

Society of Physics Students

General Meeting

Minutes

September 8, 2008

Call to order: 5:05 p.m.

Attendance: 12

Officers present: Laura Seward (President), Autumn Hallmark (Vice-President), Bob Baker (Secretary) and Michael Mercer (Treasurer).

- Election of Secretary
 - President Seward announced that three people had expressed an interest in the position of Secretary. Two were nominated: Bob and Aaron. Each nominee said a few words about their background and experience. The voting was conducted by secret ballot, and Laura announced that Bob had been elected.
- Vice-President report
 - Autumn is working on a tour of the UAH holography lab.
 - She is looking into a tour of the Aerophysics Research Center.
 - She is looking into a possible visit to Aeroballistics on Redstone Arsenal (U.S. Citizenship needed to enter Arsenal).
 - A representative from the Center for Modeling Simulator Analysis may come to speak at a future meeting.
 - The President also discussed the U.S. Army Research Facility and/or Boeing Rocket Plant tour (U.S. Citizenship would be required to visit).
- Treasurer report
 - The Treasurer said that it would be desirable to have a “meal fund” of \$40 per meeting. It cannot be sustained with dues money. A cup was placed in the middle of the table for contributions. Kira said that we could keep the expense down to \$20 per meeting. The Treasurer reminded everyone about paying dues.

- Social Committee Chair report.
 - We would like to re-initiate movie nights. It was agreed that Friday nights would be best, movies would be shown using a projector in the seminar room. Movies will be shown every other Friday of the weeks when no meeting is held. The first one is tentatively scheduled for a Friday, Sept. 19th. Kira circulated a list of movies that members own on DVD, and those present added their candidate movies to the list.
- Von Braun Astronomical Society (VBAS) Astronomy Day: Saturday, Sept. 27
 - Arrangements were made for car-pooling to the event. Meeting in front parking lot at 5:30 or at the VBAS at 6 p.m. Suggestion: bring a flashlight with a red cover and a folding chair. (No flash photography allowed.)
- Demonstration Committee Chair report
 - Laura Seward discussed the vacancy in the Demonstration Committee Chair. She can appoint the chairperson in her capacity as President.
 - Some ideas for possible demonstrations were discussed, including thermite burning, an improved Ruben's tube from last year's design, a larger demonstration of the non-Newtonian fluid, a potato launcher, a trebuchet, a demo of vacuum pressure, magnetic, bike wheel momentum, gyroscopes, and multiple pendulums.
 - The College of Science is trying to organize a Sci-Quest Trip.
- Webmaster Report: Michael said that the website may be used to help set up study groups for Physics and Astronomy classes.
- Kira Discussed the HEOS (Huntsville Electro Optical Society) banquet (Sept. 4th). A guest speaker from the University of Pennsylvania gave a very interesting presentation at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center. Among the several cutting-edge topics discussed was the development of invisibility. Bob had also attended the banquet and lecture.
- Announcements:
 - Physics Department Colloquia are held on Tuesdays, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m., in the Seminar Room. Information is available at Physics.UAH.edu.
 - Near Earth Objects seminar. Tuesday Sept. 16, 10:30 – 11:30, NSSTC room 4078.
 - NASA International Year of Astronomy Student Ambassadors Program. Applications are due by Sept. 29th. The Physics Dept. website has a link to the applications.
- Guest speaker: Dr. Carol Strong

- Dr. Strong discussed her academic background and the evolution of her career. She explained the difference between the lecturer position and tenure-track professorships, and their job responsibilities. Her responsibilities as Academic Advisor for physics students was explained. She also discussed various aspects of getting a job in physics.
- J.C. Carpenter led a discussion among the members of career plans and interests. The members present had a very diverse set of career goals (and backgrounds) which made for a very interesting discussion.
- Next Meeting: Monday, Sept. 22, 5:00/5:05 PM.