime of contributions to astronomy, has been awarded to Dr. Robert Kraft, Professor Emeritus of Astronomy and Astrophysics, UC Observatories/Lick Observatory. Dr. Kraft will

receive the medal in a ceremony to be held at the ASP's 117th Annual Meeting on September 16 in Tucson.

Other 2005 awards announced by the ASP are:

- Maria and Eric Muhlmann Award for the development of innovative instruments and techniques—Robert Lupton of Princeton University
- Robert J. Trumpler Award for the best recent PhD thesis (two awards this year)—Siming Liu, PhD granted by University of Arizona Department of Physics (now at Stanford), and Jennifer Scott, PhD granted by University of Arizona Department of Astronomy (now at NASA/GSFC)
- Klumpke-Roberts Award for contributions to public understanding of astronomy—Jeff Goldstein of the Challenger Center for Space Science Education
- Thomas J. Brennan Award for outstanding teaching of astronomy in grades 9-12—C. Steve Rapp of Linwood Holton Governor's School, Abingdon, VA
- Amateur Achievement Award for significant observational or technological contributions by an amateur astronomer—Tim Hunter/Tucson, AZ
- Las Cumbres Amateur Outreach Award for outstanding outreach to K-12 students and the public—Mary Lou Whitehorne of Halifax, Nova Scotia

PASP Co-Editors Stepping Down

Anne Cowley and David Hartwick, co-editors of the *PASP* since 1997, will be stepping down effective 31 December 2005. In announcing the change, ASP President Dennis Schatz said "In their eight years as co-editors, Anne and David have done an absolutely outstanding job, always maintaining the highest academic, editorial, and professional standards. *PASP* is a highly respected scholarly journal, and it has earned that reputation because of their hard work, dedication, and adherence to excellence."

Katy Garmany, ASP Past President, is chairing the search committee to identify a new editor. The committee intends to have the new editor in place well before the end of the year, in order to ensure a smooth transition. Anyone interested in learning more about the *PASP* editorship should contact Dr. Garmany at garmany@noao.edu.

New Officers Begin Terms

Congratulations to the ASP's new slate of officers who began their two-year terms in March. President—Dennis Schatz, Pacific Science Center. Vice President/President Elect—Jim Kaler, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Past President—Katy Garmany, NOAO. Secretary—Mary Kay Hemenway, University of Texas, Austin. Treasurer—Eugene Epstein, Aerospace Corporation (retired).

ASP September Conference Aimed at EPO Professionals

The conference of the ASP's 117th annual meeting is entitled "Building Community: the Emerging EPO Profession." To be held 14-16 September in Tucson, the conference is expected to attract



over 200 education and public outreach (EPO) professionals—those who develop and disseminate educational and outreach materials, programs, and activities relating to astronomy, space science, and astrobiology. The conference will be highlighted by invited speakers addressing important issues involving the public understanding of science, formal education, informal education, and public outreach. The ASP members meeting and awards banquet will be held Friday afternoon and evening, 16 September. For complete information and registration go to the Society web site at www.astrosociety.org and click on “Events.”

ASP Begins New Program to Train Science Center Professionals

The ASP has been awarded a major grant from the Informal Science Education Division of the National Science Foundation. The four-year program, entitled “Astronomy From the Ground Up,” calls for the ASP and its project partners to improve the capacity of dozens of smaller science centers and science museums to bring astronomy to their audiences, through improved staff training, materials, and professional development. The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) and the NOAO’s Office of Public Affairs and Educational Outreach are partnering with the ASP on this exciting new project.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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

Deadlines for FY2006 funding

AST announces the following deadlines for research and instrumentation grant opportunities in FY2006.

21 July 2005: CAREER (MPS) - Faculty Early Career Development Program – Note that a new program solicitation has been issued (NSF 05-579). See <http://www.nsf.gov/career>.

Mid-August 2005: REU Sites - Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Sites – A new program announcement is to be issued soon; see <http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/faculty.jsp>. REU Supplements Anytime

11 October 2005: NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (AAPF)

11 October 2005: MPS Distinguished International Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (MPS-DRF)

1 November 2005: Advanced Technologies and Instrumentation (ATI)

15 November 2005: Astronomy & Astrophysics Research Grants in all areas

15 November 2005: Research at Undergraduate Institutions (RUI)

20 January 2006: Program for Research and Education with Small Telescopes (PREST)

26 January 2006: Major Research Instrumentation (MRI)

Anytime: Research Opportunity Awards and REU supplements and Meeting or Conference support proposals.

The ADVANCE Program

NSF has announced a new program solicitation for the ADVANCE program (NSF 05-584, http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5383). The goal of the ADVANCE program is to increase the representation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers, thereby contributing to the development of a more diverse science and engineering workforce. Creative strategies to realize this goal are sought from men and women. In 2005-2006, the program will support three types of ADVANCE projects:

Institutional Transformation Awards – These awards support academic institutional transformation to promote the increased participation and advancement of women scientists and engineers in academe by supporting innovative and comprehensive programs for institution-wide change. (Deadline 22 July 2005)

Leadership Awards – These awards support the efforts of individuals, small groups, or organizations in developing national and/or discipline-specific leadership in enabling the full participation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers. (Deadline 15 July 2005)

Partnerships for Adaptation, Implementation, and Dissemination Awards – These awards support the analysis, adaptation, dissemination and use of existing innovative materials and practices that have been demonstrated to be effective in increasing representation and participation of women in academic science and engineering careers. (Deadline 27 January 2006).

2005 NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellows

The Division of Astronomical Sciences is pleased to announce the 2005 class of NSF Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellows. Fellows engage in a program of research of an observational, instrumental, or theoretical nature, in combination with a coherent educational plan for the three-year duration of the fellowship. The program is intended to recognize young investigators of significant potential, and provide them with experience in research and education that will establish them in positions of distinction and leadership in the community.

Jeffrey Bary – University of Virginia – “Evolution of Circumstellar Disks: A Study of Accretional Variability and Disk Lifetimes”

Matthew Browning – University of California, Berkeley – “Simulations of Convection and Dynamo Activity in Low-Mass Stars”

Sukanya Chakrabarti – Harvard-Smithsonian CfA – “Early Stages of Massive Protostars and Dusty Galaxies: Integrating the Observational and Theoretical Arenas”

Scott Dahm – Caltech – “Constraining the Timescale for the Dissipation of Circumstellar Disks and the Formation of Planetary Systems”

Daniel Kocevski – University of California, Berkeley – “Investigating Cosmology with Gamma-ray Bursts”



Nathan McCrady – University of California, Los Angeles – “Super Star Clusters and Galaxy Evolution”

Erik Rosolowsky – Harvard-Smithsonian CfA – “The Origins of Molecular Clouds”

Kim-Vy Tran - Harvard-Smithsonian CfA – “Stellar Assembly and Galaxy Evolution in the Distant Universe”

Astronomy & Astrophysics Advisory Committee

The joint NSF-NASA-DOE advisory committee, the Astronomy & Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC), has produced their annual report, due 15 March each year. The report is submitted to the heads of NSF, NASA, and DOE and to Congressional committees, OMB and OSTP. This latest report, as well as information on AAAC membership, activities, and earlier reports can be found at www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/aaac.jsp. The AAAC is responsible for providing advice to the agencies on issues such as coordinating the development of strategic plans and the identification of specific areas that might benefit from coordinated activities.

AST Committee of Visitors (COV)

In February, the Astronomy Division was reviewed by a Committee of Visitors, a regular event for all divisions at NSF. The Committee spent three days examining documentation of the review process and proposal actions, reviewing the management of national observatory facilities, and discussing with the Division our processes and planning for the future. The committee’s report and the Division’s response to their recommendations can be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/activities/cov/covs.jsp#mps>. We thank the members of the COV for their extensive dialogue with us and the complimentary and constructive report they produced.

The CAREER program

The Division wishes to remind the community that the deadline for Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) proposals is approaching. A new solicitation has been released (NSF 05-579; http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf05579). The deadline for AST this year is 21 July 2005. CAREER is a *Foundation-wide* effort, with intent to provide stable support at a sufficient level and duration to enable awardees to develop careers as leading teacher-scholars.

Successful applicants propose creative, integrative, and effective programs that demonstrate and/or build upon, but do not reinvent, knowledge of both research and educational issues. These programs should be developed, and described, within the context of the mission, goals and resources of the proposer’s organization. AST wishes to highlight that proposed education activities may be in a broad range of areas and may be directed to *any* level, including undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral education, as well as public outreach and K-12/teacher training. The research

and education components of the proposal should include a means for reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the efforts in the context of the CAREER program intent to promote integration of, and excellence in, both education and research within the context of the mission of the PI’s organization. Proposals should be written to be understandable to reviewers with a range of expertise in astronomy, and must specifically address both review criteria (Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact).

Applications from all types of CAREER-eligible institutions are encouraged. NSF especially encourages the inclusion of women, members of underrepresented minority groups, and persons with disabilities in research and educational activities.

Additionally, volunteers to serve as reviewers and panelists for the CAREER program, and/or any other AST program are welcome. For further questions, please contact Randy L. Phelps (rphelps@nsf.gov or 703-292-4910).

A Program Announcement for AST coming

The Astronomy Division has always received unsolicited proposals in response to an annual deadline with guidelines established in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). We have taken proposals in any subject in astronomy and astrophysics, using any technique or approach, and for a wide range of project scope. Although we are extremely open and flexible in what we accept and fund, we often find that PI’s impose their own interpretation and restrictions about what is allowed in the proposal submission. To help PI’s understand the full range of opportunities available in AST, and to provide more guidance on proposal submission and review in AST, we are planning on issuing a program announcement in the near future. The GPG requirements will still hold, but we expect this new program announcement to provide more context for the development of proposals, and to anticipate and answer some of the questions that frequently arise about what AST does and does not support. Look for more information in future AAS newsletters and mailings.

AST Undertakes a “Senior Review”

Dear Colleagues:

As I have mentioned on various occasions over the past six months, including our most recent Town Meeting, the Division of Astronomical Sciences is beginning the process of a “Senior Review” of its portfolio of facilities. This review, a recommendation of the most recent Decade Survey, is motivated at this particular time by a combination of the current Federal budget outlook, the ambitions of the astronomical community as evidenced in the Decade Survey and other reports such as “Connecting Quarks with the Cosmos,” and by the growth in the AST budget over the past five years.



This review is designed to examine the balance of our investments in the various facilities that we support. The primary goal of the review and the resultant adjustment of balance that will result is to enable progress on the recommendations of the Decade Survey, including such things as operations funds for ALMA, and other priorities. At the same time we must preserve, indeed grow, a healthy core program of astronomical research. We regard this as essential to support the scientific programs that will be undertaken with the new facilities, to seed the next generation of capability, and to attract, train, and retain the next generation of astronomical researchers.

We have adopted the following boundary conditions for the review:

- The assumption is that the AST budget will grow no faster than inflationary increases for the remainder of the decade
- In concert with the advice of every community advisory body that we have asked (and in keeping with our own evaluation of balance and need), we will not use resources from the unrestricted grants programs (AAG) to address the challenges of facility operations or the design and development costs for new facilities of the scale of LSST, GSMT, SKA, etc.
- The process and the adjustments in balance that may result must be realistic and realizable
- Recommendations should be based on well-understood criteria
- There should be ample opportunity for community input at all stages.

The specific goal of the review is to examine the impact and the gains we might experience by redistributing \$30M of annual spending (our 2005 budget is \$198M) from Division funds. These funds would be obtained by selective reductions in the operations of existing facilities. The near-term needs for new investment have lead us to conclude that we must try to generate the \$30M in annual redistributed funding by the end of FY2011. Even with this, there will be challenges to be met to satisfy projected need in FY2007-2008.

Over the past several months, we have considered a number of different ways that we might approach gathering the input necessary to estimate the impact of various decisions, so that we can then present a few different scenarios to a committee representing the community for their comment and advice. Our target is to have the advice of the committee in hand by September of this year.

In order to treat each of NRAO, NOAO, NSO, and NAIC, and Gemini on an equal footing and to obtain an in-depth understanding of the contributions that each of our facilities makes, component by component, we are adopting a "zero-base" approach. Under this approach, we are asking that each facility manager (AURA, AUI, Cornell) consider and document:

- The case for, and priority of, each component of their facilities, along with a defensible cost for each.
- In doing so, build the case for a forward-looking observatory operation, the highest priority components of which would exist in 2011
- Provide as realistic an estimate as possible of the cost and timescale that would be associated with divestiture of each component

We expect that their deliberations will:

- Be based on extensive consultation with the user community
- Involve evaluation of component facilities and capabilities using well-defined and carefully documented metrics to define productivity, cost effectiveness, and future utility. We will work with all facilities managers to arrive at a common set of metrics so various components can be compared.
- Take into consideration systemic issues such as complementing observations at other wavelengths, filling critical niches in the overall U.S. system, role in training and technical innovation.
- Explore opportunities to deliver scientific knowledge at reduced cost or increased efficiency through new operating modes

With this information in hand from all of the facilities that we support, and with our best understanding of the needs for development and future programs, we will then present a number of scenarios to the senior review committee for their comment and advice. This committee will be as representative of the entire community as possible. These scenarios will necessarily trade progress on the various recommendations before us against preservation of existing capability. The challenge will be to strike an acceptable balance.

We recognize that this will be a difficult task and that the end result may well be that some facilities are judged to be no longer viable under the circumstances. We also recognize that the landscape of U.S. astronomy could almost certainly change dramatically as a result of some these actions. The question for all of us is to judge whether these changes are viable and lead to a vital and sustainable future, or whether the pace and scope of change necessary to realize the cumulative aspirations of the community under severely constrained budgets are too drastic.

We welcome comments on our assumptions and on the tasks set out above. However, as I have said on numerous occasions, I do not see any way to avoid this review or the difficult judgments that will be required. Done properly and wisely, I believe it can result in a healthier program in the long-term, and one that is poised to take advantage of improving outlooks when they occur.

G. Wayne Van Citters
Director, Division of Astronomical Sciences

ANNOUNCEMENTS

AAS Observatory Reports – Discontinued

The AAS Council and Publications Board have determined that the Annual Reports of Astronomical Observatories and Departments are no longer a comprehensive record of astronomy. We will no longer publish the Observatory Reports in the *Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society* (BAAS).

The AAS Historical Astronomy Division is researching alternative ways to record the yearly state of astronomy.

AAS Membership Calendar

As a membership benefit, the AAS Membership Calendar includes important dates, such as proposal and grant deadlines and AAS sponsored meetings. Sponsors receive selection of a photo layout page, 250 words of text and sponsorship recognition in the calendar matter. For only \$1800, your institution or department can show support for the whole astronomical community and be featured prominently in astronomers' offices across the country. Sponsors and potential sponsors for future AAS calendars are reminded that sponsorship space is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Groups interested in sponsoring a month may contact Crystal Tinch (crystal@aaas.org) for more information and pricing details for the 2006 calendar. Deadline for sponsorship is 1 September 2005.

NSO Observing Proposals

The current deadline for submitting observing proposals to the National Solar Observatory is 15 August 2005 for the fourth quarter of 2005. 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 <http://www.nso.edu/general/observe/>. A web-based observing-request form is at <http://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.

Dark Energy Task Force Call for White Papers

Submission deadline: 15 June 2005

In February 2005 the NSF-NASA-DOE Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC) and the NSF-DOE High Energy Physics Advisory Panel (HEPAP) established a Dark

Energy Task Force (DETF) as a joint subcommittee to advise NSF, NASA, and DOE on the future of dark energy research.

The names of the DETF committee members, as well as the charge to the committee, may be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/detf.jsp>.

The DETF was asked to advise the agencies on the optimum near- and intermediate-term programs to investigate dark energy and, in cooperation with agency efforts, to advance the justification, specification and optimization of a ground-based Large Survey Telescope (LST) and a space-based Joint Dark Energy Mission (JDEM). The DETF will prepare a final report for submission to the AAAC and HEPAP with a target date of December 2005.

In particular, the DETF was charged to:

1. Summarize the existing program of funded projects by projected capabilities, systematics, risks, required documents, and progress-to-date.
2. Summarize proposed and emergent approaches and techniques for dark energy studies; that is, characterize these approaches and techniques by the added value the projected capabilities would provide to the investigation of dark energy.
3. Identify important steps, precursors, R&D and other projects that are required in preparation for JDEM, LST and other existing or planned experiments.
4. Identify any areas of dark energy parameter space that the existing or proposed projects fail to address.

We expect that the DETF will prioritize techniques for studying dark energy but will not rank specific projects.

In the present landscape of the study of dark energy, we expect numerous experiments leading up to JDEM and LST. Because the funding agencies will use the DETF report to help direct their resources, it is important for the committee to have information from all experimental groups, including an outline of each project's scientific goals and experimental approaches.

Hence, the DETF announces a "Call for White Papers" from all projects relating to the study of dark energy, including those that address emerging or high-risk techniques. The DETF is very interested in considering creative projects of high risk but which may produce large impacts on the measurement of dark energy. A similar but separate call will be issued to solicit contributions describing theoretical studies of dark energy.

White paper submission instructions may be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/detf.jsp>.

New DVD on Hubble Space Telescope is Launched

As part of the 15th anniversary celebrations of the Hubble Space Telescope, the European Space Agency (ESA) has produced an exclusive, 83-minute DVD film, entitled "Hubble-15 Years of



Discovery.” The documentary covers all aspects of the Hubble Space Telescope project—a journey through its history, its troubled early life and its ultimate scientific successes, and also mentions the role of the Hubble Space Telescope project in facilitating some of the activities of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA). The ESA DVD film can be obtained free of charge by sending an e-mail to OOSA at oosa@unvienna.org.

Non-Academic Astronomers Network

The Employment Committee of the AAS conducted a survey that showed a great interest from our constituents on the variety of career paths taken by astronomers. In response to that, we have gathered some data and updated the original Industrial Astronomers Network webpage to make it a more effective mentoring and networking tool. The new website is now available at <http://www.aas.org/career/nonacademic/>.

If you are aware of friends, colleagues, or students who received degrees in astronomy and went on to non-academic/non-astronomy related careers, we'd like to hear about them! Please email us at industry@aaas.org with their names and contact information so that we may contact them to ask if they would like to participate in this network. Alternately, they can also visit the website and submit their information directly.

We would greatly appreciate your support in expanding this network and look forward to working with you as we expand it to serve our community better.

HONORED ELSEWHERE

Giacconi Receives Presidential Medal

Johns Hopkins astrophysicist and AAS member **Riccardo Giacconi**, was one of eight recipients of the 2003 National Medal of Science, the United States' top scientific recognition, the White House announced.

Giacconi, co-recipient of the 2002 Nobel Prize in physics, is considered the father of astronomy research that exploits the X-ray portion of the electromagnetic spectrum. His research opened a new window on scientific understanding of the universe, from its evolution to its component black holes, neutron stars, galaxy clusters and quasars.

The National Medal of Science was established by Congress in 1959 as a Presidential Award to be given to individuals “deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding contributions to knowledge in the physical, biological, mathematical, or engineering sciences.”

AAS Members among 2005 RAS Awardees

The Royal Astronomical Society's highest honor, the Gold Medal for Astronomy, was jointly awarded to **Professor Eleanor Margaret Burbidge** FRS, Professor Emeritus in the University of California, San Diego, and **Professor Geoffrey Burbidge** FRS, Professor of Physics in the University of California.

The award is given for their joint contributions to astronomical research and their impressive record of service to the community, including Professor Geoffrey Burbidge's 30-year tenure as editor-in-chief of the *Annual Review of Astronomy and Astrophysics*, and Professor Margaret Burbidge's Presidency of the AAS.

Associateships of the Royal Astronomical Society honor eminent people in astronomy and geophysics who are not normally resident in the UK. Awards this year were made to the following AAS members: **Professor Frank Shu** (National Tsing Hua University), **Dr. Wesley T. Huntress** (Carnegie Institution of Washington), and **Professor Michael Mendillo** (Boston University).

Bethe Posthumously Awarded Franklin Medal

Three days after his death, Nobel laureate **Hans Bethe**, emeritus professor of physics at Cornell University and an architect of the age of modern atomic theory, was posthumously awarded the 2005 Benjamin Franklin Medal for Distinguished Achievement in the Sciences by the American Philosophical Society.

The American Philosophical Society is the oldest learned society in the United States. The medal is the society's highest honor for lifetime achievement in the sciences.

The medal was presented to Bethe's widow, Rose, at their home in Ithaca, 9 March 2005, by American Philosophical Society president Frank H.T. Rhodes, president emeritus of Cornell.

Starkman Named Guggenheim Fellow

Glenn D. Starkman was among 186 artists, scholars, and scientists to receive the 2005 Guggenheim Fellowship Award. Fellows are appointed on the basis of distinguished achievement in the past and exceptional promise for future accomplishment. Starkman is a Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Case Western Reserve University.

Carilli Receives Max Planck Research Award

Christopher Carilli is the recipient of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's and the Max Planck Society's International Research Award.

Carilli works at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Socorro, NM, and is one of the leading experts on radio astronomy world-wide. Carilli observes the traces of the most distant galaxies from the early period of the universe and develops the observation equipment and measuring techniques necessary to do so. He is significantly involved in developing the next generation of radio telescopes.

2005 AAAS Class Includes Five Astronomers

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences today announced the election of 196 new Fellows and 17 new Foreign Honorary Members. The 213 men and women are leaders in scholarship, business, the arts, and public affairs.

Congratulations to the following AAS members:

David C. Jewitt, Professor of Astronomy at the University of Hawaii
Steven Squyres, leader of NASA's Rover program for the exploration of Mars

Frederick K. Lamb, Fortner Professor of Theoretical Astrophysics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Andrew Evan Lange of the California Institute of Technology, Goldberger Professor of Physics

Michael Lester Norman, professor of physics at the University of California, San Diego.

AAS Members Elected to the NAS

The National Academy of Sciences announced the election of 72 new members and 18 foreign associates from 14 countries in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research.

Election to membership in the Academy is considered one of the highest honors that can be accorded a U.S. scientist or engineer.

The National Academy of Sciences is a private organization of scientists and engineers dedicated to the furtherance of science and its use for the general welfare. It was established in 1863 by a congressional act of incorporation signed by Abraham Lincoln that calls on the Academy to act as an official adviser to the federal

government, upon request, in any matter of science or technology.

The following AAS members were elected:

Charles L. Bennett; Professor of Physics and Astronomy, Department of Physics and Astronomy, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

Roger D. Blandford; Pehong and Adele Chen Professor of Physics, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, Stanford University, Stanford, California.

Wallace L.W. Sargent; Ira S. Bowen Professor of Astronomy, Department of Astronomy, California Institute of Technology

Harvey D. Tananbaum; Director, Chandra X-ray Center, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Newly elected foreign associates members include:

S. Jocelyn Bell Burnell; Fellow, Mansfield College, and Visiting Professor of Physics, University of Oxford (United Kingdom).

WASHINGTON NEWS CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

policy with people who make decisions that directly impact our research. I currently estimate that fewer than 500 hours are now spent by astronomers discussing astronomy policy with policy makers.

3) Get together with a few of your colleagues and write an op-ed for a local or national paper on an issue you think is of importance in astronomy. Op-ed pieces are read by policy makers. Your member of Congress has staff members tasked to track issues in the local paper (or they do so themselves). By getting our issues in front of the people who can make a difference, we can effect change. When writing such an op-ed, cast your issue in terms that everyone can understand and be sure to motivate your reader's concern by connecting your issue to their lives. Don't write for your colleagues. Write for your local PTA members. Write for your fellow voters, not your fellow scientists.

4) Leverage the impact of your friends, neighbors and relatives. Nearly everyone likes astronomy. Talk to your friends, neighbors and relatives about what NSF and NASA (and DOE, the Navy and the Air Force and NOAA and the Smithsonian...you get the idea) do with their tax dollars and how exciting a time of discovery we live in. If they like what these agencies do, ask them to write their member of Congress in support of science funding and basic research. Issues are not important to members of Congress until constituents let them know they should be concerned. Granted, some members of Congress are of the high-minded variety and do initiate actions for the betterment of our country, but for the majority, constituent concern equals member concern.

5) If you have a federal grant, have received observing time on a telescope or have used a federally-funded facility, write a thank-

>

you note to your member of Congress and your Senators. Research or observing time with federally funded facilities is a grant of taxpayer funding. Thank your members of Congress so that they know that federal funding is coming to their district in some form or another. Some don't even know that astronomers in the center of the country get observing time in Arizona or Hawaii or Chile or New Mexico. Let them know that you have and that you are grateful. Then tell them about the graduate students or postdocs or administrative staff you support on your grant and how your overhead helps your University. Remember, if they don't hear it from you...they won't hear it from anyone.

When times get tough, it is easy to duck and cover. It is hard enough to win a grant or observing time, let alone dedicate additional time to just writing to elected officials. But in tough financial times, those who are heard are those who will receive funding. Most federal expenditure is discretionary, not mandatory. It is not an inherent function of the government to support our research. But if policy makers know that the investment is producing good results, supporting students and bringing funding or resources to their districts or states, then they will support our programs. Especially if they hear that message many times over.

Let's not let the success and growth of astronomy in the past decade be its downfall in the current decade. We must work hard and make an extra effort to convince policy makers in these tough times that supporting and even growing our field is worthwhile. Please try and fit some policy activities into your weekly routine. Our field will greatly benefit from your efforts.

A Member's View of the NSF Budget Roll Out

I had the opportunity to attend the roll-out of the President's proposed NSF budget for FY2006. The roll-out involves several briefings wherein NSF officials tell attendees what the budget says and why they made certain funding decisions. The meetings are also an opportunity for officials to signal where the agency is heading in future years. This year's message was clear: We understand that science is important, but we have BIG federal deficits. Be happy if you didn't get cut.

So astronomers should be happy, because we are getting an overall increase: Gemini operations funding is up by 3.7 million, and ALMA construction is going forward on schedule (and is considered the number one priority in the NSF facilities budget). IceCube sank their first string early this year and will also continue with scheduled construction. However, most of the rest of the astronomy budget is flat with a few cuts, notably for NOAO's Adaptive Optics Development Program—but we all know that with inflation, flat funding really means a small cut.

Which brings me to the bad news: the future is flat, and I don't just mean the curvature of spacetime. Due to circumstances which

are beyond the realm of science, the federal budget is facing a huge overall deficit in the long-term, and that is putting funding pressure on everything on the discretionary side of the budget (that means all of science including astronomy). Adding to our pressure is the transfer into NSF this year of two aging icebreakers, formerly in the custody of the Coast Guard, which are needed by NSF to provide access to the poles. They are likely to need substantial (read: expensive) refurbishment soon, and this will come out of someone's budget.

Having said all of this, astronomy is viewed relatively favorably by NSF, in part because of our careful priority setting procedures like the Decadal Survey, which effectively highlight what we are doing and why non-astronomers should care. Some other science divisions (chemistry is a prime example) took serious hits this year because they had failed to define promising areas of research. Michael Turner, the head of the MPS Directorate (of which astronomy is a part) expressed support for a number of high priority items from recent astronomy reports, including ALMA, GSMT, LSST and ACT. However, a major concern for astronomy in future years is that the available pool of money for facilities operations is likely to be essentially flat, but there will be many new facilities coming on line in need of operations money. We can expect NSF to ask us to close some of our older facilities (or transfer funding responsibility out of the public sector to e.g. universities) in exchange for newer facilities (4m telescopes at NOAO were specifically mentioned). There was also discussion of slowing the development of new facilities or developing fewer facilities in the future so that operations budgets will have a chance to keep up.

In summary, we should probably all breathe a sigh of relief about NSF this year, but we can expect to be making painful decisions in the next several years. The more support we have from the public and from Congress the fewer difficult decisions we'll have to make, so as always, please remember to stay in touch with your local Representative about your concerns for science funding.

K. E. Saavik Ford
Carnegie Institution of Washington
Department of Terrestrial Magnetism
5241 Broad Branch Rd., N.W.
Washington, DC 20015
email: saavik@dtm.ciw.edu
phone: 202.478.8862

CONGRESSIONAL VISITS DAY



Jon Morse (l) and David Black (r), congratulate Representative Vernon Ehlers on receiving the George E. Brown, Jr. Science Policy Award from the Science Engineering and Technology Workgroup, awarded annually during the coalition's congressional visits day.



A not so normal day on the hill....the nearly 25,000 people who work on the Hill and uncounted numbers of visitors, including 250 scientists and engineers participating in CVD were evacuated from Hill buildings when a private plane strayed into restricted airspace. Within 20 minutes, the all clear sounded and appointments continued.



Dave Black (l) and Dan Lester (r) outside of Henry Bonilla's office (R-TX).



AAS Congressional Visits Day (11-12 May 2005) participants in front of the Rayburn House Office Building. (l to r) Dan Lester, D.J. Pisano, Sandy Eulitt, David Black, Jim Ulvestad (partially blocked), Rachel Akeson, Alyssa Goodman, Jim Klimchuk (partially blocked), Jon Morse, Allison Loll, Joan Burkepile.



Rita Sambruna and D.J. Pisano, prepare to visit Representative Moran's office (D-VA).



After a full two days of briefings and visits, CVD participants smile with relief after a very useful 1.5 hour briefing with OMB staff responsible for NASA and NSF funding. (l to r) Jim Ulvestad, Jim Klimchuk, Allison Loll, D.J. Pisano, Rita Sambruna, Jon Morse and Sandy Eulitt.

CALENDAR

AAS & AAS DIVISION MEETINGS

Solar Physics Division/AGU

23-27 May 2005 — New Orleans, LA

Contact: Jim Klimchuk

(klimchuk@nrl.navy.mil)

Division for Planetary Sciences

4-9 Sept 2005 — Cambridge, England

Simon Mitton, LOC

(smittin@cambridge.org)

Carl Murray, SPC

(c.d.murray@qmul.ac.uk)

<http://www.dps2005.com/>

Historical Astronomy Divison - Wash DC

8-9 January 2006

<http://www.aas.org/~had/meetings.html>

207th Meeting - Washington, DC

8-12 January 2006

Contact AAS Executive Office

gilmore@aas.org

208th Meeting - Calgary, Alberta

4-8 June 2006

Contact Russ Taylor

russ@ras.ucalgary.ca

Division for Planetary Sciences

8-13 October 2006 — Pasadena, CA

<http://www.aas.org/dps/dps.html>

209th Meeting - Seattle, WA

(Joint with AAPT)

7-11 January 2007

Contact AAS Executive Office

gilmore@aas.org

210th Meeting - Hawaii

May/June 2007

Contact AAS Executive Office

gilmore@aas.org

OTHER EVENTS

The physics of the s-process

29 May-12 June 2005 — Aspen, CO

Contact: Falk Herwig (ferwig@lanl.gov)

<http://wnr.lanl.gov/aspen05/>

LISA Data: Analysis, Sources, and Science

29 May-18 June 2005 — Aspen, CO

Contact: Matthew Benacquista

(benacquista@msubillings.edu)

<http://www.astro.northwestern.edu/>

AspenS05/index.html

Submillimeter Astronomy: in the era of the SMA

13-16 June 2005 — Cambridge, MA

Contact: Paul Ho

(smast05@cfa.harvard.edu)

<http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/smast05>

Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomenon Conference (INSAP) V

26 June-1 July 2005 — Chicago, IL

Contact: Marvin Bolt

(insapv@adlernet.org)

Ultra-relativistic Jets in Astrophysics

11-15 July 2005 — Banff, Alberta

Contact: Rachid Ouyed

(jdevilliers@capca.ucalgary.ca)

<http://www.capca.ucalgary.ca/meetings/banff2005>

Star Formation in the Era of Three Great Observatories

13-15 July 2005 — Cambridge, MA

Contact: Scott Wolk

(stars05@cfa.harvard.edu)

<http://cxc.harvard.edu/stars05>

Solar MHD: Theory and Observations - a High Spatial Resolution Perspective

18-21 July 2005 — Sunspot, NM

Contact: John Leibacher

(jleibacher@nso.edu)

www.nso.edu/general/workshops/2005

Physics and Astrophysics of Supernova Neutrinos

18-22 July 2005 — Santa Fe, NM

Contact: Chris Fryer (fryer@lanl.gov)

qso.lanl.gov/meetings/meet2005/index.html

*Basic Astrometric Methods

18-22 July 2005 — New Haven, CT

<http://www.astro.yale.edu/workshop/2005/>

*Pulsar Timing Array-A Nanohertz Gravitational Wave Telescope

21-23 July 2005—University Park, PA

Contact: Camma Homman (pta-local@gravity.psu.edu)

<http://cgwp.gravity.psu.edu/events/>

PulsarTiming/index.shtml

Michelson Interferometry Summer Workshop

24-29 July 2005 — Pasadena, CA

Dawn Gelino (dawn@ipac.caltech.edu)

<http://msc.caltech.edu/workshop/2005/>

2005 SPD Summer School on Helioseismology

24-29 July 2005 — Boulder, CO

Contact: Yuhong Fan (yfan@ucar.edu)

<http://www.hao.ucar.edu/summerschool>

9th Asian-Pacific Regional IAU Meeting (APRIM-2005)

26-29 July 2005 — Bali, Indonesia

Contact: Premana W. Premadi

(premadi@as.itb.ac.id)

<http://www.as.itb.ac.id/APRIM2005>

Neutron Stars at the Crossroads of Fundamental Physics

2-6 August 2005 — Vancouver, BC

Contact: Jeremy S Heyl

(hey1@physics.ubc.ca)

<http://www.physics.ubc.ca/~hey1/ns2005>

*Summer School on Adaptive Optics

6-12 August 2005—Santa Cruz, CA

Contact: Paula Towle (cfao@ucolick.org)

<http://cfao.ucolick.org/>

IAU Symposium No. 229

Asteroids, Comets, Meteors - ACM 2005

8-12 Aug 2005 — Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

Contact: Daniela Lazzaro (lazzaro@on.br)

<http://www.on.br/acm2005>

News, Expectations and Trends in Statistical Physics (NEXT2005)

13-18 Aug 2005 — Crete, Greece

<http://www.polito.it/next-sigmaphi>

*4th International X-ray Astronomy School

15-19 August 2005 — Cambridge, MA

xrayschool@milkyway.gsfc.nasa.gov

<http://xrayschool.gsfc.nasa.gov>

IAU Symposium No. 230

Populations of High-Energy Sources in Galaxies

15-19 August 2005 — Dublin, Ireland

Contact: Evert J.A. Meurs

(ejam@halley.dunsink.dias.ie)

www.dunsink.dias.ie/IAUS230/index.html

***MODEST 6 - Modeling Dense Stellar Systems**

29-31 August 2005 — Evanston, IL
Fred Rasio (rasio@northwestern.edu)
<http://www.astro.northwestern.edu/MODEST6/>

***The Origin and Evolution of Cosmic Magnetism**

29 Aug-2 Sep 2005—Bologna, Italy
Contact: Bryan Gaensler
(bgaensler@cfa.harvard.edu)
<http://www.ira.cnr.it/~magnetic/>

IAU Symposium No. 231

Astrochemistry throughout the Universe: Recent Successes and Current Challenges
29 Aug-2 Sept 2005 — Monterey, CA
Contact: Eric Herbst
(herbst@mps.ohio-state.edu)
<http://asilomar.caltech.edu/>

***Science with the Virtual Observatory - NVO Summer School**

6-15 September 2005 — Aspen, Colorado
Contact: summer-school@us-vo.org
www.us-vo.org/summer-school/2005

Building Community: The Emerging Education and Public Outreach (EPO) Profession

14-16 September 2005 — Tucson, AZ
Contact: Tim Slater
(tslater@as.arizona.edu)
<http://astrosociety.org/events/meeting.html>

***Dust in Planetary Systems**

26-30 September 2006 — Lihue, HI
Contact: Eberhard Gruen
(eberhard.gruen@mpi-hd.mpg.de)
<http://www.lpi.usra.edu/meetings/dust2005/>

IAU Colloquium No.200

Direct Imaging of Exoplanets: Science and Techniques
3-7 October 2005 — Nice, France
Contact: Claude Aime
(Claude.Aime@unice.fr)
<http://www-luan.unice.fr/IAUC200.htm>

***Radio Astronomy: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow**

15-19 Oct 2006 — Charlottesville, VA
Contact: Ken Kellerman
(kkellerm@nrao.edu)

***Michelson Fellows Symposium**

20-21 October 2005 — Caltech, Pasadena, CA
Contact: Gerard van Belle
(gerard@ipac.caltech.edu)
<http://msc.caltech.edu/conferences/2005/fellows05/>

Protostars and Planets V

24-28 October 2005 — The Big Island, HI
Contact: Bo Reipurth
(reipurth@ifa.hawaii.edu)
<http://www2.ifa.hawaii.edu/CSPF/ppv/ppv.html>

Fourth Chandra Calibration Workshop

31 Oct-1 Nov 2005—Cambridge, MA
Contact: Vinay Kashyap
(ccw@head.cfa.harvard.edu)
<http://cxc.harvard.edu/ccw/>

7th Pacific Rim Conference on Stellar Astrophysics

1-5 November 2005—Seoul, Korea
Contact: Young Woon Kang
(kangyw@sejong.ac.kr)
<http://arcsec.sejong.ac.kr/~web/pacific-rim/>

***Six Years of Science with Chandra Symposium**

2-4 November 2005 Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA
Contact: Antonella Fruscione
(afruscione@cfa.harvard.edu)
http://cxc.harvard.edu/symposium_2005

***The Spitzer Science Center 2005 Conference: Infrared Diagnostics of Galaxy Evolution**

14 -16 November 2005 — Pasadena, CA
Contact: Harry Teplitz
(irevolve@ipac.caltech.edu)
<http://ssc.spitzer.caltech.edu/mtgs/irevolve>

IAU Symposium No. 232

Scientific Requirements for Extremely Large Telescopes (ELTs)
14-18 Nov 2005 — Cape Town, South Africa
Contact: Michel Dennefeld
(dennefel@iap.fr)
<http://www.sao.ac.za/IAUS232/>

IHY/Basic Space Science Workshop

20-23 November 2005 — United Arab Emirates University
Contact: Barbara Thompson
(ihy_unbss_info@ihy.gsfc.nasa.gov)
<http://ihy.gsfc.nasa.gov/>

16th Annual “October” Astrophysics Conference in Maryland: “Gamma-Ray Bursts in the Swift Era”

29 Nov - 2 Dec 2005 — Washington, DC
Contact: Susan Lehr
(october@astro.umd.edu)
<http://www.astro.umd.edu/october/>

11th Latin-American Regional IAU Meeting (LARIM-2005)

11-16 December 2005—Pucon, Chile
Contact: Monica Rubio
(mrubio@das.uchile.cl)

***Relativistic Jets: The Common Physics of AGN, Microquasars and Gamma-Ray Bursts**

14-17 December 2005 — Ann Arbor, MI
Contact: Philip Hughes
(phughes@umich.edu)

***Astrochemistry-From Laboratory Studies to Astronomical Observations**

15-20 December 2005—Honolulu, HI
Contact: Ralf I. Kaiser
(kaiser@gold.chem.hawaii.edu)
<http://www.chem.hawaii.edu/Bil301/AstroPacificchem.html>

2006 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Astronomical Society/Societe Canadienne D’Astronomie (CASCA)

1-4 June 2006 Calgary, Alberta
Contact: Rene Plume
(plume@ism.ucalgary.ca)
<http://www.ism.ucalgary.ca/meetings/casca06>

***Physics and Astrophysics of Supermassive Black Holes**

9-14 July 2006 — Santa Fe, NM
Contact: Chris Fryer (fryer@lanl.gov)
<http://qso.lanl.gov/meetings/meet2006/index.html>

Note: Listed are meetings or other events that have come to our attention (new or revised listings noted with an asterisk). Due to space limitations, and 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.



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

Newsletter 125 June 2005



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

Periodical
Postage
Paid
Washington DC

WASHINGTON NEWS

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



Bad Times and What to Do About Them

The news these days in Washington on science funding is pretty grim, including funding for astronomy and astrophysics. NASA has announced cuts to various programs, some directly linked to support for astronomers, some linked to future or current missions. NSF has initiated a senior review process of the facilities it funds hoping to find \$30M by 2011 to make greater progress on the ambitious Decadal Survey of Astronomy and Astrophysics. These cuts and the need to find funding are due to the flat or even declining budget for science being put forward by the Administration and the ambitious goals of our community.

During the Clinton administration, science budgets grew dramatically. The National Institutes of Health actually doubled its budget during Clinton's tenure (though much of this increase was due to a concentrated lobbying effort by a variety of groups and a favorable appropriations committee on the Hill). Since the tide has clearly changed, what can scientists do to reverse the trends we see playing out in our budgets? Is the situation

hopeless? Should we just tighten our belt and keep our head low? Absolutely not. There are a number of activities, which we can collectively undertake that will make a difference.

1) Dedicate 30 minutes each week to contact policy makers. If every US member of the AAS pledged to spend 30 minutes a week contacting policy makers (and not just their own representatives and Senators), what a shocking difference it would make. Currently, only the members of Congress with astronomy centers in their districts typically hear from any astronomer and then, they hear from them only rarely. I know. I walk around the Hill speaking with staffers from these districts. Unless some large threat has developed, they say that they rarely hear from our community. This must change in order to change the declining budgets we now face.

2) Pledge to make one visit to a policy maker this year and increase the number of visits you make each year by one. Do it for a decade. With ~ 5,000 astronomers making 10 visits each per year to discuss astronomy issues, we are talking about 50,000 visits of about 30 minutes each. That is 25,000 hours of discussion of astronomy