

Precision Measurements and Fundamental Constants Group

Newsletter No. 31, May, 2007

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The Executive Committee Meeting and the Business Meeting of the GPMFC were held on Sunday, April 15, at the April Meeting of the American Physical Society in Jacksonville, FL, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Group members attending the meeting, who were Invited Speakers or election candidates, were also invited to the Executive Committee lunch.

2007 Election Results

Election winners were David Demille, Chair-Elect; John Gillaspay, Vice-Chair; Paul Vetter, Secretary-Treasurer; and Susan Gardner and Michael Romalis, Members-at-Large.

The election was web-based for the first time. 160 of 435 eligible voters of our Group participated, with 5 members voting by paper ballot. The 36.8 % voting rate is well above participation rates for the last several years. As usual, nearly all of the races were closely contested. We thank all of the candidates for agreeing to participate, and also thank Kurt Gibble who Chaired the Nominating Committee, Paul Huffman, Member, and Kate Kirby, APS Councilor for their prompt work and the excellent field of candidates.

2007 APS Fellow

Congratulations to Zheng-Tian Lu, our 2007 APS Fellowship nominee, who received his Certificate and pin at the GPMFC Business Meeting. Thanks to Siu Au Lee for assuming leadership of the Fellowship Committee, after the resignation of Steve Lamoreaux. John Gillaspay is ex officio Chair of the Fellowship Committee for 2008. Please consider nominations of our Group members that you know to Fellowship next year. We have deserving members, who are not yet Fellows.

Minutes of the Business Meeting

Committee Reports:

Program Committee: Siu Au Lee was Chair, with Harvey Gould as Member. Siu Au chaired our Prize and Fellowship Session C8 on Saturday, where the speakers were Frances M. Pipkin Award winner David Demille, Broida Prize winner James Bergquist, and Fellowship recipient Zheng-Tian Lu. Harvey chaired our Session H5 Precision Experiments and Tests of Fundamental Laws, where the Invited Speakers were David Reitze, Karl van Bibber, and Blayne Heckel.

Eric Hessels will Chair the Program Committee for 2008, with Eric Burt and Blayne Heckle as members. DAMOP solicits input for the kinds of session to organize, but GPMFC does not provide direct input on the speakers at present. It was proposed that

better formal coordination with DAMOP be attempted on session input and speakers representing GPMFC. This year joint member Tim Gay volunteered to organize the 2007 DAMOP session C1 with four invited speakers on Cold Molecules jointly with our Group – thanks in advance to Tim. Eric Burt volunteered to organize an atomic clock session at DAMOP in 2008. There are one or two Invited Sessions at the April Meeting each year, depending on the amount of participation by our Group, which meets alternate years at the DAMOP Meeting.

Nominating Committee: Kurt Gibble will chair the Nominating Committee again in 2008. It is noted that the web-based elections require somewhat earlier input from this committee, since the process is extended. Kurt was successful in meeting the deadlines in 2007, despite the unexpected competition for Chair-Elect.

Fellowship Committee: Siu Au had not received up-to-date information on the present nominations from Alan Chodos of APS at the time of the Meeting. It was suggested that the Deadline for nominations be extended to May 15. GPMFC has up to two possible nominations per year, and can initiate nominations. John Gillaspay chairs this committee in 2008, and Eric Burt is a member.

Pipkin Award Committee: This committee was chaired by Alex Kostelecky, with Tiku Majumder as Vice-Chair and Alejandro Garcia as outside member. Tiku moves up to Chair for 2008, and it was proposed that he suggest a Vice-Chair candidate to the Executive Committee.

The Pipkin Award fund increased to \$39,816.08 by 12/31/06, with a yearly income of more than \$2600 based on investments near 7%. At present, the Pipkin Award is \$2000 plus travel expenses, offered every two years. It was suggested that the Pipkin Award could be conservatively increased to \$2500 plus travel expenses. Eric Hessels agreed to coordinate such a proposal to APS with Alan Chodos of the Committee of Prizes and Awards.

The Pipkin Award is the only award explicitly associated with GPMFC. A Deslattes Prize was proposed some time ago, but questions raised by APS and co-sponsor DAMOP have not been addressed. Scott Dewey agreed to discuss this matter with Alan Chodos of APS and with DAMOP, on the part of NIST and GPMFC, to attempt to bring this matter to some kind of closure.

Publication Committee: No business has been brought before our Publication Committee in recent years, perhaps because the Abstract Classification system has not been changed in recent memory. Paul Vetter becomes Ex Officio Chair of this committee, which is constituted as needed.

Chair Siu Au Lee reported discussions with APS about paying the dues of incoming student members, or possibly paying all student memberships of GPMFC. APS has offered that each graduate student may choose free membership in one Topical Group per year, with implementation beginning in 2008. Encourage your students to choose GPMFC!

Our sponsorship of beer and pizza at the DAMOP Meeting, following a poster session with abstracts from our group, or the Business Meeting, was discussed. Depending on the organization details of the DAMOP Meeting, this can be expensive and difficult to implement, rather than inexpensive and more spontaneous, as originally conceived. The focus is on the alternate years, when our Executive and Business Meetings are held at the DAMOP Meeting.

Outgoing Secretary-Treasurer David Church reported on GPMFC finances. The GPMFC Available Funds stood at 25,397.25 on 12/31/04; \$27,899.47 on 12/31/05, and \$30,851.71 on 12/31/06. Income comes from three main sources: our share of the dues, at \$5 per member, was \$2075 in 2006 from 415 dues-paying members, and membership has been slowly rising by about 15 members per year recently. Our allocated investment income from interest (at about 7 % - how do they do that?) on our Available Funds is fairly stable at \$1938.72 in 2006 and \$1914.75 in 2005. Our share of the profits from the April APS Meeting can vary significantly: \$270 in 2006, and \$617 in 2005. Overall, our total revenue was \$4283.72 in 2006, slightly down from \$4521.75 in 2005.

Our yearly expenses also are in a few categories. Student travel grants to subsidize travel by students who lack DAMOP support, but are submitting abstracts to DAMOP or the April Meeting in our research areas, total about \$1000 per year. The amount of each grant is \$200 or less, depending on the number of applicants, adjusted to hold the total below \$1000. We pay for Sorters Travel, which pays the expenses of a designated member of the Program Committee to go to APS and sort out the submitted abstracts for GPMFC content. We pay for the lunch served at the meeting of the Executive Committee, usually about \$30 per invited person at the big hotels. Mailing expenses, which used to be large, are now only about \$20 per year. The cost of the beer and pizza reception at DAMOP has varied a lot, but an expenditure topping out near \$400 is considered a good goal.

Judy Franz visited our Executive Committee Meeting again, to answer questions about APS operations. It was noted the precision measurements and fundamental constants (at various levels of precision and constancy) are becoming the concern of other Divisions of APS not presently represented by our Group, and might be a source of increased membership and interaction. Judy suggested going to Division leaders to ask about sending a message to their members about our group interests. Eric Hessels agreed to look into this.

2007 GPMFC Executive Committee

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