

letters

under way at AIP: For the short run, a procedure has been established for revising and updating PACS at regular intervals to take into account new developments in physics. For the long run, a study has been undertaken of the usefulness of PACS and possible alternatives to it in various contexts (journal subject indexes, abstracting journals, computer-assisted literature searches). While I cannot promise Hecht that he will find journal subject indexes more to his liking in the future, I can assure him that the editors do take his complaints and those of others seriously.

STANLEY G. BROWN
Editor, *Physical Review D*
11/82 Chairman, AIP Publication Board

Founding of the SSRL

I appreciate the notice concerning me in the "We Hear That" section in May (page 96). However, I should not have been mentioned in the context of "...founding the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory." Rather, it should have been noted that I was co-founder of that laboratory with Professor Sebastian Doniach of Stanford University's Department of Applied Physics.

WILLIAM E. SPICER
Stanford University
Stanford, California

7/82

Trends at PRL

It was most interesting to read the analysis of trends in research output and funding in November (page 9). I am particularly gratified at having statistics—without having to collect them myself—showing the steadily increasing part played by foreign authors in our journal.

My real reason for writing, however, is to correct a presumption made by the authors. The approximate constancy of the total number of letters per year published in PRL was not a matter of editorial mandate. There was one year in which the financial status of The American Physical Society induced the treasurer to request that we keep the journal at the same size it had been the year before, but that was after the plateau had been reached, and we had to make no special effort to implement the request. I could suggest several possible contributing causes, but that is beside the point. The plateau was maintained from outside the journal.

It should be noted that this correction does not vitiate any conclusions of the article. Rather, it strengthens the case for a tendency toward decline in

the vigor of the US physics in general, and of our industry-based physics in particular.

GEORGE L. TRIGG
Editor
Physical Review Letters

11/82

Heat from junk mail

Having published three letters opposing junk mail (Blosser, April 1981, page 74; Vossen, August 1981, page 71; Elmer, November, page 13) I hope *PHYSICS TODAY* will air another view. I find and purchase several products per year through junk mail. Others must also, or else advertising this way would not be worthwhile for the companies doing it. Eliminating this mail would force such companies to use other presumably more expensive means of advertising, which would then be reflected in higher prices for their products. Thus eliminating junk mail would raise the price of doing experimental physics. I am opposed to that.

There is another benefit from junk mail on our campus. Combustible trash is used to produce energy for heating and cooling. Burning such trash saves directly on fuel costs, and it also saves on the cost of trucking trash away. Our program has been so successful that we are making arrangements to obtain such material from nearby industries and a junior college. Technical details may be obtained by writing the Utilities Department, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Florida 32216. Instead of being annoyed by junk mail, we are thankful for the contribution to our heating and air conditioning.

JAY S. HUEBNER
University of North Florida
Jacksonville, Florida

12/82

I find William Elmer's complaint rather devoid of imagination; for many physics- and technology-minded fire-place owners, the arrival of junk mail is an energy-blessed happening for the winter months. It provides an average monthly intake of about 20 kg solid fuel with a combustion heat of roughly 8 liters (2 gallons) of heating oil.

The accompanying gift of business reply cards will not only perpetuate this welcome supply, but also helps to provide job security for the mailman.

R. GERHART
USANVL/ACD
Ft. Belvoir, Virginia

12/82

Chandrasekhar and Eddington

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continued on page 101

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