

NJAAPT Newsletter
September 2007

President's Message

Welcome back to a new school year. The executive board has been busy in preparing a series of events for you in the upcoming school. A calendar of these programs is listed in the newsletter. Take the opportunity to attend at least one of the sessions – you will be very happy that you did.

Also with the advent of the 2007-08 school year, there are changes in the method of delivery of the newsletter. This was explained in the last newsletter and further clarification and justification for the decision is addressed later in this issue. Then, there's the issue of what you need to do to be reimbursed for attending meetings that is mandated by the state. Registration and payment for workshops and renewal of memberships will be handled electronically to facilitate the process.

What all of this means is that we are finally entering the 21st century, albeit a little late. With access to computers and the internet, anything we can do to communicate with the membership in a more timely manner is preferred to old way of doing things.

Now is the time for a concerted effort on the part of the physics teachers who belong to the NJ section to become more involved in the sponsored activities. We want to provide the type of programs that will benefit you the most, so if you have an idea for a workshop contact me at r7429@optonline.net and submit your proposal. There are many good ideas out there just looking for an outlet and we can provide the means for you to share your enthusiasm with the other members of the NJAAPT.

Have a great school year and I hope to see you at one of our events.

Ray Polomski

Newsletter Update

The task of composing, printing, preparing for mailing, and the mailing itself has increased over the years. The time invest was one of the criteria used to foster this change, but the overwhelming consideration was the cost. Our funds are limited to membership dues and workshop registrations. Over the past few years this has meant that the financial reserves that we were able to amass has slowly been eroded. The cost of the publication of the newsletter has been a significant factor in the decrease of our working capital. As mentioned in the last newsletter, anyone who has provided an email address to the NJAAPT will henceforth receive the newsletter as a PDF file to be read on your computer or to be downloaded.

The executive board feels that this is an appropriate response to solving a problem that has been growing in scope. So, if you have not provided an email address or if your address has changed, please send it to Jim Kovalcin, jimthx@comcast.net, to be included in the mailing.

Workshop Registration

Since most announcements of workshops will be emailed to the membership, the executive board took action to conduct registration for the workshops we offer online. The registration form will appear on our website, www.njaapt.org, and the information can either be completed online along with payment through PayPal or the form can be downloaded, completed and a check mailed to the person hosting the workshop.

This change will allow a streamlining of the accounting process and an up-to-date roster of attendees.

Workshop Reimbursement Changes

Please check with your school district Business Manager/ Board Secretary regarding the change in NJ State Law concerning reimbursement for attending workshops and meetings. Apparently, it is now a State Law requirement that a teacher be granted permission to obtain monies paid out of pocket by receiving approval of the Board of Education prior to attending the program. Therefore, you would have to seek the request for payment at a meeting of the Board in the month before the event.

New Jersey Science Convention

The NJSC will be held at the Garden State Exhibit Center, Somerset, on Oct. 9-10. We will be making our presence felt again this year by having a booth with information relating to our activities and some items to give away. Also, we are sponsoring three Physics Demo Dens: Electrostatics, Physics of Sports, and Work, Power, & Energy. We are in need of help with the Demo Dens and if you can lend a hand by doing about five minutes of demonstrations or some other presentation, please contact Borislav Bilash, bbilash@pascack.k12.nj.us, so you can be placed on the agenda.

We will have a Physics Teachers Roundtable on Tuesday from 12 - 1:15. This will give anyone the chance to discuss the role of the NJAAPT and how it can assist physics teachers. Check the NJSC program booklet for programs given by members of the NJAAPT.

Your support will be greatly appreciated whether you stop by the table, the Demo Dens, the Roundtable, or any of the member programs.

*Physics Teachers Meet in the Tar
Heel State
By Nancy Michaelson*

Workshops, physics vendors, presentations, poster sessions, guest speakers, the demo show, contests---all of these and more could be found at the 2007 AAPT National Summer Meeting in Greensboro, NC. The meeting was a great opportunity to learn more about ideas, resources, and research in the area of physics teaching, as well as a chance to meet fellow physics educators from far and wide.

The plenary session speakers were outstanding! Neil de Grasse Tyson gave an amazing and entertaining talk about science illiteracy. The auditorium was packed, and the talk went on 45 minutes longer than planned, it was that good. If Dr. Tyson ever decides to do something other than astrophysics, he could make a living on the comedy club circuit! Janet Guthrie, of car-racing fame and a physicist herself, spoke about her racing adventures and the qualities that make one successful when facing challenges. She graciously autographed her book, "A Life at Full Throttle" for anyone interested.

In terms of professional development, there was no shortage of workshops and presentations about many aspects of physics instruction at all levels. Also included were various contests, including the photography contest (photos by high school students), the apparatus competition, prize drawings, and the great book giveaway. And don't forget the "stuff" you get from the vendors!

If you didn't have the opportunity to attend this year's meeting, then start thinking ahead to 2008. The Winter Meeting will be in Baltimore. The Summer Meeting is a bit further away...no, I lied...it's *a lot* further away --- in Edmonton, Alberta! If you ever wanted to go to the Great White North (when it's not white with snow) well here's your chance! The meeting in Edmonton will have everything for physics teachers from "A" to "Zed". Pretty cool, *eh?* See---I've already started speaking Canadian!

So how about updating your passport (do it early), marking your calendar, and heading to Edmonton next July, *eh?*

Winter Meeting 2008, Jan. 19-23 (Baltimore, MD)
Summer Meeting 2008, July 19-23 (Edmonton, Alberta----Passport
Required)

2007 - 08 Calendar of Events

The following events listed are programs that are set for the upcoming year.

Sept. 29 Cosmic Ray Detector Workshop

Oct. 9 – 10 NJSC

Oct. 20 Bergen County Meeting and Telescopic Observation Evening

Nov. 3 Electricity/Magnetism Workshop

Dec. 1 Holiday Treats

Jan. 12 Physics Olympics

Feb. 8 Dave's Demo Night

Mar. 14/15 Sectional Meeting

Information relating to any of the programs, including cost of the workshop, the workshop leader, and contact information will be posted at www.njapt.org.

Additional programs will be added if proposed. Any member wishing to host a workshop should contact Ray Polomski at r7429@optonline.net