

AAS Newsletter

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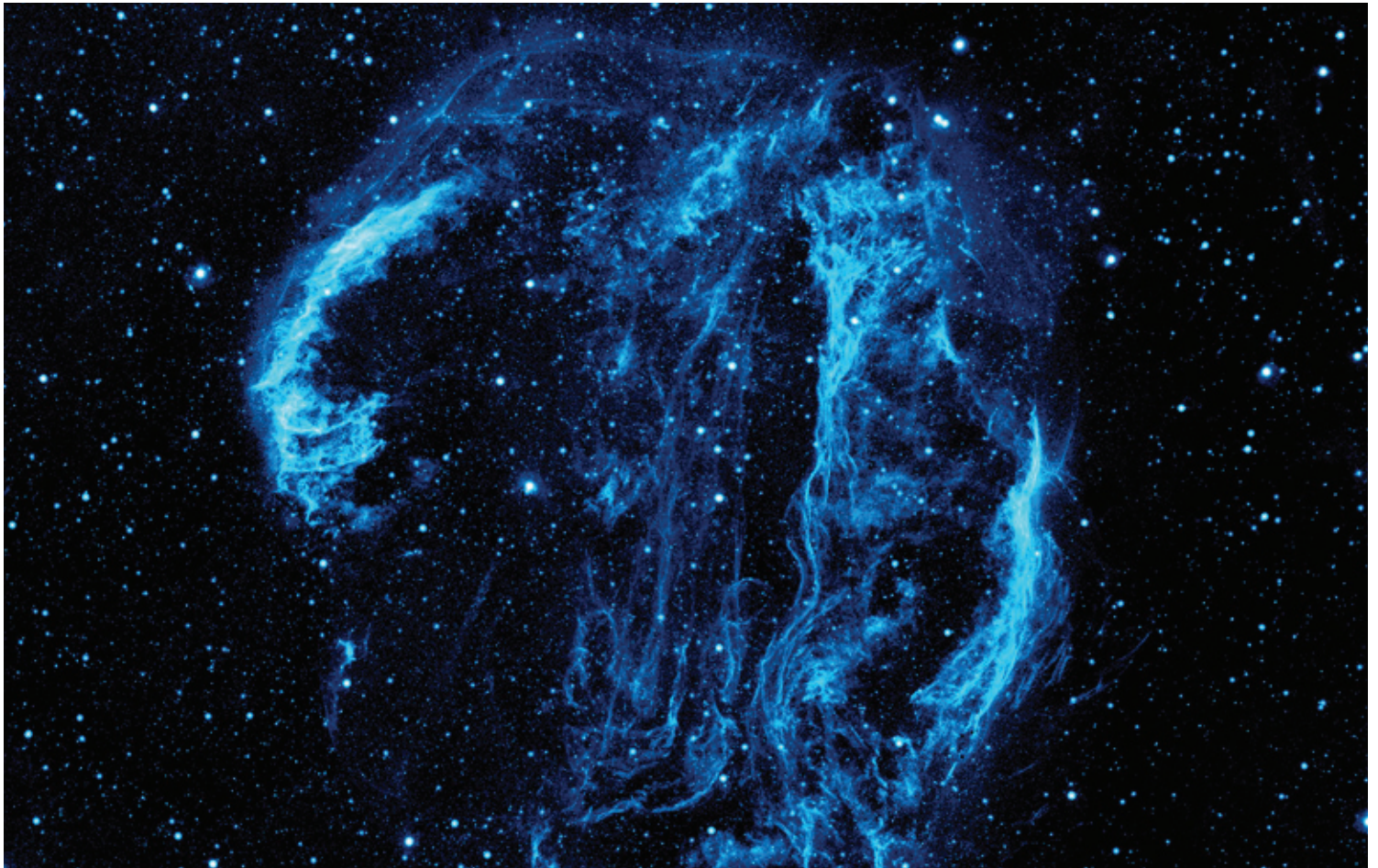


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Items of general interest to be considered for publication in the *AAS Newsletter* should be sent to crystal@aas.org. Appropriate pictures are welcome. For information about deadlines and submitting articles, see <http://aas.org/publications/newsletter.php>. 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.

Front Cover

PIA15415: Cygnus Loop Nebula. Image credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

President's Column

Debra Meloy Elmegreen, president@aas.org



This is my last column as your president; what a quick two years this has been for me! At the members' meeting in Anchorage, it will be time for me to pass the gavel to David Helfand as our new president, and I will serve an additional year on Council as past president. I know that we will be in good hands with David's energy and enthusiasm and new ideas to help move the AAS forward. I have been profoundly humbled and honored to have had the privilege of serving the AAS membership, and thank all of you for that opportunity.

This has been another busy spring. I am delighted to report the start of the AAS Astronomy Ambassadors program. The program will train undergraduate and early graduate astronomy students to be effective in engaging in a wide range of outreach efforts in their local communities. This new initiative is in keeping with our Mission and Vision Statement (http://aas.org/about/mission_and_vision), as I mentioned in the November-December newsletter, and addresses several parts of our Strategic Plan and goals (http://aas.org/about/strategic_plan). In March, I chaired a brainstorming meeting with Education and Outreach Coordinator Rick Fienberg, who is overseeing the details of the initiative, Executive Officer Kevin Marvel, Astronomy Education Board members Ed Prather, Suzy Gurton, and Carol Christian, ASP's Andy Fraknoi, AIP Society for Physics Students director Gary White, NASA HQ's Rita Sambruna, and Afterschool Alliance Director of STEM policy (and former Bahcall Fellow) Anita Krishnamurthi to develop an implementation plan. We will offer free two-day workshops and lodging to junior members immediately preceding our AAS meetings, to provide training on addressing and engaging diverse audiences, as well as information on tools and resources, and on finding and designing outreach opportunities. Astronomy Ambassadors may decide to carry their outreach to schools, afterschool programs, clubs, scout troops, museums, etc., depending on their situation. We will begin with a pilot workshop at the winter 2013 meeting in Long Beach with about 30 students, and eventually develop an online training program for students who cannot make it to an AAS training workshop. An upcoming revamped AAS website will serve as a networking hub for Astronomy Ambassadors to share ideas and experiences and tap existing resources. Stay tuned for the details and registration opportunities.

I can not escape mention yet again of the ongoing AAS role in advocacy for astronomy in the federal budget. In response to the proposed Presidential budget for FY2013, the Division for Planetary Sciences issued a call for action, and the AAS Executive Committee, with input from Bahcall

Fellow Bethany Johns and the Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy, posted a statement, <http://aas.org/governance/resolutions.php#nasafy2013>. In March I testified on Capitol Hill on behalf of the AAS to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies regarding astronomy in the FY2013 budget, <http://aas.org/node/4786>, as I did last year, and the AAS provided Congress with written testimony as well: <http://appropriations.house.gov/Calendar/EventSingle.aspx?EventID=282261>. My term in office included the roll-out of the astronomy and astrophysics decadal survey in 2010 and the planetary sciences survey in 2011, and will end with the heliophysics survey in 2012; the AAS will continue to advocate for the recommendations of the surveys. Besides CAPP and Council actions and the ongoing policy efforts by Kevin Marvel and Bethany Johns, the new AAS Communicating With Washington initiative (<http://aas.org/policy/cww>) as well as AAS involvement in Congressional Visits Day each April is bringing many new astronomy voices to the Hill.

My term as president ranks as one of the best experiences of my life. I have immensely enjoyed working with the dedicated, caring, hard-working councilors and AAS staff, all striving to make the AAS the best organization it can be. I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish during my term through our collective efforts. I will highlight the Council activities that stand out to me these past two years in addition to the ongoing AAS successes with journals and meetings and the excellent work of our many committees and divisions.

Regarding committees and divisions, I am very excited that we approved a new Laboratory Astrophysics Division (LAD), the first new division in over 30 years. LAD will be formally welcomed at the Anchorage meeting. We also formed a Sustainability Committee to encourage our membership and the Society to go green, and added a longitudinal study group to an expanded Demographics Committee, to keep tabs on our members' diversity and careers.

On equality, we revised AAS By-Laws Article X on Nondiscrimination in Professional Activities to include a broader statement of our philosophy of equality of opportunity and treatment for all members. We also welcomed the formation of a Working Group on Gay and Lesbian Equality (WGLE), and presented a special certificate of appreciation posthumously to former astronomer Frank Kameny, who spent a career working for equality for homosexuals.

On federal policy issues, we submitted testimony to Congress and have had ongoing op-eds and Congressional and agency visits about Decadal priorities for astronomy and astrophysics, planetary sciences, and heliophysics. We started a Communicating With Washington initiative of weekly visits by AAS members to Capitol Hill, which Bethany Johns helps facilitate. We also submitted an Amicus Curiae brief to the Supreme Court regarding the right to privacy in JPL background checks; Lee Anne Willson and Kevin Marvel, who wrote the brief, were present for the Supreme Court hearing.

At meetings, we now have a large closing reception instead of a more restricted banquet. We have started a Media Intern opportunity at meetings, in which astronomy graduate students interested in science media participate in press activities with Press Officer Rick Fienberg and write blogs and tweets about the meetings. Starting in Anchorage, we will host a student-Officer breakfast at our summer meetings, to foster more interactions with our junior members. We will also host a focus group at meetings to discuss how to improve the AAS and the meeting experience.

Several new prizes were started: the Kavli Foundation Plenary Lectureship prize, in connection with the opening lecture, the Lancelot M. Berkeley - New York Community Trust prize for meritorious work in astronomy, as the closing lecture, and the Rodger Doxsey Graduate Student Travel prizes. We named two new honorary (international) AAS members, Malcolm Longair and Yasuo Tanaka. We also welcomed a new Patron of the Society, Irene Osterbrock. We presented special certificates of appreciation to Roger Blandford, Lynne Hillenbrand, and Michael Moloney for their efforts leading the Astro2010 decadal survey. We also presented certificates and AAS junior memberships to student prizewinners at the National Society of Black and Hispanic Physicists convention.

Regarding outreach, we are about to begin the AAS Astronomy Ambassadors Program mentioned above, which will train and engage undergraduate and early graduate student researchers in outreach to their local communities to foster interest in astronomy and in STEM careers. We are remodeling the Harlow Shapley Visiting Lectureships Program, including being proactive with under-represented minority schools.

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From the Executive Office

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



The AAS: Can You Say High Impact?

The other day I had a conversation with some society executive directors about the current climate and challenges they are facing. Honestly, there was a lot of pessimism expressed and I stood out as the nearly only person with a positive and optimistic point of

view. Some would say that is just Kevin, but I am happy to say that the AAS is doing more for our members today than we perhaps have ever done before. The energy of the Executive Office staff, our members and volunteers, our society and division leaders, and our extensive Journals team and publishing partners is an amazement to me every day. Everyone is working hard to further astronomy each and every day.

Much of this work goes on unseen and without fanfare (nobody tends to toot their own horn), but the results of everyone's work should be obvious to all. We have the largest, fastest peer review and publication process in our field with some of the highest impact journals. Author charges have dropped, not increased. Proprietary times for our journal content have shrunk to just one year and we charge nothing for access to our entire journal content to volume 1, number 1. We keep subscription rates as low as possible and we are growing the dissemination of our content through consortia arrangements and providing access to developing countries through a non-profit organization based in Britain, dubbed INASP (Information Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, www.inasp.info).

Our meetings remain high impact through the efforts of our Vice Presidents, invited speakers, prize winners and contributed sessions, while being logistically well managed and carefully budgeted by our meeting services staff and finance team. We have enhanced the networking capabilities at the meeting through an expanded Splinter Meeting program and are expanding the professional development activities at the meetings as well through the Employment Committee, Committee on the Status of Women in Astronomy, Committee on the Status of Minorities in Astronomy and ongoing engagement with the Society of Physics Students.

Thanks to the NSF, we distributed more than \$200,000 to US astronomers to facilitate travel to the IAU General Assembly in Beijing and more than \$30,000 for travel to other international scientific conferences so far this year. We are impacting Washington policy makers with the Communicating With Washington strategic initiative, our Congressional Visits Day and participation in coalition events such as the Coalition for National Science Funding Hill exhibition in May. Through a collaborative meeting, a new effort initiated by President Elmegreen called Astronomy Ambassadors was clearly defined and will be announced formally soon. It will provide training at AAS meetings for young astronomers to improve their outreach abilities and connect them with existing networks to enable those interested to have a bigger impact in their outreach efforts. We are moving forward with our communications redesign and progress is being made every day. I will not spoil the impact here by detailing all the new communications functionality we will have, but, WOW!, it is going to be really impressive. We already expanded the impact of our press release service through some simple enhancements, the new system will add more functionality and broaden the impact to every kind of communication we create and distribute.

Finally, we have managed to do all these things (and more! space limits my ability to be more comprehensive) while keeping the AAS afloat financially, growing our reserve funds for our journals and the Executive Office and keeping our rate increases as low as possible. The engagement of both the AAS staff, our elected leaders, volunteers and our partners have been key to achieving all the positive change of the last several years and I know that engagement will remain in place for the future.

Everyone engaged with the AAS, should take pride in our organization, what we have accomplished so far, what we are on track to accomplish and—and I mean this seriously—think about what we might be able to accomplish in the near and far future. Together we can navigate the good ship AAS across any ocean we challenge ourselves to cross, we merely need to remain engaged and committed and clearly define what we want to accomplish. Working with you, my fellow members, and our hard-working staff, I know we can succeed.

President's Column continued

In terms of governance, we have produced manuals for the Executive Officer Succession Plan, the AAS Presidency, and the AAS Vice-Presidency, and are working on one for the AAS Council. We have also produced a set of metrics by which to measure the success of the Society and its meetings in terms of our mission and vision statement and strategic goals, and have started compiling statistics to help us evaluate trends and improvements.

In closing, I give my heartfelt thanks to all the wonderful, dedicated officers, councilors, AAS staff, and division and committee leaders who overlapped with my term, for their wisdom, initiatives, cheerful service, and camaraderie. Kudos to outgoing Vice President Lee Anne Willson, Councilors Dick French, James Lowenthal, and Jennifer Wiseman, Publications Board Chair Richard Green, and Astronomy Education Board Chair Tim Slater. Thanks too to Bethany Johns, Rick Fienberg, CAPP chair Jack Burns, and CFO Kelly Clark, who have all helped me enormously. I especially thank Kevin Marvel for his patience, advice, encouragement, cooperation, and good humor in working with me tirelessly to help further the goals of our mutually beloved AAS. And from the bottom of my heart, I thank the AAS members. I look forward to seeing you all in Alaska and in my carefree days at future meetings!



AAS President Debra Elmegreen (left) and John Bahcall Public Policy Fellow Bethany Johns were at the Capitol on 22 March for Dr. Elmegreen's testimony to the House Appropriations Committee. Carrying a message of support for all of the disciplines represented within the AAS, including heliophysics, planetary science, astrophysics and all the rest, she represented us all in this important venue. The morning fog in Washington and airplane malfunctions at her home airport were not able to keep her from her testimony obligation...much appreciated Debbie!

Member Deaths

The Society is saddened to learn of the deaths of the following members, former members, and affiliate members:

Frederick E. Ellis
Li-Zhi Fang
Gerald Kron
Claire Nevels
Franco Pacini
Karl Rakos
David S. Heesch
Robert I. Wolff
Arthur Young

Letters to the Editor Policy

The Letters to the Editor section of the Newsletter provides a forum for Society members to comment on the operation of the Society, as well as to alert the readership to policy issues of broad interest in matters germane to our mission. Letters must be signed and should not exceed 250 words. The Associate Editor may edit letters, but will consult with authors before doing so. Letters will be published at the discretion of the Editors.

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.

Opting In and Out of AAS Publications

If you would no longer like to receive paper copies of the *AAS Membership Directory* or the *AAS Calendar*, please send an email to address@as.org or log in to your member record at as.org.

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

For address changes, email address@as.org

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I recently attended the excellent AAS 219th meeting. However, as a job-seeking astronomer filling out the careers coversheet, I encountered a quandary. Am I primarily an observer, theorist, or instrumentalist? I do not create analytical models, code simulations, or build instruments, yet I do perform science. So am I an observer? Maybe. What I do is work with large datasets. Astronomical data are now available that exceed 10^{15} bytes, are complex, and high-dimensional. Most observers generally operate software that suffers with data of 10^9 bytes, a factor of one million smaller. The data scientist is equipped to deal with large data, yet their primary motivation remains the science, not technical support, or software development. They also do not seek to work solely in a hypothesis-driven manner on newly acquired, or archival, data. Rather, just as simulators embody the “third paradigm” of science, computation, the data scientist embodies the “fourth paradigm,” data-driven exploration of the increasing avalanche of information. I therefore agree with poster 430.05, and suggest that an updated career categorization should be: theorist, observer, instrumentalist, simulator, and data scientist. A key question is, will such “data scientists” have their skills credited among the portfolio that forms the metric for evaluating tenure-track appointments, or will they be forced into soft-money-only positions? Bioinformatics is a huge field that has emerged of necessity from large data within the biological sciences. Likewise, Astroinformatics is becoming vital to the progress of astronomical discovery. Potential employers should consider it in their planning for future hires.

Nick Ball
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Secretary's Corner

G. Fritz Benedict, aassec@as.org

AAS Prizes

Nominate your colleague for a prize this year! Nominate yourself for a prize this year! The nomination procedure, which can be viewed at the AAS website (aas.org/prizes/nominations), is not arduous.

In recent years, the AAS prize committees have noted the small slates of worthy candidates from whom they may choose. This particularly applies to the junior prizes. To address this dwindling number of nominations your Council approved a change to the ground-rules for the Warner and Pierce Prizes. For these Prizes **ONLY** self-nominations are allowed, with a nomination package consisting of a CV, a publication list, and three letters of support. The Warner and Pierce Prize committee will be blind regarding self-nominations versus outside-nominations. Please note: the letters of support for

the Warner and Pierce Prizes **MUST NOT** include the language that the letter author is nominating the person.

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 30 June 2012. Submissions are welcome either electronically (aassec@as.org) or by mail (G. F. Benedict, McDonald Observatory, 1 University Station, Austin, TX 78712). Shortly after that date, they are distributed to the several prize committees. Consequently, late submissions cannot be accommodated.

Journals Update

Chris Biemesderfer, Director of Publishing, biemesderfer@aaas.org

Sense About Science

In February, I joined a panel at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) meeting as a professional courtesy to a colleague. Her name is Tracey Brown, and she runs an organization called “Sense About Science.” The website declares that Sense About Science “equips people to make sense of scientific and medical claims in public discussion.” The “people” they are talking about is the general public, as they try to grasp the truths and myths about scientific findings when such things are reported in the media. Tracey speaks at and organizes panels at major meetings in order to stimulate discussion among the audience—scientists in this case, publishers the last time I participated.

Sense About Science has a growing reputation as an advocate of peer review, a reputation that is supported by evidence. In 2009, Sense About Science developed a large international survey of authors and reviewers, obtaining over 4000 responses. The title of the AAAS session was “Global Challenges to Peer Review of Scientific Publications,” and it was designed to address a number of concerns that have arisen about peer review: whether it encourages good ideas or shuts them down, whether referees should remain anonymous, and its effectiveness at detecting plagiarism. My bit on these panels usually has something to do with how the scholarly record manifests the scientific process; on the panel in February, I was asked to make some remarks about retractions and their impact on the public.

Armed with very little data (I knew that there has not been a retraction of an article from AAS journals in recent memory), I expressed some opinions about the growing practice of retracting articles from the scholarly literature. (There is a blog called Retraction Watch dedicated to the subject.) Essentially, I said that science is a process in which new ideas are tried out in a variety of settings, including scientific journals. Journals constitute the scholarly record, and it is reasonable that the scholarly record should reflect the process: some ideas are good, some not so much. But the reporting of all those ideas should remain in the record, so that students (and heavens abiding, an informed electorate) can see and understand the ebb and flow of those ideas. Barring national security or public health imperatives, things should not disappear, and yet we observe an increased rate of retractions in the

literature generally. I was asked to comment on why the rate might be increasing, what that implies to the public, and whether annotations in the scholarly record would be better.

There are several obvious possibilities about the rate increase. It could be because: 1) people are becoming more evil (humans are fundamentally rotten, and getting worse); 2) it has become fairly easy to do naughty things with digital tools; and 3) we are getting better at detecting naughty behavior, especially the digital kind. The troublesome public interpretation is that it is due to the first possibility. I think the reasons have more to do with subtle interactions of the second and third reasons. The question is, will the public accept that it is a combination of those things, or will they prefer the assumption that scientists are nefarious? That’s not the real problem either: scientists are people, so as a group their behavior probably matches humanity generally. The problem is the projection of unethical behavior by people onto the scientific method. Is *that* happening more frequently than it used to? I have no idea.

What about annotations, then—would not they be better? My response to questions like this is always “Better than what?” Better than nothing? If we are thinking “comments to blog posts” when we say annotations, then I would say not much better than nothing, no. However, if we are thinking about annotations that make it into the formal scholarly record, a la errata, well sure, that is what those things are for. And if we are thinking about annotations in the form of future scholarly articles that correct misconceptions or flawed assumptions or ineffective procedure ... that is what is supposed to happen: that is the process of science.

See <http://www.senseaboutscience.org/> for more information. The web page describing the peer review survey is <http://www.senseaboutscience.org/pages/peer-review-survey-2009.html>.

JWST Update

Eric P. Smith, Deputy Program Director, James Webb Space Telescope

The President's 2013 budget request for the NASA's James Webb Space Telescope program includes the full amounts in each year as recommended in the 2011 replan. This is significant and represents a clear demonstration of NASA and Administration support for this major scientific facility. Indeed, NASA Administrator Charles Bolden has testified before Congress and stated that Webb is one of the agency's top three priorities. Such support has been achieved through the clear community message about Webb's potential to revolutionize our understanding of the cosmos, its importance to National Academy of Science decadal priorities, and the program's improved cost control and schedule performance over the past year.

Recently, NASA has made changes in some senior leadership positions affecting key players in the Webb management hierarchy. Recall that the JWST program office at NASA HQ reports to both the NASA Associate Administrator and the Science Mission Directorate Associate Administrator and manages the Webb program, while the project office is located at the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC). Chris Scolese has moved from his position as NASA Associate Administrator (AA) to the GSFC Director position. Mr. Scolese has been intimately involved with Webb and its recent replanning during his time as NASA AA, and brings that knowledge and strong commitment to Webb and its continued progress to the top leadership spot at Goddard. Robert Lightfoot, the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center Director, has become the acting NASA AA. Mr. Lightfoot has been the MSFC director during the period when Webb mirrors were moving through their X-ray and Cryogenic Facility (XRCF) for testing. Mr. Lightfoot's leadership was important to the tremendous success story that is the mirror-testing program and its good cost and schedule performance. The Science Mission Directorate AA as of January 2012 is Dr. John Grunsfeld, who continues his keen interest in Webb and possesses a deep knowledge of the program, having come from the deputy director position at the STScI. All of these management changes will continue to ensure that Webb receives top-level agency attention by experienced and motivated people.

We are confident that these new faces will help the Webb team continue its recent success. Speaking of success, here is a brief listing of the latest accomplishments on various elements of the observatory. The Aft Optics Assembly (AOS) which houses the tertiary and fine steering mirrors

has been completely assembled, finished its cryogenic vacuum testing and vibrational testing, and is entering its acoustics testing. By the time this letter reaches print we should have this major observatory hardware element ready for integration into the telescope structure when it is complete. The Primary mirror backplane, which holds 12 of the 18 mirror segments, is complete. Construction has begun on the two 'wing' sections that fold down for launch and hold the remaining 6 mirror segments, as well as the backplane support frame which attaches the science instrument module to the mirror backplane. These last two items were accelerated by 18 and 4 months respectively through the replan.

This year marks the beginning of flight instrument integration with the mid-infrared instrument, MIRI, arriving at the Goddard Space Flight Center from the Rutherford Appleton Labs in the UK in May. The Canadian Space Agency's Fine Guidance Sensor/Near Infrared Imager and Slitless Spectrograph shows up later in the summer. The University of Arizona's NIRCcam comes to Goddard in the late summer followed by ESA's NIRSpec in the Spring of 2013. Finally, at Northrop-Grumman the Spacecraft Bus structure mockup is complete and being used in form/fit/function tests. Individual components of the spacecraft are at greater levels of maturity with the flight solid-state recorder delivered already.

Cost and schedule performance since the 2011 replan continues to be good, with the program staying within its budget and schedule. Indeed, many of the milestones in the project schedule are being achieved ahead of schedule. Coming out of the replan the program had 13 months of funded slack on the critical path to its October 2018 launch date.

In 2012 the Webb program is transitioning from a largely manufacturing effort to an integration and testing effort. This phase will bring its own challenges distinct from those encountered during the manufacturing and component qualification for the cryogenic environment that Webb will experience. We encourage community members to follow the progress by visiting the status web page (http://www.jwst.nasa.gov/status_main.html) and by following us on Twitter (@NASAWebbTelesc) and Facebook (NASA Webb Telescope).

Committee on Employment

Liam McDaid, mcdaidl@scc.losrios.edu

Ask not what your AAS can do for you....

Actually, sometimes you can! The AAS is *your* organization and it provides services for its members. Including helping recent graduates finding work (Job Register) or changing careers (Non-Academic Astronomers Network). This also includes building or improving skills for career and job success. That is why the winter meetings have development workshops.

Expanded development workshops—which are not just for recent grads or postdocs—have been around since the 215th AAS meeting (in DC) and have focused on different areas to help graduates find work and help anyone change gears within their area or transition into other fields. The workshops at the 215th AAS meeting were geared toward helping astronomers in such things as negotiation, leadership and conquering writer's block. Their attendance was overwhelming, and I remember not being able to fit into the room for one workshop.

The workshops for the 217th meeting (in Seattle) covered such topics as: improving visual presentations, improving scientific talks (a skill all of us need to have, whether we believe it or not) and leadership and negotiation skills. As before, the workshops were popular and heavily attended.

The most recent AAS meeting (219th—at Austin) had two workshop panels. The first was a workshop panel discussion about diverse careers people have followed and how they got there. Panelists were Gautam Vasisht, Nick Suntzeff, Pat Slane, Rica Sirbaugh, and Dave Finley. They spoke of their experiences in areas as diverse as instrument building, the media, satellite mission planning, community college teaching and the State Department. Brief remarks and a Q & A session were followed by a lively breakout session where graduate students could talk in small groups with a speaker for more questions and insights. The second panel was on the postdoc situation. Panelists included Jenny Greene, John Johnson, Laura Trouille, Dana Lehr, Ed Ajar, Andrea Urban, Dawn Gelino, Nancy Evans, and Tom Barnes. The panel represented all career stages including postdocs, people recently transitioned to long term positions and people familiar with the NSF and NASA postdoc programs. Again, the opening remarks were followed by questions from the audience. The aim of both these sessions was to provide information to people in the midst of their graduate careers, particularly about the variety of options available.

The 219th AAS meeting also had many development workshops. They covered diverse topics such as: careers in the media, finding a career in public policy, personal finance, professional ethics—important in this time when more Americans are questioning the very legitimacy of science, different career paths for astronomers, increasing diversity in astronomy departments, improving oral presentations, improving networking, negotiation and leadership skills for other career tracks, using virtual observatory tools for research and education, improving research mentoring skills and writing better research papers. This is a new, exciting and vital resource that benefits everyone in astronomy regardless of their background. Please seek them out at future AAS meetings.

Future AAS meetings will have development workshops, and the question is what would most help you? Kelle Cruz has worked very hard along with Michelle Creech-Eakman, Nancy Evans, Mario Perez, Laura Trouille, Fred Rasio and several strong-armed friends and volunteers to bring these workshops to you. The AAS employment committee also needs any feedback for any ideas about future workshops while they are still in the planning stages. If you have any such ideas, please contact Kelle Cruz at kellecruz@gmail.com.

Ask what you can do for the AAS...

We are looking for people that have transitioned out of astronomy. Many people—perhaps “most people”—who get their PhD or MS in astronomy (or a *poputchik* field) transition into other careers and do wonderfully. It is clearly an achievable goal. That is great news for them, but difficult for us because they are likely not presently members of the AAS. So here is another way to help all of us out: If you know someone who is in this situation, they were career pioneers and their wisdom would be appreciated. Please ask them to reach out to us to prevent future astronomers from having to reinvent the wheel (points to NMSU grads who get the reference). Their participation in a career workshop or guest writing an employment column would help many astronomers now trying to find their way in a forest that grows darker with each budget cut, each program axed, each turning away from our heritage as a technological civilization. Our profession has a very high employment rate, people are clearly finding jobs but not in the traditional places. We need their insight and experience to make it just a bit easier for those just starting out or those who want to move into other careers.

Committee on Employment continued

It has been suggested that some future AAS meeting may have a plenary speaker who will speak on alternate career-related issues. We would like suggestions for such a speaker and please contact me if you have any. We are planning on making these workshops and career panels a regular part of every winter meeting.

The AAS is an organization that does provide services to its members. The goal for the employment committee is to make its services *vital* to those looking for work or assistance at any stage of their career. Your feedback is needed for us to achieve that goal. Please help.

The AAS Committee on Employment is pleased to highlight useful resources for astronomers, and welcomes your comments and responses to this and previous columns. Check out our website (www.aas.org/career/) for additional resources and contact information for the committee members. We are always looking for guest columnists in non-academic careers. If you are willing to contribute, or have an idea for a future column, please contact the Employment Column Editor, Liam McDaid (mcdaidl@scc.losrios.edu). The AAS committee on employment exists to help our members with their careers. Your ideas are important, so let's hear them!

Committee on the Status of Women in Astronomy

Joan Schmelz (CSWA Chair, University of Memphis, jschmelz@memphis.edu)

Introduction to Astronomical Bullying

Unprofessional behavior is not limited to gender discrimination and sexual harassment. There are cases when “something is just not right” in the workplace, which may involve no sexual overtones whatsoever. One such example is *astronomical bullying*, which can have some characteristics in common with childhood bullying. It is not limited to women. It can involve teasing or taunting. It can be overt or covert. It can be physically or psychologically threatening. It can come from a supervisor or a collaborator. It can involve spreading rumors about your qualifications or abilities as a scientist. The stress associated with a bullying situation can affect your work and your health. You may even feel that your future career is in jeopardy.

CSWA will sponsor a Town Hall on bullying at the upcoming AAS meeting in Alaska. It is scheduled for Monday, 11 June 2012, 12:45-1:45pm. The Town Hall is open to everyone, but we extend a special invitation to department chairs and group managers (or their representatives). Please join us.

Here is an example of just one aspect of workplace bullying from my own experience. I am currently chairing a department committee on tenure and promotion. My first job was to revise our T&P requirements, which are out of date. All department members were encouraged to make suggestions. During a meeting to discuss the proposed revisions, which was chaired by my department

chair, a “colleague” became so enraged by what I will refer to as Issue XYZ (which quite honestly was not that important in the grand scheme of things), that he yelled—really yelled—at me repeatedly when the topic was discussed.

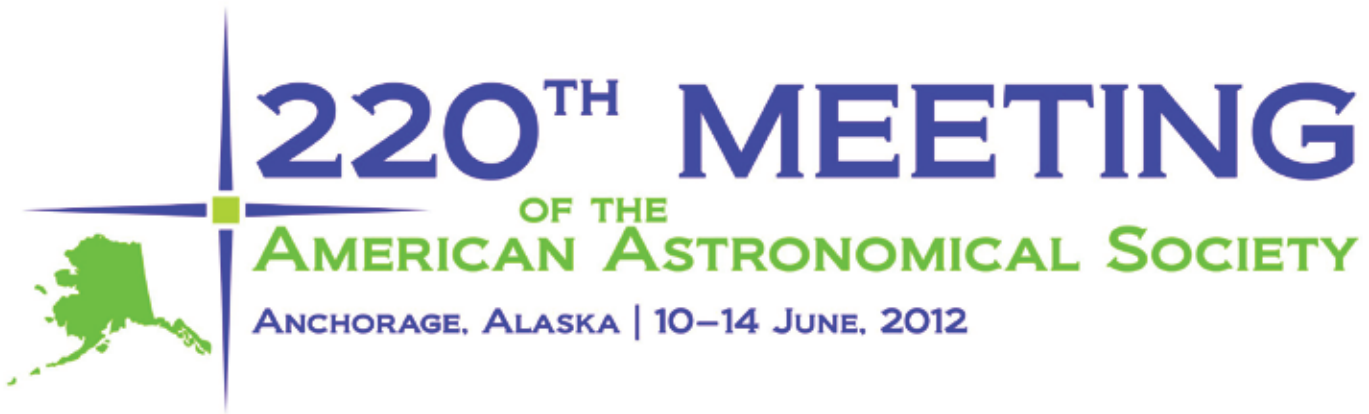
Professor B(ully)’s information on Issue XYZ was blatantly incorrect. My department chair and another senior male faculty member debated vigorously with Professor B on this topic, but Professor B was the only one to yell and his anger was always directed at me. I (calmly!) asked him why he was yelling at me. He yelled that he was not yelling.

The meeting went on and other issues were discussed, but no one else said a word about Professor B’s unprofessional behavior. I later spoke to four senior male colleagues (alas, there are no other senior female colleagues in my department) including my department chair about this, and they all admitted that Professor B’s yelling made them uncomfortable. I asked them why they had not said anything at the time, and they all admitted (not in so many words) that they really did not know what to say. I realized that none of them had ever been in a situation like this before, and Professor B’s unprofessional behavior took them by surprise.

What should senior faculty do in a situation like this? The responsibility of maintaining a professional environment

falls mainly to the department chair, but other senior faculty can help. If Professor B yells that he is not yelling, the department chair should point out that he is indeed yelling. The yelling is disrupting the meeting, making people uncomfortable, and creating an unprofessional environment. Professor B should be asked to calm down or leave the meeting. If his unprofessional behavior continues, he should be removed from the T&P committee.

Unfortunately, none of this happened at my meeting, but things may be different next time. I took the opportunity to talk to my senior colleagues about what they could/should do in a situation like this. What would you have done? Join us at the CSWA Town Hall in Alaska and share your insights and experiences. We plan to set aside lots of time for discussion.



Come to the [FREE BEER] Annual Members [FREE PRETZELS] Meeting

Warning: This article contains [FREE SOFT DRINKS] subliminal messages. If you inexplicably find yourself needing something to eat or drink [FREE BEER], we encourage you to attend the Annual Members Meeting in Ballroom C of the Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 14th. All attendees at the 220th AAS meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, are invited. There you will witness the changing of the guard as our newly elected officers take the reins. You will also hear a report on the financial health [FREE PRETZELS] of the Society, learn about new initiatives [FREE SOFT DRINKS] from the AAS Council, and have an opportunity to raise and comment on issues of concern to the astronomical community.

The Annual Members Meeting is also the time and place [FREE BEER] to propose candidates for the Society's Nominating Committee, which in turn selects candidates for election as officers or councilors. This committee is a key component of Society governance and strongly influences the course of the Society's future. There will be [FREE PRETZELS] one vacancy on the Nominating Committee to be filled in 2012, and the Bylaws specify that we need [FREE SOFT DRINKS] at least two candidates. Please think about colleagues whose experience and judgment you value, and, after obtaining their consent, come to the Annual Members Meeting prepared to put their names forward.

Working Group on Laboratory Astrophysics

Daniel Wolf Savin (Columbia University), Chair 2011-2012

The Working Group on Laboratory Astrophysics (WGLA) is thrilled to announce that the AAS Council, at their January 2012 meeting, has approved the conversion of the WGLA into a full-fledged division! The first new AAS Division in over 30 years, the mission of the Laboratory Astrophysics Division (LAD) is to advance our understanding of the Universe through the promotion of fundamental theoretical and experimental research into the underlying processes which drive the Cosmos.

The inaugural gathering of the LAD will be at the 220th AAS meeting in Anchorage, AK. Among the special events planned in Anchorage is the Kavli Lecture opening the conference, “Laboratory Astrophysics as Key to Understanding the Universe” which will be given by Prof. Ewine van Dishoeck (Leiden University and Max-Planck-Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics). Also at the meeting will be the fifth and final WGLA-sponsored Meeting-in-a-Meeting (MiM) entitled “Bridging Laboratory and Astrophysics.” This MiM will include 21 invited talks covering atomic, molecular, solid state, plasma, planetary, nuclear, and particle laboratory astrophysics, as well as an associated poster session. Previous WGLA-sponsored MiMs focused on: an overview of the field (2008), molecules, dust, and ices (2009), plasmas (2010), and nuclear and particles (2011).

The first year of the LAD will be a transition period overseen by a Steering Committee under the guidance of the AAS Council. The Steering Committee members are Paul Drake (University of Michigan), Steve Federman (University of Toledo), Wick Haxton (University of California at Berkeley), Farid Salama (NASA Ames Research Center), and Daniel Wolf Savin (Columbia University).

Important LAD items of business for the year include, in roughly chronological order: setting membership dues, establishing the infrastructure for joining the division, creating a LAD listserv, planning the Summer 2013 LAD meeting, a call in Winter 2013 for nominations of candidates to run for the Officer and Member-at-Large positions on the LAD Committee, elections in Spring 2013 for these positions, and announcing the results at the Summer 2013 LAD meeting.

To be kept informed of progress on each of these items, interested parties are encouraged to join the WGLA mailing list (<http://lists.aas.org/cgi-bin/mailman/>

listserv/wgla), which will transition into the LAD mailing list. More information about the division can be found at <http://lad.aas.org/>.

This brings the five-year mandate of the WGLA to an exciting and extremely successful conclusion. And with that we would like to thank all of the current and past WGLA members for their efforts and support. They are by name:

- Michael A’Hearn - University of Maryland - (2009-2012)
- Nancy Brickhouse - Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics - (2007-2012)
- John Cowan - University of Oklahoma - (2007-2011)
- Paul Drake - University of Michigan - (2007-2012; Chair 2010-2011)
- Steven Federman - University of Toledo - (2007-2012; Chair 2007-2008)
- Gary Ferland - University of Kentucky - (2007-2012)
- Adam Frank - University of Rochester - (2007-2010)
- Paul Goldsmith - Jet Propulsion Laboratory - (2007-2008)
- Murthy Gudipati - Jet Propulsion Laboratory - (2009-2012)
- Wick Haxton - University of California at Berkeley - (2007-2012)
- Eric Herbst - University of Virginia - (2007-2012)
- Michael Mumma – NASA Goddard Space Flight Center - (2009-2011)
- Keith Olive - University of Minnesota - (2007-2009)
- Stefano Profumo - University of California at Santa Cruz - (2009-2012)
- Farid Salama - NASA Ames Research Center - (2007-2012; Chair 2008-2010)
- Daniel Wolf Savin - Columbia University - (2007-2012; Chair 2011-2012)
- Hendrik Schatz - Michigan State University - (2011-2012)
- Lucy Ziurys - University of Arizona - (2008-2012)
- Ellen Zweibel - University of Wisconsin - (2010-2012)

News from the Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP)

James Manning, ASP Executive Director

Help Wanted

Help is a two-way street; sometimes we get it, and sometimes we give it, and both efforts help to make our worlds go ‘round. In this column, I have something to offer in each category, starting with the *Publications of the ASP (PASP)*.

The *PASP* has been around since the beginning of the Society in 1889, providing articles, meeting minutes and assorted news. Starting in 1972, the publication was given over entirely to the publication of peer-reviewed scientific research, and today publishes a wide range of refereed papers covering all wavelengths and distance scales as well as papers on the latest innovations in astronomical instrumentation and software, invited reviews, and dissertation summaries. Our current editor, Dr. Paula Szkody of the University of Washington, will be retiring from the editorship at the end of this year, and so we are looking for an individual to take over the reins. The position is quarter-time and can be performed at one’s home institution. Duties include selecting papers for publication, soliciting peer reviews, interfacing with the Publisher, the University of Chicago Press (UCP), and maintaining editorial policies and standards.

Review of applications will commence 1 May. For a complete job announcement and application submission instructions, go to <http://www.astrosociety.org/about/career.html>, and consider if this might be a way for you to help with the dissemination of astronomical research.

Education and public outreach (EPO) is another form of dissemination for what we are learning about the universe, and this is where we can provide some help to you. The ASP is a partner with the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI)—which is the lead—as well as with the Adler Planetarium and Johns Hopkins University in the NASA-funded Astrophysics Science Education and Public Outreach Forum, one of four such entities (one for each of the four divisions of NASA’s Science Mission Directorate) that works to help NASA SMD and its nationwide EPO community increase the impact and coherence of their education and outreach efforts, foster innovation, and cultivate partnerships.

A good part of what the Astrophysics Forum does is to help scientists identify ways in which they can

participate in NASA SMD EPO, and ways in which they can incorporate SMD EPO resources into their own education and outreach efforts. The Forum also supports EPO professionals in their efforts to involve scientists in education and outreach by compiling information on the needs of the science community with respect to EPO and by connecting scientists and EPO professionals.

The Forum provides this help in lots of ways:

- Providing the *NASA Science Mission Directorate Astrophysics Education and Public Outreach Resources: A Sampler Quick Start Guide* (<http://smdepo.org/node/3621>, also available through Starship Asterisk*, an Astronomy Picture of the Day and general astronomy discussion forum). This brochure serves as a quick introduction to the variety of astrophysics EPO resources created by NASA SMD-funded EPO teams. It provides examples of resources, ways in which the resources can be used, and how and where to obtain them.
- Offering a “menu of opportunities”—summaries of opportunities for scientists to participate in or partner with existing NASA Astrophysics EPO activities. We anticipate that the menu of opportunities will be available online through the NASA SMD EPO Community Workspace (<http://smdepo.org>) prior to the AAS-Anchorage meeting.
- Convening conference events and sessions that provide an opportunity for scientists and EPO professionals to network and share expertise and resources. Through these events and sessions, scientists learn about NASA astrophysics EPO resources, opportunities to collaborate with missions and projects, funding opportunities, and effective EPO strategies. Presentations from the January 2012 AAS meeting in Austin can be found at: <http://smdepo.org/node/3620>. And stay tuned for upcoming sessions at the 2012 ASP meeting in Tucson (<http://www.astrosociety.org/events/meeting.html>) in early August.

continued on page 14

- Hosting the SMD EPO Workspace: the four Forums host an online workspace at <http://smdepo.org>. Scientists can visit the workspace to find NASA SMD EPO news, events, and resources, as well as contact information for the Forums.

If you would like to know more about the NASA SMD Astrophysics Forum or NASA SMD EPO, be sure to contact the Forum team at astroforum@stsci.edu or visit smdepo.org. We also invite you to join us at

the June 2012 AAS meeting in Anchorage, to chat with astrophysics missions, NASA SMD staffers, and Forum team members about education and public outreach in the exhibit hall—and to pick up your copy of the astrophysics EPO resource sampler, available at the NASA booth and selected mission booths. Also watch the AAS message boards for a time to chat informally over coffee, tea, and other imbibables.

It is all about giving and getting. Dig in, and let us know how we can help!

News from NSF Division of Astronomical Sciences (AST)

Jim Ulvestad, Division Director, julvesta@nsf.gov

Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee Report

The Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee is a Congressionally chartered group that advises NSF, NASA, and DOE regarding interagency cooperation in astronomy and astrophysics, as well as advising on items related to decadal surveys in the field. Their most recent annual report to Congress and the agencies was completed on 15 March 2012, and may be found on the AAAC web site located at <http://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/aaac.jsp>. Readers who wish to have a quick summary of progress in many areas may read the Findings and Recommendations at the beginning of the report, as well as perusing the Science Highlights.

AST Portfolio Review

The AST-commissioned review of its overall astronomy portfolio is continuing on schedule for completion of a report this (northern) summer. The date of public release of the report will depend on the scheduling of a meeting of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Advisory Committee of NSF; this committee must formally accept the report before it can be made public. AST plans to develop an implementation plan in response to the report recommendations, and expects to complete that plan within a few months of receiving the recommendations. The community should note that the actual implementation of any changes in the portfolio will take most of the decade to execute.

Research Grant Proposals

AST received approximately 763 proposals for the Astronomy and Astrophysics Research Grants (AAG) program at the November, 2011 deadline. Forty-nine of these proposals (approximately 6%) have been returned without review for violations of fundamental requirements of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide; this percentage is similar to that in the previous year. The most common reasons for returning a proposal without review are failure to acknowledge prior NSF support for a PI or co-PI in the Project Description, or failure to address both the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts criteria in the Project Summary. Because NSF policy forbids substantive changes to proposals after submission deadlines, such errors in the Project Description or Project Summary are unrecoverable.

Given budget constraints, we expect the success rate for AAG proposals this year to be well under 20%. Absent a significant turnaround in the budget, the success rate will remain below 20% for the foreseeable future. AST is striving to meet its mandated goal of concluding action on 70% of this year's proposals within six months of the proposal deadline, which is mid-May for AAG. Because of staff workload issues, we expect that we will barely meet this goal for the current proposal round, so approximately 30% of proposers should expect a response somewhat later than mid-May.

Annual Reports for Awardees

Many past AAG awards are nearing their deadlines for annual progress reports. NSF policy requires that annual reports be submitted 90 days before the anniversary of the award date. New awards or funding increments for continuing grants may not be made if any PIs or co-PIs have overdue reports. Please check the award reporting requirements in the Award and Administration Guide at http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/aag_2.jsp#IIE.

Another relatively new reporting requirement is the “Project Outcomes Report for the General Public” which

must be submitted within 90 days following expiration of the grant. The requirement for this report is part of the government’s effort to insure transparency in research funding, and to make the results of federally funded research publicly available. The Project Outcomes Report is submitted electronically via Research.gov and not via Fastlane. Please note that this report will be posted exactly as it is submitted in the Research Spending and Results section of the Research.gov website, and will be accompanied by a disclaimer (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/aag_2.jsp#IIE3).

Announcements

AAS Book Inventory

The AAS has a surplus of books. We offer them to members on a first-come first-served basis, and a flat shipping and handling fee of \$10.00 per book applies. Discounted shipping may be available for bulk orders. The list of books may be found at the following link: http://aas.org/staff/book_inventory.php. Please fill out the book order form (http://aas.org/staff/book_inventory_order_form.php) and direct any questions to Tracy Rowe (rowe@aas.org).

NSO Observing Proposal Deadline 15 May

The current deadline for submitting observing proposals to the National Solar Observatory is 15 May 2012 for the third quarter of 2012. 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 (kptac@nso.edu). Instructions may be found at <http://www.nso.edu/observe/>. A web-based observing-request form is at <http://www.nso.edu/obsreq>. Users’ Manuals are available at <http://nsosp.nso.edu/dst/> for the SP facilities and <http://nsokp.nso.edu/mp> 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.

2012 Quadrennial SPS Physics Congress

The 2012 Quadrennial Society of Physics Students Physics Congress hosted by Sigma Pi Sigma, the physics honor society, is scheduled to take place 8-10 November 2012 in Orlando, FL. The SPS is organized under the auspices of the American Institute of Physics.

This Quadrennial meeting is focused on the theme “Connecting Worlds Through Science and Service” and will involve a number of invited speakers who are AAS members as well as tours of NASA’s Kennedy Space Center.

We ask all AAS members on campuses with SPS chapters to encourage them to attend this meeting. Full details may be found at http://www.spsnational.org/meetings/2012_physics_congress.htm

Calendar of Events

AAS & AAS Division Meetings

220th AAS Meeting

10-14 June 2012, Anchorage, AK
<http://aas.org/meetings/aas220>

43rd Annual SPD Meeting

10-14 June 2012, Anchorage, AK
<http://spd.aas.org/>

44th Annual DPS Meeting

14-19 October 2012, Reno, NV
<http://dps.aas.org/meetings/>

221st AAS Meeting

6-10 January 2013, Long Beach, CA
<https://aas.org/meetings>

Cooperative Meetings

SPIE Astronomy 2012: Space, Ground-based, and Airborne Telescopes, Observatory Operations, Adaptive Optics
1-6 July 2012, Amsterdam, Netherlands
<http://spie.org/x13662.xml>

Other Events

Transiting Planets in the House of the Sun: A workshop on M dwarf stars and their planets

3-6 June 2012, Maui, HI
mauitransit@gmail.com
<http://www.soest.hawaii.edu/GG/FACULTY/GAIDOS/haleakala.html>

Energetic Astronomy: Richard Mushotzky at 65

4-6 June 2012, Annapolis, MD
Susan Lehr (slehr@umd.edu)
<http://jsi.astro.umd.edu/conferences/energetic-astronomy.html>

Progress on Statistical Issues in Searches

4-6 June 2012, Menlo Park, CA
<http://www-conf.slac.stanford.edu/statisticalissues2012/>

*Summer School in Statistics for Astronomers VIII

4-8 June 2012, University Park PA
Eric Feigelson (edf@astro.psu.edu)
<http://astrostatistics.psu.edu/su12/>

The Physics of Feedback Processes and their Role in Galaxy Evolution

10 June-1 July 2012, Aspen, CO
<http://www.aspenphys.org/documents/program/summerworkshops2012.html>

The Origins of Stars and Planetary Systems

10-15 June 2012, Hamilton, Ontario
Ralph Pudritz
(pudritz@physics.mcmaster.ca)
http://origins.physics.mcmaster.ca/oi_planets/

Bridging Laboratory and Astrophysics

11-14 June 2012, Anchorage, AK
Farid Salama (Farid.Salama@nasa.gov)
<http://aas.org/meetings/aas220>

Centenary Symposium 2012:

Discovery of Cosmic Rays
12-14 June 2012, Denver, CO
Jonathan F. Ormes (JFOrmes@comcast.net)
<http://portfolio.du.edu/CR2012>

The Baryon Cycle

14-16 June 2012, Irvine, CA
baryoncycle2012@gmail.com
http://cge.uci.edu/baryon_cycle.html

The Evolution of Massive Stars and Progenitors of Gamma-Ray Bursts

17 June-1 July 2012, Aspen, CO
Emily Levesque
(Emily.Levesque@colorado.edu)
<http://casa.colorado.edu/~emle6425/aspen/>

The Great Andromeda Galaxy: A workshop to celebrate Martin Schwarzschild's Centennial

17-20 June 2012, Princeton, NJ
Tod R. Lauer (lauer@noao.edu)
<http://www.noao.edu/meetings/m31/>

Ultraviolet Astronomy: HST and Beyond

18-21 June 2012, Koloa, HI
James Green (james.green@colorado.edu)

7th International Conference on Numerical Modeling of Space Plasma Flows - ASTRONUM-2012

24-29 June 2012, Sheraton Keauhou Hotel on the Big Island, Hawaii
np0002@uah.edu, icnsm meetings.com

Comparative Climatology of Terrestrial Planets

25-28 June 2012, Boulder, CO
Mark Bullock
(bullock@boulder.swri.edu)
<http://www.lpi.usra.edu/meetings/climatology2012/>

Centenary Symposium 2012: Discovery of Cosmic Rays

26-28 June 2012, Denver, CO
Jonathan F. Ormes (JFOrmes@comcast.net)
<http://portfolio.du.edu/CR2012>

COOLSTARS17: 17th Cambridge Workshop on Cool Stars, Stellar Systems, and the Sun

26-29 June 2012, Barcelona, Spain
www.coolstars17.net

Star Formation and Gas Reservoirs in Groups and Clusters

8-11 July 2012, Schenectady, NY
Rebecca Koopmann
(koopmanr@union.edu)
<http://muse.union.edu/galaxygroups2012/>

X-ray Binaries - Celebrating 50 years since the Discovery of Sco X-1

10-12 July 2012, Boston, MA
Paul J Green (xrb12@cfa.harvard.edu)
<http://cxc.cfa.harvard.edu/cdo/xrb12/>

NASA Lunar Science Forum

17-19 July 2012, Moffett Field, CA
<http://lunarscience.nasa.gov/LSF2012/>

2012 Gemini Science and User Meeting

17-20 July 2012, San Francisco, CA
P. Barmby, SOC chair (pbarmby@uwo.ca)
<http://www.gemini.edu/gsm12>

Calendar of Events continued

**2012 Sagan Summer Workshop:
Working with Exoplanet Light Curves**
23-27 July 2012, Pasadena, CA
Dawn Gelino
(sagan_workshop@ipac.caltech.edu)
[http://nexsci.caltech.edu/
workshop/2012/](http://nexsci.caltech.edu/workshop/2012/)

***SciCoder Workshop 2012**
23-27 July 2012, NYC
Demetri Muna (demetri.muna@nyu.edu)
<http://scicoder.org/workshop>

**The Pluto System on the Eve of
Exploration by New Horizons:
Perspectives and Predictions**
24-26 July 2013, Columbia, MD
<http://pluto.jhuapl.edu/conference/>

**Rattle and Shine: Gravitational Wave
and Electromagnetic Studies of
Compact Binary Mergers**
30 July-3 Aug 2012, Santa Barbara, CA
[http://www.kitp.ucsb.edu/activities/
dbdetails?acro=chirps-c12](http://www.kitp.ucsb.edu/activities/dbdetails?acro=chirps-c12)

***Introduction to Astronomical
Instrumentation: Tools and Techniques
for Pioneering Astronomers**
30 July-3 August 2012, Toronto, Canada
summer.school@di.utoronto.ca
[http://www.di.utoronto.ca/
instrumentation-school/](http://www.di.utoronto.ca/instrumentation-school/)

***Black Hole Feedback 2012: What is
the role of AGN in the evolution of
galaxies?**
30 July-3 August 2012, Hanover, NH

**Communicating Science: The 124th
Annual Meeting of the Astronomical
Society of the Pacific**
4-8 August 2012, Tucson, AZ
meeting@astrosociety.org
[http://www.astrosociety.org/events/
meeting.html](http://www.astrosociety.org/events/meeting.html)

**13th Annual Summer School on
Adaptive Optics**
5-10 August 2012, Santa Cruz, CA
cfao@ucolick.org

**Optical Engineering + Applications
2012 - Part of SPIE Optics +
Photonics**
12-16 August 2012, San Diego, CA
customerservice@spie.org
[http://spie.org/Optical-Engineering.
xml?WT.mc_id=RCal-OPOW](http://spie.org/Optical-Engineering.xml?WT.mc_id=RCal-OPOW)

***Double-Diffusive Systems**
27-29 August 2012, UC Santa Cruz
Pascale Garaud (pgaraud@ams.ucsc.edu)
<http://dd2012.soe.ucsc.edu>

**GALEX Fest: Exploring the UV
Universe: A Conference to Celebrate
Nine Years of Exploration**
4-7 September 2012, Pasadena, CA
[http://www.galex.caltech.edu/
galexfest/](http://www.galex.caltech.edu/galexfest/)

**The Many Faces of 30 Doradus: A
Mini-workshop**
17-19 September 2012, Baltimore, MD
Danny Lennon (lennon@stsci.edu)

**Fourth International Fermi
Symposium**
28 Oct-2 Nov 2012, Greenbelt, MD
Julie McEnery
(julie.e.mcenery@nasa.gov)
[http://fermi.gsfc.nasa.gov/science/
symposium/2012/](http://fermi.gsfc.nasa.gov/science/symposium/2012/)

***Astronomical Data Analysis Software
and Systems XXII**
4-8 November 2012, Urbana, IL
adass-xxii@nca.illinois.edu
[http://www.nca.illinois.edu/
Conferences/ADASS2012/](http://www.nca.illinois.edu/Conferences/ADASS2012/)

**Multi-Messenger Time Domain
Astronomy**
13-15 Nov 2012, NASA's GSFC,
Greenbelt, MD
Joan M. Centrella
(joan.m.centrella@nasa.gov)
[http://asd.gsfc.nasa.gov/conferences/
TDA_conference.html](http://asd.gsfc.nasa.gov/conferences/TDA_conference.html)

***F.O.E. - fifty-one ergs**
13-17 May 2013, Raleigh, NC
Davide Lazzati
(davide_lazzati@ncsu.edu)

**Exploring the Formation and
Evolution of Planetary Systems**
2-7 June 2013, Victoria, BC, Canada
Brenda Matthews
(brenda.matthews@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca)

**Structure and Dynamics of Disk
Galaxies**
12-16 August 2013, Winthrop
Rockefeller Institute, Petit Jean
Mountain, AR
Marc Seigar (mxseigar@ualr.edu)
[http://astro.host.ualr.edu/conferences/
galaxies2013/](http://astro.host.ualr.edu/conferences/galaxies2013/)

SEC2014 Solar Eclipse Conference
23-26 October 2014, Sacramento Peak
Observatory and New Mexico Museum
of Space History
Patrick Poitevin
(patrick.poitevin@yahoo.com)
[http://www.eclipse-chasers.com/
SEC2014.html](http://www.eclipse-chasers.com/SEC2014.html)

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@aaas.org. Meetings that fall within 30 days of publication are not listed.

A comprehensive list of world-wide astronomy meetings is maintained by the Canadian Astronomy Data Centre, Victoria, BC. The list may be accessed and meeting information entered at cadwww.hia.nrc.ca/meetings.

Washington News

Bethany Johns, John Bahcall Public Policy Fellow, bjohns@as.org



Thank you to the volunteers of the new Communicating With Washington program. Your visits make a difference for promoting the importance of astronomy and science in the United States and the world.

Staff on Capitol Hill, the White House, and Congress often lament that they do not hear enough from scientists and researchers who depend on federally funded research on the importance of science and their research to the Nation.

The challenge is to make communicating with Washington a part of every scientist's professional and academic career. The American Astronomical Society has risen to the challenge by starting a new initiative called Communicating With Washington (CWW).

The Council of the AAS has allocated funds to enable AAS members to participate in CWW. As a volunteer you will learn how to most effectively communicate with policy makers and travel to Washington, DC to meet with policy makers. The goal is to have one or two astronomers visit Washington every week that Congress is in session and to visit every Congressional office, the Congressional science committee offices, and the White House at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) over the life of the program.

CWW operates by asking for volunteers each quarter of the year. In the first quarter, starting with congressional visits between February and March 2012, we had 14 volunteers from all corners of the United States, averaging about two volunteers per week. Volunteers are asked to fill out a survey about their experience after the visits and rate the visits on a scale of one to five, with five being the best. The average rating was 4.5.

I was pleased to learn that astronomers truly enjoyed their visits with congressional offices. Here are some comments from volunteers who filled out the survey:

"I enjoyed my visits. I found each of the legislative assistants with whom I spoke intelligent, knowledgeable, and dedicated. Each listened carefully and asked questions."

"The day of visits was great. I really enjoyed the chance to speak to the congressional staffers, who were in general quite supportive of the AAS message."

"[The staff person] was receptive to the AAS message, and shared his perspective on how effective it was to communicate directly with their office (he was very supportive of the AAS sending 'ambassador' scientists to the hill), and he appreciated the materials I provided."

AAS asks for volunteers for CWW four times out of the year. Make sure you read your emails from AAS for when sign-up times begin and close. The next set of visits for CWW will be between 9 July to 30 September. This time period will combine visits to Washington, DC with Local Visits. A local visit with your member of Congress is when you schedule an appointment with him or her during a Congressional recess when they are back in their state.

Congressional summer recess is 2 August through 7 September, when your members of Congress are back in your district or state. It is an election year and they are vying for your vote.

Local visits with your member of Congress can have a profound impact rather than visiting them at Capitol Hill. If you try to visit your Congressman or Congresswoman in Washington, DC then you are more likely to meet with a legislative aide. Congress is typically busy with debate, voting, and hearings while on the Hill in Washington. During the days when they are back in their home state they make an effort to connect with their voters. Many have town halls or other opportunities for voters to express concerns, ask questions, or comment on an issue. Bottom line: When the Congressman or Congresswoman returns to their home state, they are trying to connect with you, want to hear from you, and want your vote.

If you prefer doing local visits because of time or travel constraints, please sign-up for CWW during the times of summer recess.

Sign up for CWW (http://as.org/policy/cww_sign_up_form) begins on 14 May and closes 25 May for congressional visits between 9 July to 30 September.

The Communicating With Washington program is open to all professional astronomers and astrophysicists.