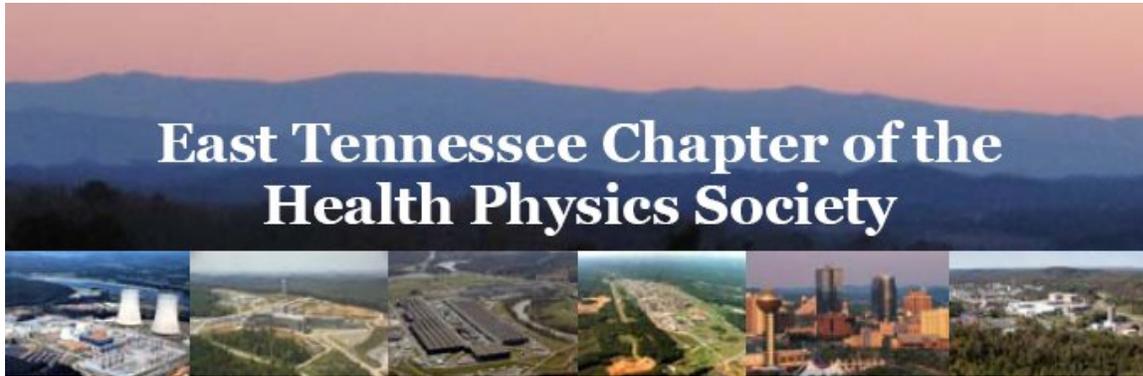


# March 2008 Newsletter



## East Tennessee Chapter of the Health Physics Society

### **Next Meeting:**

**March 18, 2008**

**Guest Speaker: Sammy Jones**

Topic:

**OREX Dissolvable Anti-C Clothing Process**

Location: Oak Ridge Library Meeting Room

Social Begins: 5:30 PM

Meeting Begins: 6:00 PM

## Election Results

Seventy (70) ETCHPS members cast ballots in the 2007/2008 annual election. The election results were reported at the February 2008 Business Meeting. Congratulations to:

**President-Elect: Mark McHugh**  
**Secretary-Elect: Rodney Bauman**  
**Council Member: John E. Aperans**

Congratulations also to:

**Council Member Appointee: Michael Rennhack**

Michael will fulfill the 3<sup>rd</sup> year council member seat vacated by Jenny Roddy due to a job relocation.

Based upon the election results and the appointment process, the ETCHPS Officers for 2008 are:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>
President	Joe Alvarez	(865) 591-0175
President-elect	Mark McHugh	(865) 803-2048
Past President	James East	(865) 599-6661
Secretary	David McLaughlin	(865) 576-1447
Secretary-elect	Rodney Bauman	(865) 241-5344
Treasurer	Michele Landis	
Council	John Aperans	(865) 574-9464
Council	Glenn Marshall	(865) 285-3018
Council	Michael Rennhack	(865) 238-0203

## **Study Pays Off**

The American Board of Health Physics recently reported that several area radiation protection professionals (including several ETCHPS members) passed different parts of the ABHP certification exam. The ETCHPS would like to recognize the following:

### **Passing Part II of the ABHP Certification Exam:**

**Matthew Buchholz (ORISE), Brian P. Lemieux, and Richard F. Utrera (ORNL)**

### **Passing Part I of the ABHP Certification Exam:**

**Scott A. Bryers (Energen), Roy J. Faddis (NFS), J. Curtis Kwasniewski, Henry S. Lynn , and Michael S. Whittenbarger (ORNL).**

## January Program Meeting

The East Tennessee Chapter of the Health Physics Society held its monthly program meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2008 at the Sagebrush Steakhouse in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Approximately 30 ETCHPS members and guests were in attendance.

The featured speaker was Dr. Richard E. Toohey, President-Elect of the National Health Physics Society. Prior to beginning his presentation Dr. Toohey provided a brief status report on the National Health Physics Society:

- Overall, the National HPS is in good shape having experienced a net increase in membership over the past year.
- Economic realities have resulted in a slight increase in membership dues.
- The Society has been successful in its media and government relationship outreach programs and is becoming a sought after source for radiation-related information. As an example, Dr. Toohey pointed to the Society's input in a national weekly news magazine during the Po-210 poisoning event.
- Dr. Toohey indicated that the ETCHPS is the 19th chapter that he has visited on his tour as HPS President-Elect. He has 23 more Chapters to go.
- Dr. Toohey encouraged ETCHPS to volunteer for National HPS service and committee work. Openings are currently available in the nominating, rules, and continuing education committees.

Dr. Toohey's presentation was titled: **“Why No One Believes Us: Cognitive Neuroscience and Radiation Risk”** The presentation, which included 40 slides, emphasized the difficulties that radiation protection professionals must overcome to effectively communicate radiation risk to the public, the media, and government officials. Dr. Toohey's pessimistic assertion is that the combination of personality type, brain anatomy/physiology, culture, personal experience, and generational typing has created an almost impenetrable barrier to effective risk communications. His premise is based on the following:

- Perceptions between radiation protection professionals and the general public differ. Whereas radiation protection practitioners regard the use of shielding, limiting time, and increase distance as good health physics practice, workers and the general public perceive such actions as evidence of unnecessary risk and hazard.
- Radiation Protection Professionals tend to have different personality types than the general public. Based on the Myers-Briggs Classification, 51% of HPs fall into four categories. These categories favor judgment over perception, thinking over feeling, and are more introverted than extroverted. Only 13% of the general population falls within these same categories. Therefore, HP Professionals prefer a “rational” communication style; but, because the knowledge-based, rational communication style is not preferred by more than 80% of general population, poor communication results.
- Brain anatomy and physiology are hard-wired with certain survival “templates.” Templates concerning contagion, pattern-seeking, and justice are important components

for evaluating risk. These patterns cause humans to avoid things that we associate with illness (e.g. certain foods), give advantage to predators that recognize prey behavioral patterns, and lead us to seek revenge after being cheated. Connected to radiation exposures these templates collectively lead to the following thought progression: 1) Radiation causes illness and death (contagion), 2) An illness contracted following radiation exposure must have been caused by the radiation (pattern-seeking), and 3) Compensation is due (justice).

- Learned behavior and cultural influences have increased the public's radiation phobia. This is enhanced through the use of language ("deadly rays"), entertainment icons (Godzilla), and news reports (health effects in radium dial painters and, more recently, deaths at Chernobyl).
- Individuals accept risk based on their understanding of the risk, the necessity of the risk, control of the risk, and their voluntary exposure to the risk. The magnitude of the risk is irrelevant – what matters is the consequence. Radiation loses on all five fronts.

Dr. Toohey concluded that the radiation protection community faces a Sisyphean task (an uphill struggle). However, improvements can be made by adopting a strategy that counters the above factors and replaces automatic negative reaction with controlled positive ones. Dr. Toohey indicated that a positive shift may already be occurring as he gave examples of advertising campaigns depicting rabbits bounding around cooling towers, nuclear power being touted as a solution to global warming, and more favorable entertainment images (e.g. mutant ninja turtles).

Dr. Toohey recommended that the Health Physics Society continue to serve as a source of unbiased information concerning radiation hazards, that outreach materials clearly communicating radiation hazards be developed, that the society team with specialists from other professional organizations such as the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM), the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM), the American College of Radiology (ACR), and the American Public Health Association (APHA) to educate health care providers on radiation risks. He also suggested that younger generations be approached through web-based and multimedia education materials. Dr. Toohey stated that during his term as HPS President he will appoint an ad-hoc committee on communication strategy and outreach.

Dr. Toohey recommended the following for local chapters: 1) Start a communicator program and form a speakers' bureau. 2) Identify effective communicators. 3) Establish a working relationship with local media. 4) Offer expertise to local public health agencies. 5) Join the National Citizen Corps Medical Reserve Corps Program. 6) Invite a news media speaker to address the chapter.

Dr. Toohey's presentation was followed by some spirited discussion and dissenting opinion.

## Annual Business Meeting

The East Tennessee Chapter of the Health Physics Society held its Annual Business Meeting on Tuesday, February 19, 2008 at the Sagebrush Steakhouse in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Approximately 20 ETCHPS members and guests were in attendance.

The 2007 election results were announced:

President-Elect:	Mark McHugh
Secretary-Elect:	Rodney Bauman
Council Member:	John Aperans

James East (out going President) and Joe Alvarez (President) thanks the membership for attending and asked for a report from each officer:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Council Member (Tom Rucker):

The 2007 vendor's meeting was attended by approximately 150 chapter members and 21 vendors. This represented a decrease from past years. The decrease was attributed to problems in the Chapter's mass emailing system, difficulties in compiling a vendor contact list, and delays in contacting vendors. As a result, the chapter lost approximately \$1000. The loss was in fees paid to Rothchild Catering for an estimated attendance of 200 members. The ETCHPS awarded several prizes including a wide screen TV.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Council Member (Jenny Roddy):

It was announced that Jenny Roddy has resigned her seat due to a job relocation.

- 1st Year Council Member (Glenn Marshall):

Glenn reported that the chapter held its annual picnic in September at Clark Center Park. Attendance was down from past years due to inclement weather early in the day.

- Treasurer (James East for Michele Landis):

ETCHPS netted approximately \$4000 in gains in 2007. Most of this was attributed to payments received from hosting the recent midyear meeting. Overall, the Chapter's assets total approximately \$34,000 in checking accounts and CDs.

- Secretary (David McLaughlin for Erika Bailey):

The Chapter has been working to upgrade the website and membership database. The mass emailing problems have been corrected and a dues payment summary has been added to membership accounts. Dues for calendar year 2008 have been received from approximately 86 members.

- President-Elect (Joe Alvarez):

The Chapter's past year meeting and activity schedule included:

- February: Annual Business Meeting (New China Palace, Oak Ridge)
- March : Joint meeting with the American Nuclear Society:  
Dr. Chet Ramsey, Director of Medical Physics at the Thompson  
Cancer Center  
(Rothschild Catering, Knoxville)
- April: Grant Ashley, Bechtel Jacobs,  
Qualifying criticality Instruments for Operation in Intense Radiation  
Fields  
(Sagebrush Steakhouse, Oak Ridge)
- May: Dr. Joe Alvarez, ETCHPS President-Elect  
New development in detection limits.  
(Gondolier Restaurant, Farragut)
- June: Dr. Jerry Eisele, ORAU  
The History of the ORNL Dairy Farm  
(Sagebrush Steakhouse, Oak Ridge)
- July: No Meeting – National HPS in Portland, Oregon
- August: Dr. Doran Christensen ORAU's Radiation Emergency Assistance  
Center/Training Site (REAC/TS).  
New Cytogenetic Biodosimetry Laboratory.  
(Oak Ridge Public Library)
- September: Chapter Picnic  
(Clark Center Park)
- October Bill Wilcox, Co-Chair, Partnership for L-25 Preservation  
Historical Preservation at K-25  
(Mancino's Pizza and Grinders, Knoxville)
- November : Michael Mobley, Chair of the Southeast Compact Commission  
Discussion and Observations – Disposal of Commercial Low-  
Level Radioactive Waste  
(New China Palace, Oak Ridge)
- December: Vendor Meeting (Rothschild Catering, Knoxville)
- January: Dr. Richard Toohey, President Elect HPS  
Why No One Believes Us: Cognitive Neuroscience and Radiation  
Risk (Sagebrush Steakhouse, Oak Ridge)

Joe then introduced the newly elected officers.

The council member vacancy created by Jenny Roddy's resignation was discussed and the proposal to appoint Micheal Rennhack, the 2<sup>nd</sup> place candidate, to a one-year office seat was presented to attending council members and the ETCHPS membership. No opposition was voiced and Mr. Rennhack was appointed to the ETCHPS council. He will fulfill the 3<sup>rd</sup> council member seat and be responsible for the vendors meeting (the traditional responsibility for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year member). Glenn Marshall will be responsible for the educational committee and John Aperans will coordinate the picnic.

Service plaques were awarded to outgoing officers:

- Outgoing President – James East,
- Outgoing Secretary – Erika Bailey, and
- Outgoing Council Member – Tom Rucker.

## **Dues**

The chapter requests that dues be paid by March 31st. You can check you dues status on-line at [www.hpschapters.org/etchps/admin](http://www.hpschapters.org/etchps/admin). You can also email the chapter Secretary, David McLaughlin, at [d15@ornl.gov](mailto:d15@ornl.gov) with any questions.

Dues can be paid using Paypal. Just click the “Pay Dues” menu selection on the ETCHPS home page ([www.hpschapters.org/etchps](http://www.hpschapters.org/etchps)).

Dues may also be paid by cash or check at any program meeting or by mailing a check payable to ETCHPS to:

**ETCHPS, P.O. Box 7006 ,Oak Ridge, TN 37831-7006**

### **Membership fees are as follows:**

Plenary	\$15.00
Fellow	\$15.00
Student	\$ 7.50
Member Emeritus	\$ 7.50
Life Member	No Dues

**Thanks again for your support.**

**David McLaughlin**  
**ETCHPS Secretary**