Wayne Hazen (SB. Thesis advisor: Wayne Nottingham.) attended an MIT Town Meeting this winter of physicists who were concerned with the impending demise of Institute shop facilities. Otherwise, his “professional activity” consists of a weekly brown bag lunch with several retired physicists at the University of Michigan, with whom he also travels a bit, e.g., to NYC for ballet, opera, etc.

Frank Jamerson (SB. Thesis advisor: David Frisch.) published the 2007 edition of Electric Bikes Worldwide Reports (ebwr.com). Twenty million Light Electric Vehicles were sold world-wide this year. Booming sales in China and India, in addition to growth in Europe and the U. S., suggests 50–100 million LEV units a year will be sold by 2017. Electric transportation is here!

Arthur Winston (PhD. Thesis advisor: Louis Osborne.) was the co-recipient this year of the National Academy of Engineering’s Bernard M. Gordon Prize for Innovation in Engineering and Technology Education. He is a former President and appointed Life Fellow of the IEEE, and remains active in pre-college issues for the organization.

Bjarne E. Ursin (SB) is spending a lot of time studying and working with super string, QED, and quantum gravity theories. The balance of his time is devoted to chairing legislative activity and education for safe boating in the U. S.; hobbies at home; and visiting children and grandchildren.

Jason Taylor (SB. Thesis advisor: Louis Osborne.) In the ’90s, Jason taught math and physics at Bentley College as physics department head. He was also an adjunct instructor in MIT’s Writing and Humanistic Studies program, until his car was stolen in front of Walker. This year, Jason wrote and illustrated a children’s book for Humanistic Studies program, until his car was stolen in front of Walker. This year, Jason wrote and illustrated a children’s book for the technology involved to be the solution to eliminating greenhouse gases and politically-motivated oil cartels.

James Schecher (SB. Thesis advisor: Sandborn Brown.) retired from PRC, where he had been a computer programmer.

Walter Helly (PhD. Thesis advisor: Philip Morse.) Aside from advisor Philip Morse, others who helped Walter along included Herman Feshbach and Bob Herman (then of General Motors). Today, Walter polishes antique cameras and takes cruises.

Burnell G. West (SB. Thesis advisor: David Luckey. PhD ’65, Colorado University.) was elected a Life Fellow of the IEEE in December 2005, which will come as quite a surprise to those of his friends in the MIT physics class of 1960, who may still recall how he was all thumbs in electronics lab. This event was followed by another career highlight: retiring in August of 2006.


Bruce Tarter (SB. PhD ’67, Cornell University.) retired from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in 2004, after 37 years of employment, where he served as Director from 1994–2002. He continues to work part-time at the Lab (mostly on its history), while serving on the Board of Directors of Draper Laboratory. Last year, Bruce chaired a national security panel of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which released the report, “The United States Nuclear Weapons Program: the Role of the Reliable Replacement Warhead.” He found it a fascinating technical and political project, but was reminded of how much more work is involved in chairing a group, rather than in simply being a participant.


Gary J. Linford (SB. Thesis advisor: Charles Townes. PhD ’71, University of Utah.) has been supporting the development of Prometheus inertial confinement fusion power plants. He considers the technology involved to be the solution to eliminating greenhouse gases and politically-motivated oil cartels.

Walter A. Simmons (SB. PhD ’69, Purdue University.) and his colleague S. Pakvasa posted a research paper on April 7, 2007, on quantum geometric phase.

Neal Carron (SB) recently published the physics textbook, useful in radiation studies, An Introduction to the Passage of Energetic Particles Through Matter. It’s available on-line, and its author welcomes feedback from fellow alums: ncarron@alum.mit.edu.

Gene Sprouse (SB. PhD ’68, Stanford University.) was appointed Editor-in-Chief of the American Physical Society (APS) in March 2007. As one of three co-equal operating officers of the APS, his
primary responsibility is the Physical Review series of physics journals. Sprouse is on leave from his professorship at Stony Brook University.

‘65

Andy Tanenbaum (SB. Thesis advisor: Minoru Oda.) is still a Professor of Computer Science at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. Last year, he managed to publish over a dozen papers, of which two won “Best Paper” awards. His MINIX 3 system (minix3.org) is starting to take off; it was downloaded almost 200,000 times in the past year. All in all, it is full steam ahead for Andy.

J. Craig Wheeler (SB. Thesis advisor: Charles Townes.) is currently President of the American Astronomical Society, where he’s leading efforts to grow its publications, The Astrophysical Journal and The Astronomical Journal, as well as expanding communication amongst the Society’s membership. Craig’s own research involves the astrophysics of exploding stars, with implications ranging from astrobiology to the “dark energy” driving the mysterious acceleration of the Universe. The second edition of his popular-level book, Cosmic Catastrophes: Exploding Stars, Black Holes, and Mapping the Universe, was recently released by Cambridge University Press. The film of his novel, The Krone Experiment, is available on DVD at thekroneexperiment.com.

‘70

David Cannell (PhD ’70, SB ’65. Thesis advisor: George Benedek.) is a Professor of Physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he’s now responsible for half of a flight experiment to test fundamental fluid properties, i.e., fluctuations in a fluid driven out of equilibrium by a heat flux. The experiment—named Gradflex (GRAdient Driven FLuctuations Experiment)—is a collaboration with Marzio Giglio of the University of Milan, whom David first met while a student in George Benedek’s group in the late ’60s. Gradflex is scheduled to be flown in a satellite for 12 days, beginning September 14, 2007. It’s part of the European Space Agency’s Foton M-3 mission.

‘71

James M. Turner (PhD. Thesis advisor: Joseph Binsack.) was selected as Deputy Director of the U. S. Department of Commerce’s National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), where he’ll manage NIST’s daily operations and assist in setting strategic directions. Prior to joining NIST, James served as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Nuclear Risk Reduction in the U. S. Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration.

‘72

James N. Hallock (PhD ’72, SB ’63. Thesis advisor: Harald Enge.) After more than 20 years as Manager of the Aviation Safety Division at the Department of Transportation’s Volpe Center, James was promoted to Senior Technical Expert for Air and Space Transportation Safety. The “space” part of the new title derives from his participation as a member of the space shuttle Columbia Accident Investigation Board in 2003. Now Jim can spend all his time on technical problems.

‘73

Steve Berger (PhD ’73, SB ’67. Thesis advisors: Bernard Feld, Lee Grodzins.) continues to teach and mentor in the New York City public school system in Queens. He’s tutoring students in the general areas of physics, math, and physical chemistry. In 2006, Steve received a “Master Instructor” award for superior teaching. Viola Szasz Ruck (SB. Thesis advisor: Sergio Fubini.) was promoted to Professor of Physics at North Lake College, Irving, TX. As a President’s Scholar, she delivered the school’s commencement speech this spring.

‘75

Francine Wright Bellson (SM. Thesis advisor: Daniel Kleppner.) designed, produced, and released her husband’s latest CD, The Sacred Music of Louie Bellson, available through cdbaby.com/louie-bellson or (800) 645-6673.

‘77

David Batchelor (SB. Thesis advisor: Stanislaw Olbert. PhD, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.) is a radiation physicist at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, where he first arrived in 1980 to study radiation from solar flares as a graduate student. His current research is on performing forecasts of radiation doses that must be tolerated by proposed spacecraft. He considers it an opportunity to ensure the safety and success of the future moon missions in the Constellation program, and it’s his first involvement with the human spaceflight projects.

‘79

James F. DeBroux (SM. Thesis advisor: Margaret MacVicar.) In mid-2006, Jim moved from his position as Group Director for Business Operations in the Advanced Concepts business unit of L-3 Communications-SYColeman to become the Vice President of Washington Operations for Digital Fusion, Inc., a small Huntsville-based company that specializes in research and engineering, IT, and acquisition and business support services. Digital Fusion works
primarily in the Federal sector and focuses on supporting space, missile, and aviation functions at Redstone Arsenal, AL.

‘82

José Antonio García-Barreto (PhD. Thesis advisor: Bernard Burke.) is an Associate Professor at the Institute of Astronomy at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. In October 2006, he published a new book, co-authored with Julio Martínez, *Solutions to Problems in Electromagnetic Theory*, a reference textbook for physics or mathematics graduate students.

‘84

Cyrus Taylor (PhD ’84, SB ’80. Thesis advisors: Ken Johnson, Philip Morrison.) was named interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University in July 2006 and permanent Dean in January 2007.

‘85

Nuri Dagdeviren (PhD. Thesis advisor: Arthur Kerman.) After spending two years in Seoul, Korea, managing Agere Systems’ mobile phone business with Samsung, Nuri is now the President of PINC Solutions in Berkeley, CA.

Megan Donahue (SB. Thesis advisor: Claude Canizares.) is a Professor of Astronomy and Physics at Michigan State University, where she studies clusters of galaxies using the three operational NASA Great Observatories: Chandra, Hubble, and Spitzer. In 2006, she was elected to a three-year term as councilor of the American Astronomical Society. Megan is also the co-author, with Jeffrey Bennett, Nicholas Schneider, and Mark Voit, of two popular introductory astronomy textbooks, *The Cosmic Perspective* and *The Essential Cosmic Perspective*, now in their fourth editions.

‘86

Stephen Y. Chou (PhD. Thesis advisors: Henry I. Smith, Marc Kastner, Dimitri Antoniadis.) was elected a member of the National Academy of Engineering this year “for contributions to nanoscale patterning and to the scaling of electronic, photonic, magnetic and biological devices.” Steve is the Joseph C. Elgin Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering at Princeton University.

‘88

Ofelia C. de Hodgins (SM. Thesis advisors: Keith Johnson, Donald Uhlman.) is a Six Sigma Black and Lean Enterprise Master, as well as the author of over thirty-two articles in scientific and technical journals, and more than 25 years in process engineering and excellence.

Joseph Harrington (SB. Thesis advisor: James Elliot. PhD ’95, *Earth, Atmospheric & Planetary Sciences.*) moved this year from a research position at Cornell University to a faculty position at the University of Central Florida. His research group recently made the first detection of thermal variations on an extrasolar planet, which was also the first direct detection of a non-transiting planet (published in *Science*). A subsequent *Nature* paper presented the first exoplanetary emission spectrum, with more announcements yet to come.

Ernest N. Prabhakar (SB) After three years spent in Sacramento while his wife pursued a residency in family medicine, Ernie moved back to the San Francisco Bay area. He’s still the Open Source Product Manager at Apple, as well as a Board Advisor to the Open Source Initiative, and regularly runs into many MIT alumni.

‘90

Marian (Shih) Kinnicutt (SB. Thesis advisor, Donald Heimann. PhD ’95, *University of Michigan.*) was recently promoted to full Professor of Physics at Saginaw Valley State University, Michigan, where she continues to serve as Chairperson of the Physics Department. Marian remembers with fondness her undergraduate thesis advisor, Don Heimann, and how he taught by example the importance of dealing fairly with all scientists when doing research. She also enjoys reminiscing about the other physics faculty whose classes she took, and tries to emulate them when teaching her own courses. She and her husband delight in watching their three-year-old daughter Emily growing up.

‘91

John T. Chen (SB. Thesis advisor: Stephen Meyert.) After spending several years working in both industry and start-ups, John joined Silicon Valley venture capital firm Battery Ventures, Inc., two years ago, and has enjoyed every minute of it. He spearheads the firm’s investments in advanced materials, nanotechnology, and clean technology companies, and has, in addition, completed the second year of his Kauffman Fellowship with Battery Ventures. John’s always on the lookout for promising technology companies that leverage materials science, and welcomes the chance to discuss opportunities with any MIT alumni (jchen@battery.com).

Michael Lercel (SB. Thesis advisor: Marc Kastner. PhD ’96, *Cornell University.*) was appointed Director of Lithography at SEMATECH in 2006, after serving as Associate Director. Along with the dynamics of the semiconductor lithography roadmap, Michael finds that balancing the research efforts in extending optical lithography and emerging litho technologies is a challenge.
Matt McCluskey (SB. Thesis advisor: Jonathan Wurtele.) was Acting Chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Washington State University this past year. He recently received a Department of Energy grant to study the optical and magnetic properties of zinc oxide nanoparticles doped with transition metals.

Edward A. Ajhar (PhD ’92, SB ’86.) currently serves as Chair of the Department of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Sciences at St. Thomas University, Miami Gardens, FL. He was recently named Interim Dean of the newly formed School of Science, Technology, and Engineering Management.

Scott Seo (SB. Thesis advisor: Walter Lewin.) After receiving an M.S. in Physics from the University of Wisconsin in 1994, Scott completed an M.D./Ph.D. at Baylor College of Medicine in 2003. He just completed his fourth and final year of residency training in Ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins, and joined a private practice in Connecticut.

Denise Ciotti Labieniec (SB.) still chairs the science department at The Winsor School for Girls in Boston, while teaching several levels of physics. Her big news is that she and husband Michael have welcomed a new son, Nicolo, into the world. Denise can’t believe she used to think that the all-nighters she pulled for quantum problem sets as an undergrad were bad...it’s nothing compared to feeding a newborn!

Ted Sung (PhD. Thesis advisor: Stephen Steadman.) has been keeping busy, particularly with his kids. He has a teenager, Jonathan, who just turned 13, as well as two girls: Leilani (9) and Michelle (6). For several years now, Ted has been coaching Jonathan and Michelle’s soccer teams, which has helped him to appreciate all the coaches he himself had in his time. He still plays soccer himself, as well as a lot of ice hockey in the winter. Since graduating from MIT, Ted has worked as a software developer at Intex Solutions, which specializes in structure finance.

Kevin Borland (SB. Thesis advisor: Earl Lomon.) was licensed and admitted to practice law in Virginia in March 2007. In his spare time, Kevin has begun preparing a database for comparing syntactical and lexical features of the Germanic languages and has done work in reconstructing proto-languages in the family, with emphasis on conversational usage. He has also done some independent research on the geographical features of the Pacific Rim mountain ranges this year, and took a road trip with his wife and son, encompassing nearly the entire length of the American Rockies.

Karen Thibault Bodnar (SB) recently earned an M.D. from the University of Florida, and will remain in Gainesville to complete a pediatric residency. She’s also happy to announce the birth of a daughter, Amelia Mae, in January 2007.

Edward Daw (PhD. Thesis advisor: Leslie Rosenberg.) is a lecturer in Physics and Astronomy at the University of Sheffield, U. K. His research involves experiments searching for weakly interacting dark matter, as well as experimental searches for gravitational waves. He is married to Anne Daw (MIT, M.Arch, 1998), with whom he has two children, Georgia (3) and Eli (1).

Andrew Howard (SB. Thesis advisor: Thomas Greytak.) was awarded the Ph.D. in Physics from Harvard University in June 2006 for work with Paul Horowitz on optical SETI (the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence). Last year was also notable for his personal life, as he married Sarah Muirhead in Olympic National Park. What a year! In the summer of 2007, he began a Charles Townes Postdoctoral Fellowship, working with Geoff Marcy on searches for extrasolar planets.

Eric B. Ford (SB. Thesis advisor: Frederic Rasio.) This summer, Eric moved from the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics to the University of Florida, where he has accepted a position as an Assistant Professor in the Astronomy Department.

Noah Bray-Ali (SB. Thesis advisor: Uwe-Jens Wiese.) After nine long years, Noah has made it back to his native Los Angeles. His current postdoc at the University of Southern California in the physics and astronomy department allows him to continue developing interests in condensed matter physics, first kindled at MIT by courses with Tom Greytak and Kerson Huang. After MIT, Noah spent a summer at the University of Tokyo as a participant in the MIT-Japan program, followed by UC-Berkeley’s Ph.D. program in physics.

Baruch Feldman (SB. Thesis advisor: Uwe-Jens Wiese.) is working on his Ph.D. in applied condensed matter theory with Prof. Scott Dunham at the University of Washington. He hopes to have his second publication and take the general exams this quarter.
Joshua Weitz (PhD. Thesis advisor: Daniel Rothman.) This January, Joshua began a position as an Assistant Professor in the School of Biology at Georgia Tech. He received a Career Award at the Scientific Interface from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund, in support of his interdisciplinary research on the evolutionary ecology of bacterial viruses.

Alex Wissner-Gross (SB, Physics/Electrical Engineering/Mathematics. Thesis advisor: Bolek Wyslouch.) is completing his Ph.D. in Physics as a Hertz Fellow at Harvard University. He was recently awarded the 2007 Dan David Prize Scholarship for Future Energy applications, the 2007 Graduate Student Silver Award from the Materials Research Society, and named one of the top six scientific film directors in the 2006 Materials Research Film Festival. Alex was also featured in New Scientist, and is the recipient of numerous physics teaching awards for his Wikipedia-based reading list generation software. More information is available at alexwg.org.

Xiaochao Zheng (PhD. Thesis advisor: William Bertozzi) In August 2006, Xiaochao accepted a position as an Assistant Professor of Physics at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Her area of research is experimental medium energy physics. Although she had never taught before joining UVA, at the completion of her first year she was awarded a University Teaching Fellowship.

Annemarie Grandke (SB. Thesis advisor: Thomas Greytak.) After receiving her M.Phil. in Politics from Oxford University in June 2006, Annemarie joined the Munich office of The Boston Consulting Group, where she focuses primarily on the consumer goods industry. The closest she has come thus far to doing any physics was when examining the physical implications of high pressure pasteurizing hazelnuts.

Michelle L. Povinelli (PhD. Thesis advisor: John Joannopoulos.) This June, Michelle was awarded a Fellowship for Women in Science, sponsored by L’Oreal-USA. The prize provides $20,000 of research funding to each of its five recipients, selected from a national applicant pool across all scientific disciplines.

Julia Steinberger (PhD. Thesis advisors: Thomas Greytak, Daniel Kleppner.) After a few career detours, including a stint as a radio news reporter in Geneva and participating in the 2005 United Nations World Summit for the Information Society, Julia found a new home in academia in the field of industrial ecology. Since May 2006, she has been a postdoc at the Universities of Lausanne and Zurich, and has accepted a position as a senior researcher at the Institute for Social Ecology of the University of Klagenfurt in Vienna.

Nasruddin Nazerali (SB) is glad to be back at MIT after one year of teaching high school mathematics, and hopes to complete his M.Eng. in Environmental Engineering this year. He’ll join the MIT Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences department’s Geophysics Ph.D. program this fall.

Sean P. Robinson (PhD ’05, SB ’99. Thesis advisors: Frank Wilczek, Edward Farhi.) Since June 2005, Sean has been the MIT Physics Department’s primary coordinator for construction of the new Green Center for Physics. With that now ending, he moves to the position of Technical Instructor, also in the MIT Physics Department, and will be involved in both 8.01 TEAL and 8.13 Junior Lab this fall. Sean continues theoretical research in general relativity and quantum field theory. He lives in Marshfield, MA, with his wife and two children.

David Chan (PhD. Thesis advisor: John Joannopoulos.) After finishing his Ph.D., David moved to New York and joined Goldman, Sachs & Co., as a strategist working in the equities division. In his spare time, when not performing FDTD simulations on stock indices and looking for exponentially divergent components, David can often be found running along the East River, schmoozing at cocktail parties, and enjoying the many cultural events that Manhattan has to offer.

Amanda Frye (SB) Since July of 2006, Amanda has been teaching physical science and physics to high school students in the Philadelphia public schools through Teach for America. She finds her students to be some of the brightest, most imaginative and amazing students she has ever met. Most of her students are lacking skills in math, so Amanda does a lot of conceptual and hands-on physics with them. Her MIT training has served her well in making amazing demonstrations possible on a shoe-string budget.