

NCCHPS

The Newsletter of the Northern California Chapter of the Health Physics Society
September 2008



Our Next NCCHPS Meeting

***Thursday, September 18, 2008
Francesco's, Oakland***

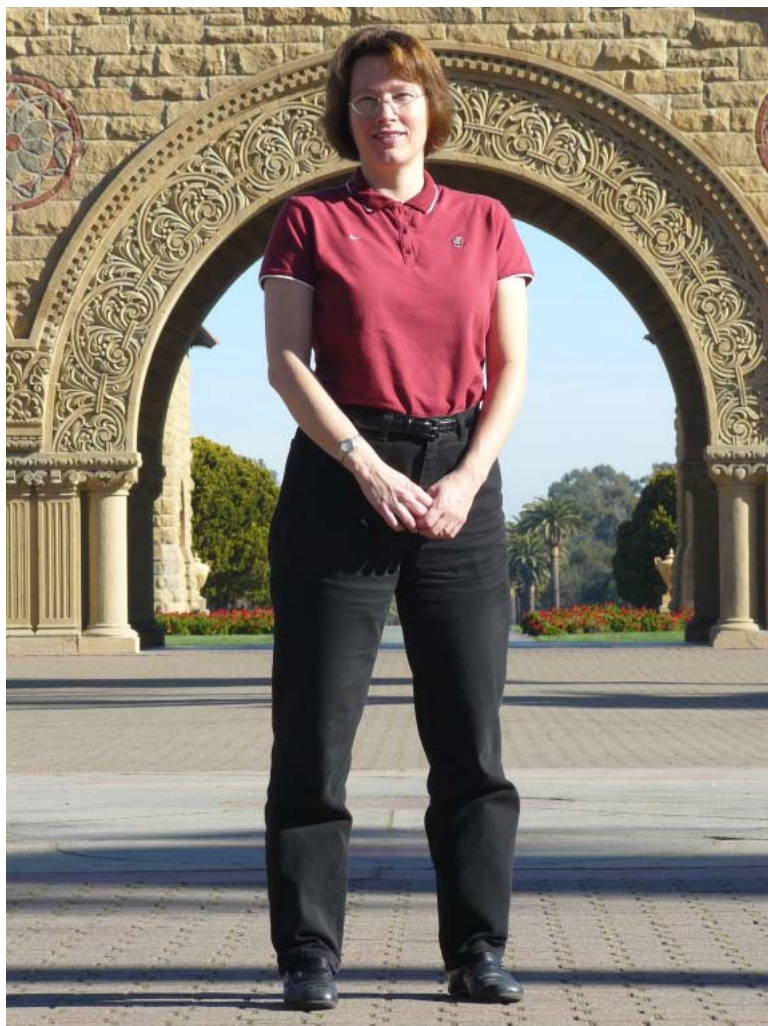
***6 pm-Social Hour
7 pm-Dinner
8 pm-Presentation***

Presentation Topic:

“CTs-A Brief Talk on Everything”

About the Speaker:

Dawn Banghart is a Senior Health Physicist and the Alternate Radiation Safety officer at Stanford University. She received a bachelor's degree in Physics from the University of California Santa Barbara and was board certified in 2002 by the American Board of Health Physics. She has been active in the area of medical, university and Department of Energy health physics for over 19 years and has served on local and national Health Physics Society committees. Currently she provides radiation safety program oversight in the clinical uses of radioisotopes at the Stanford University Hospital and the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS) and overseas radiation safety at the Molecular Imaging Program with its associated isotope production cyclotron and imaging/radiochemistry facilities.



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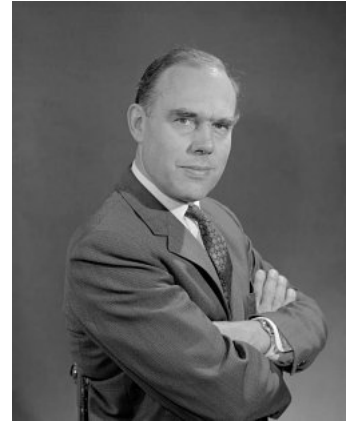


The Burton J. Moyer Fellowship - An NCCCHPS Legacy

Burton J. Moyer (1912-1973) was a professor and chairman of the University of California-Berkeley Physics Department, and staff member, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. As both researcher and teacher, Professor Moyer combined the best of scientific and humanistic traditions by using his scientific training and clear thinking for humane ends.

The prestigious Burton J. Moyer Memorial Fellowship was established by the Northern California Chapter of the HPS to memorialize the Dr. Moyer and to encourage his ideals in the study of the safe use of radiation for the benefit of all people. Wade Patterson (1924-1997) was instrumental in the founding of the Fellowship. The award consists of a stipend of \$7,500. The fellowship is accompanied by a travel grant to be used in attending the HPS annual meeting.

The national Health Physics Society administers the awarding of the B. J. Moyer Memorial Fellowship. The application form may be obtained from NCCCHPS. Applications are typically due in February and awardees are notified in April. For additional information, please contact any of the NCCCHPS board members.



Previous Recipients

- 1985 Anthony Greenhouse, University of California, Berkeley
- 1986 Mark Joseph Rudin, Purdue University
- 1987 Chwei-jeng (James) Liu, Texas A&M
- 1988 John Copeland, University of Massachusetts Lowell
- 1989 Christine L. Hartmann, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 1990 Marty A. Tries, University of Massachusetts Lowell
- 1991 Philip C. Fulmer, Texas A&M
- 1992 Brian Scott, University of Florida
- 1993 Mark Nell, University of Missouri, Columbia
- 1994 H. Justin Mohler, Colorado State University
- 1995 Jay M. Thompson, Texas A&M University
- 1996 Loren M. Thomsen, University of Florida
- 1997 Lionel G. Bouchet, University of Florida
- 1998 Jennifer Jacobs, University of Florida
- 1999 Kenneth G. Veinot, Georgia Institute of Technology
- 2000 Heather Gepford, Georgia Institute of Technology
- 2001 Chengyu Shi, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2002 Yayum Song, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- 2003 Baodong Wang, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2004 Jonathan Saleeby, University of Massachusetts Lowell
- 2005 Nino Chelidze, Idaho State University
- 2006 Scottie Walker, University of Florida
- 2007 Maia Avtandilashvili, Idaho State University-Pocatello

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President's Message

Do we have a shortage or a surplus of Health physicists? This has been the subject of an ongoing debate for decades. In a free-market economy, the relationship between supply and demand generally decides such questions. In many commodities, for example, a surplus might be diminished by storing it for use when the demand increases. But health physicist are not commodities, they are human beings with human needs, they cannot be put in a "deep freeze." While certain industries, such as pharmaceuticals and medical, have increased their horizon, the overall number of governmental positions, where most of the opportunities are, went down.

Naturally, it is easy to say that the cause is the imbalance between the supply and the demand, and one can find rational explanations for why this is so. Academe is in the business of teaching; it needs a certain number of students to maintain its staff, and, therefore, it does not adequately take into consideration the decrease in available jobs for its graduates. Industry and government needs health physicists who are up-to-date in new safety-oriented work environments, and, therefore, young graduates, middle-aged health physicists with family obligations and full-time jobs often have difficulty finding time to keep up with new knowledge. Since jobs are limited, it means that new hires entering the workforce push out older people at the other end of the pipeline.

When the Chapter was founded, the membership was homogeneous, and the services expected and provided were simple: newsletters and meetings. I believe the first responsibility of the chapter is to its own members. We must design our plans with an eye toward primarily the benefit of the members and then secondarily for that of the profession. This is an important reversal of the philosophy that has governed the chapter since its inception. I am therefore asking every member to use this principle in its deliberations, and I am prepared to appoint task forces for quick actions as needed. If the solutions require a new paradigm or even a new philosophy, so be it. We need more than a Strategic Plan, we need a Strategic Vision.

Some of you reading this message might think that the approach I propose cannot work, but I would ask you to think about it again. In 1884, there was an important gathering of the world's best physicists in Europe to discuss whether a heavier-than-air flying machine was physically possible. After two weeks of thorough consideration, this savant group delivered the verdict: Man will never fly! (I could be flippant and note that trans-Atlantic mail service was slow at that time, and after 19 years the verdict still had not reached the Wright brothers in time to stop their "impossible" experiment.) There is, however, a logical explanation: Aerodynamics was an unknown science; the physicists' verdict was based on past knowledge without considering possible new approaches. Of course, it's not easy to predict the future. Isaac Asimov, the famous science-fiction writer, in the 1940s predicted the increased use of computers in our lives. This was before the discovery of the transistor, and he could not foresee the computers' diminutive sizes; instead he visualized an ever-increasing size, even taking over the moon!

I am not minimizing the problems of the profession; they will not be solved overnight. Finding solutions cannot be achieved by a single person in one year. I fervently hope that these efforts will be a start and will continue after I hand over the helm to President-Elect Dawn Banghart in 2009. However, we must begin without delay.

(Continued on next page)

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(President's Message, cont)

As you can see, I do not consider the chapter presidency as a one-person, one-year effort. I am working closely with the current presidential succession, Immediate Past-President John and Dawn, to act in unison. We will work together with the Board to utilize everyone for this purpose. We also want to involve our member in every way possible, creating local and regional task forces as needed to give every willing member an opportunity to join this effort. In the past, we frequently overlooked the tremendous talents available at the grassroots level, and we failed to seek input from this resource.

The key to the success of our chapter is a grassroots approach! A favorite ploy by some politicians is to promise easy-sounding, "pie-in-the-sky" solutions that frequently sound condescending: "We know what to do, just trust us." Similarly, some of the past efforts focused on convincing the members that "top-down" solutions were best for them: "Try it, you'll like it!" Such attitudes may have been the result of overconfidence, lack of input, or other benevolent reasons. It is not important how it happened or why. I have frequently quoted Winston Churchill's warning against debating the past, because by doing so we may miss the future. Who did what and why is immaterial. The past is important only to ensure that we avoid repeating the same mistakes. What are we going to do now? Proposed actions should not be killed in advance by finding reasons why they cannot work; a more rational and pragmatic approach is to look for ways how new ideas can work.

I have intentionally not spelled out detailed plans. The most important part of my suggested approach is to involve every member who is willing in all phases of the planning and execution process. On one principle I will not waver: I will relentlessly press for action to improve the professional state of those whose work makes our profession so valuable, from the youngest health physics student to the most respected one. I am not proposing change for the sake of change, nor to terminate existing programs that work, but I am not afraid to try new ideas just because someone says they might not work.

These issues are complex and their solutions are difficult, but I won't paraphrase Churchill and offer only "blood, sweat, and tears" to solve them. We have things much easier. Remember, we are all in this together. If we follow this admonition and work together, the future will be bright.

I am prepared to lead, but I will need your help, cooperation, and support. I want to revive the spirit that prevailed when our organization began several decades ago. As we enter the 21st century, I invite you to join me in a new journey to seek out uncharted territories of ideas where perhaps no one has gone before. In earlier times, we frequently delayed action, choosing instead to continue the quest for perfect solutions. We cannot afford the luxury of endless discussion. We must listen to our members and start activities and programs in response to their needs. Try new things! Experiment!

We must deal with the problems in a different way: IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE!

Steven N. Bakhtiar, Ph.D.
NCCCHPS President

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2008-2009 NCCHPS Meeting Dates:

September 18, 2008
Francesco's, Oakland

November 2008
Location TBA

2009 Dates - TBA

Direct input for our next
newsletter to:

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<http://hpschapters.org/ncchps/>

The Next NCCHPS Meeting!

Thursday, September 18, 2008

Francesco's

8520 Pardee Drive at Hegenberger Road
Oakland CA 94621

Telephone: (510) 569-0653

[http:// www. francescosrestaurant.com/](http://www.francescosrestaurant.com/)

Parking: Free parking available at Francesco's

Dinner menu:

Grilled Chicken Breast with Button Mushroom
and Lemon Butter Sauce (Meat)

Fresh Fillet of Pacific Red Snapper (Fish)

Vegetable Manicotti - Seasonal Vegetables and
Four Cheese Blend (Veggie)

**Deadline: Please register by September 10,
2008 online.**

NCCHPS members - \$30 (\$35 at the door)

Members' spouses - \$35

Students - \$10

Non-NCCHPS members - \$40

Register for dinner ONLINE at

<http://hpschapters.org/ncchps/dinner.php3>

**Only online registrations will be accepted.
Contact Jesse Hendricks ONLY if you en-
counter problems with online registration:
jhendricks@berkeley.edu**

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