Director's Matters
By H. Frederick Dylla, Executive Director & CEO

Moveable type to flying bits

October is the time of the Frankfurt Book Fair, the longest running trade fair in existence; it traces its origin to the 12th century when barrels of handmade books were displayed on the banks of the River Main. The 2010 fair, held October 6–10, attracted more than a quarter million visitors from more than 100 countries; exhibitors topped 7500. Publishers of scientific, technical, and medical publications shared an entire floor of an exhibit building.

AIP has been exhibiting at the Buchmesse for the past 20 years; we use the annual event as a primary means of connecting with our international customers. Our sales and marketing staff met with many of our major international customers whose purchases of our journal content make up more than two-thirds of AIP’s journal income. AIP staff connected with our sales agents who represent customers in Japan, China, and other countries of the Far East; library consortia representatives from Mexico, Germany, Poland, and France; and potential new content distributors serving the Middle East.

Robert Harington, AIP’s newly appointed Publisher for Partnerships, is spearheading an effort to transform our customer-vendor relationships so that both parties work in tandem for mutual gain—to improve the content and accessibility of partner journals. "Publishing partnerships," the theme for our Frankfurt exhibit and promotion, complemented this campaign.

It would be difficult not to be influenced by the history and sheer scale of the event. I came away from the Frankfurt Book Fair with an increased awareness of the power of the printed word and image. There is still a significant amount of material at Frankfurt that is printed type on paper—usually more than two million volumes are on display. Just a short train ride away from the fairgrounds is the city of Mainz, home of Johannes Gutenberg’s famous workshop and birthplace of the printing press. The combination of moveable metal type, oil-based inks, and a wooden press launched the print revolution. Many historians would count the printing press as the most important invention of the past millennium; it led to
the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the Reformation, and mass literacy as the printed book and broadside became accessible to the common citizen. Visitors to the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz can see a replica of the Gutenberg press, two copies of his most famous product—the Gutenberg Bible—and a complete history of printing in the Western world and its earlier development in the Orient.

In Western culture, Gutenberg is the anointed inventor of printing. But the Gutenberg Museum shows visitors that individual type script was introduced in the fifth century BC by the Chinese on bone and ceramic pieces and that paper was introduced in the second century BC. The first “printing” might be attributed to Chinese paper rubbings from inked script carved into stone in the third century AD. Two centuries later, carved wood blocks were used to transfer both type and images. Transformational inventions are often a combination of new and preexisting ideas or processes. Gutenberg's ideas may not have been novel, but his methods made mass production possible and spurred the first printing revolution.

We are just at the start of the second revolution for the display and dissemination of text and images. The digital process transforms typeface characters and images into bits and bytes that can be shipped anywhere in the world with a key stroke and displayed on electronic screens that fit in our palm or tower over a sports stadium. Selling our wares in the shadow of Gutenberg's famous press reminds us of the power of both revolutions.

PUBLISHING MATTERS

AIP reaches co-publishing agreement with prestigious Chinese society

AIP has signed a new partnership agreement with the Chinese Society of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics. The two organizations will be co-publishing a new journal, *Theoretical and Applied Mechanics Letters (TAML)*, which will be launched in January.

The journal will publish short, original articles in all areas of theoretical and applied mechanics; in several engineering-related fields, including aerospace, energy, and materials; and in biomedical, mechanical, coastal, civil, hydraulic engineering. See the [press release](#) for more details.

PHYSICS RESOURCES CENTER MATTERS
SPS National Council meets in DC

The Society of Physics Students (SPS) National Council, consisting of 36 elected student and faculty representatives and a seven-member Executive Committee, convened in the Washington Metro area September 30–October 2 to deliberate and begin work on SPS projects for the coming year. The meeting opened on a high note, as Nobel laureate John Mather spoke to the Council about his work on the cosmic microwave background radiation and on the James Webb Space Telescope. Following his talk, Mather was elected as a Sigma Pi Sigma honorary member, the highest level of membership.

The Council tackled a host of issues, including continued planning and preparation for the 2012 Sigma Pi Sigma Congress, whose theme will be "Connecting Worlds through Science and Service." The Council also chose to build SPS's 2011 theme around the 100th anniversary of the discovery of the atomic nucleus, committed to drafting a letter to the National Science Foundation about continued support of undergraduate research, and agreed to continue SPS's diversity efforts. Representatives from the 18 regional zones around the United States selected the outstanding SPS chapters for 2010, and drafted plans for zone activities and meetings in the upcoming year.

The meeting came to a close with outreach on the National Mall. More than a dozen SPS Council members led hundreds of visitors through laser science and rolling science activities at the Smithsonian Institution's Spark!Lab.
The inaugural USA Science & Engineering Festival

The country's first national science festival is going on now. The grassroots event represents a collaboration of more than 500 of the nation's leading science organizations—including AIP and several Member Societies. The culmination of the festival will be a free, two-day Expo on the National Mall and surrounding areas on October 23–24 that will feature more than 1500 fun, hands-on science activities, live shows and performances, and talks.

SPS has joined forces with the APS, AAPT and OSA to create a one-of-a-kind laser haunted house for the Expo. Volunteers are also needed to help with the house; sign-up with SPS.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

Events at ACP (College Park, MD)

Tuesday–Wednesday, October 19–20

- Introduction to and training for new communication tools: SharePoint, Outlook/Exchange, and Office Communicator; conference room A
- General information sessions are on Tuesday morning, at 9:15 am and 11:00 am. Department consultations are on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday.

Thursday, October 21

- Open Enrollment. Sessions at 9:30 am and 11:00 am; conference room A
- Freecycle of children's winter outerwear, 12:00 – 1:00 pm; conference room B
- ACP building staff are welcome to donate or accept gently used children's winter outerwear (boots, mittens, hats, jackets) for ages infant–5 years. Items can be dropped off at the daycare center starting on October 19; parents will staff the event. Leftover items will be donated to the National Children's Center.

Member Society events

October 17–22

- AVS 57th International Symposium & Exhibition, Albuquerque, NM
For past issues of this newsletter, visit the AIP Matters archives.