



Director's Matters

Public input on public access

Last week was important for publishers of scientific information such as AIP and our Member Societies. In the [March 3 issue](#) of *AIP Matters*, I described some of the issues and concerns about the *open access* movement in the publishing and reader communities. The goal of the open access movement is to post information on the Web free of access controls thus making that information free of charge to the reader.

However, free to read does not mean free to publish, and someone in the food chain of a scientific article (from the author, through the publisher, to the reader) needs to cover the very real costs of publishing high-quality scientific articles. A major institutional force in the open access movement has been the [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) with its [public access initiative](#) that would impose requirements on authors of scientific articles funded by NIH grants. As a result of this year's appropriation bill for NIH, this initiative became public law, and NIH is requiring that all NIH-funded scientists deposit their published articles in the NIH public-access platform, [PubMed Central](#), within 12 months of the publication date. AIP is already compliant with this directive; however, we and our fellow scientific publishers are greatly concerned with the implementation of this new law. Even though very few articles published in AIP journals are written by NIH-funded authors, we are concerned that this law, developed without sufficient engagement with the publishers, will devalue scientific publications, harming the societies that produce these publications and the scientists who regard them as essential documentation tools.



Shortly after the appearance of the first Web browser, AIP moved very quickly to adopt and adapt to the Web, placing its journals online. We continue to evolve our online platform. The danger with any fast moving enterprise is that you miss the boat or sink the boat, and we have cautioned NIH that a wholesale adoption of a new economic model for scientific journals has to be executed carefully.

On March 7, 2008, NIH asked for written [public comments](#) on the implementation of its public access policy, and on March 20, 2008, the agency held a public hearing on the topic. AIP (on behalf of its Member Societies) submitted comments, as well as a [letter](#) to NIH Director, Elias A. Zerhouni, registering our concerns. I attended the public hearing on March 20, and was given one of the public comment five-minute slots, giving me an opportunity to emphasize several of the points made in the written submissions. I opened my comments by pointing to results from the physics community that are very important for the medical community, including the development of X-ray, MRI and PET medical imaging techniques, and the origination of the World Wide Web by the high energy physics community. I stated that, as a scientist and a citizen, I want to see NIH resources devoted to frontier medical research, and I am quite concerned that efforts are being expended at NIH to duplicate the copyediting, machine translation, digital hosting and data referencing of scientific articles that publishers already provide for all journals. I concluded my remarks by noting that the popular press has confused the public access to scientific journals with the public access to new scientific results that are understandable by non-scientists. Given the complexity and specialization of modern science, the public needs science writers who can translate frontier research into lay language for the public. This is precisely what AIP and our Member Societies do when we use income from our publications to produce copy for journalists (see [Inside Science News Service](#)) or programs for television news stations (see [Discoveries and Breakthroughs in Science](#)).

Sincerely yours,

Fred

Publishing Matters

All your eggs in one . . . shopping cart



In fall 2007, two AIP units—Fulfillment & Marketing and Business Systems & Operations—launched a new version of the [American Geophysical Union's](#) e-Commerce site in time for the 2008 renewal season. The site features a new AGU [online book store](#), as well as consolidated shopping cart features. Both members and nonmembers are now benefiting from this site: they can [join AGU](#) or renew their membership, update their profile, register for a meeting, and purchase books—all in a single transaction. The new book site and improved user experience have proved beneficial for AGU, especially for their book program.

The journals scene in New Orleans

At the [2008 APS March Meeting](#) in New Orleans, LA, AIP's booth in the exhibit hall spotlighted publications from AIP and Member Societies. Our new publications were featured at the booth, including promotional materials on the upcoming launch of our newest journal, [Journal of Renewable and Sustainable Energy](#), and on the introduction of a new section of [Applied Physics Letters](#)—APL: *Organic Electronics and Photonics*. On March 11, attendees enjoyed a festive evening at the annual "Meet the Editors" reception. Co-sponsored by APS, this social gathering provides authors with the opportunity to rub elbows with editors of AIP and APS journals.

Physics Resource Center Matters

2008 Sigma Pi Sigma Undergraduate Research Awards announced

Eight Society of Physics Students (SPS) chapters have received [Sigma Pi Sigma Undergraduate Research Awards](#) to fund chapter research projects. The awards provide calendar year grants to support local chapter activities that are deemed imaginative and likely to contribute to the strengthening of the SPS program.

The SPS Chapter at University of Colorado-Colorado Springs describes the rationale behind their awarded project:



Left to right: Sara Goldman, C. Travis Hunter, Hoshang Almemar, Robert Webber, Evangelos Economou, and James Vedral

"From wristwatches to the most advanced computer systems on earth, liquid crystals have made their way into every aspect of our lives. Since liquid crystals have been introduced to the industry, there has been a great demand to reduce their energy consumption. That is the great problem—making a stable liquid crystal display that uses less energy. There is a possible solution, mixing liquid crystals with material that possesses a higher sensitivity to electric fields. There are preliminary results, which suggest the feasibility of creating such materials.

Although this solution may sound simple, there are major problems that need to be overcome to make this not only 'a lab sample,' but a practical reality ... Creating a stable 'liquid crystal enriched with ferroelectric nanoparticles' will lower the energy consumption of all liquid crystal devices.

This would not only mean longer battery life for cell phones and laptops, it would mean a great leap in the science of liquid crystals and a new frontier in the industry."

Around AIP

What's in your mailbox?

Let's face it, when it comes to email, most of us are pack rats. But the inbox is one area where organization really pays off. The more you keep in your inbox, the longer it will take to open GroupWise, sort mail and perform other functions. So, delete that old mail. For what you need to keep,

GroupWise gives you tools to help manage it. Here are some tips:

- 1) **Color-code your mail:** Right click on a mail item and use categories to draw attention to important items, or to sort mail. You can also create your own categories like "pending response" and "projects."
- 2) **Use the checklist feature:** This folder is an electronic to-do list. It allows you to set a due date for email items and check them off when complete.
- 3) **Establish a folder structure that works for you:** Structure folders by date, by project, or mimic your paper filing system.

Not sure how to use these features? Contact the HelpDesk for a GroupWise "Quick Start Card."

We invite your feedback to this newsletter via email to aipmatters@aip.org.

For past issues of this newsletter, visit the [AIP Matters archives](#).