AIP|Matters

Monday, September 15, 2008

Director's Matters

Milestones in scientific discovery and scientific communications

Two events last week were major milestones that affect AIP and the physical science community. One was more than a decade in planning and preparation and brought a major new science instrument on line. The other event was less than a year in gestation but strengthens a century-long commitment to the value of scientific publications.

Last Wednesday, September 10, 2008, at 4:28 a.m., scientists announced that a proton beam had completed its first circuit around the 27 km circumference of the world's largest particle accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN. This machine is the most complicated and most expensive scientific instrument ever built. When the LHC is fully commissioned with counterrotating proton beams colliding at 7 trillion electron volts, its detectors will allow us to peer into the smallest subatomic dimensions ever explored. The completion of the LHC construction is a testament to international scientific collaboration—scientists and engineers from more than 100 countries are participating in the project.

The field of high energy physics generates excitement because it's our best window into the very nature of our existence—from the fundamental questions of how matter is constructed to the evolution of the universe. This excitement has played out in much of the popular and general science press reporting on the LHC event over the past two weeks.

The second major milestone affecting the AIP community occurred one day after the LHC achievement. On Thursday, September 11, 2008, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Courts, Internet and Intellectual Property held its first hearing on a newly introduced bill, HR 6845, the Fair Copyright in Research Works Act. For more than a century, copyright laws have provided the necessary incentives for scientific publishers to invest in all that is necessary to produce and distribute a high-quality scholarly journal: manage the peer-review process that ensures the scientific integrity of the article, produce high-quality copy in print and on line, collaborate with peer publishers so that bibliographic records are functional and properly maintained, print and distribute journals, and (post-1997) host and archive journals on a highly reliable online platform that, in response to user demand, is constantly technologically enhanced with new tools and capabilities.

The purpose of the legislation is to strengthen the existing copyright laws, which have been weakened by the passage of the NIH Public Access Policy in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008. The NIH policy requires that any article based on NIH-funded research must be made available on NIH's public website within 12 months of publication. AIP and most other scholarly publishers have been urging NIH and other federal agencies to consider other means of enhancing public access to the results of scientific research while continuing to preserve the value of copyright. In support of this legislation, AIP and many of our Member Societies submitted letters to Congress and created a special website with information about the legislation. FYI: The AIP Bulletin of Science Policy News will issue a summary of last week's hearing shortly. I will keep you posted on the progress of this important legislation as it moves through Congress next spring.

Sincerely,

Fred

Publishing Matters

Seeking excellence in serving our customers

Production Operations & Customer Services (POCS) is pleased to welcome Greg Lupion to the newly created position of production manager. This position was created in an effort to achieve excellence in service and customer relations. Greg's responsibilities span all of POCS's many publishing customers, and his direct reports are the four production team leaders. In his role, Greg will ensure the maintenance of high quality standards, schedules, and deadlines for all publications produced by POCS.

Physics Resource Center Matters

Outstanding students present their research at international conference

Three members of the Society of Physics Students received 2008 SPS Outstanding Student Awards for Undergraduate Research, which earned them a trip to present their work at the International Conference of Physics Students (ICPS) in Cracow, Poland, this past August. The award covered travel expenses, a $500 honorarium, and a $500 award for their SPS chapter.

Jodie Barker-Tvedtnes—Utah State University (left): *Noctilucent clouds from above and below.* **Therese Jones**—the Pennsylvania State University (center): *Partial covering of the broad emission line region by an Fe I-rich intervening weak Mg II absorber.* **Rachael Roettenbacher**—Ohio Wesleyan University (right): *A study of differential rotation on II Pegasi using starspot imaging.* Check out the SPS website to read about the students' experiences at the ICPS.

ACP staff: Join AIP Education for popcorn on Wednesday at 2:30 PM in Conference Room A. Nothing gets attention like the aroma of fresh popped corn! Share the excitement as we gear up for the 2008 Sigma Pi Sigma Congress at Fermilab, November 6–8.

Around AIP

TeaLeaf: A new way of looking at Web usage to enhance customer service

Since the existing technology did not provide us with clear insight into the real experience of customers using our services, earlier this year Business Systems and Operations implemented Tealeaf, a new type of customer experience management software. Tealeaf enables our Fulfillment & Marketing staff to see actual online experiences, capturing what a customer is doing and observing every page and every click.

Customer service personnel can view actual web sessions in real time or find sessions meeting certain criteria (like new members who also registered for a particular meeting). These sessions can then be analyzed for patterns in customer behavior, which will allow us, for example, to understand why abandonment or other site actions occur. The eventual goal is more effective customer service and a positive user experience.

Around ACP

APS hosted a pajama party last Wednesday morning—at 2 am (!)—to celebrate the Large Hadron Collider's accomplishment of

sending its first proton beam around the 27-kilometer loop. There's nothing like ushering in a new era of high-energy physics with waffles and a live webcast of the big event. On the topic of LHC, check out the "Large Hadron Rap," posted on YouTUBE. Creator and former APS intern Katie McAlpine has gained international cyber acclaim, as the video's views now exceed 2.6 million!

We invite your feedback to this newsletter via e-mail to aipmatters@aip.org.

For past issues of this newsletter, visit the AIP Matters archives.