

AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION PRESENTS AWARDS AT SPRING MEETING

At its spring meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, the American Geophysical Union presented Eugene N. Parker of the University of Chicago with the 1990 William Bowie Medal, AGU's highest honor. The award citation called Parker's development of the solar wind concept "one of the most important foundations of modern astrophysics." According to the citation, the idea of a "supersonic solar wind flowing radially and continuously from the Sun" was essentially new when Parker introduced it in 1958. (See *PHYSICS TODAY*, April, page 91.) Most successful recent models of cosmic ray modulation by the solar wind use an equation developed by Parker in the 1960s, the citation said. Parker has also contributed to the understanding of other geophysical and astrophysical phenomena, including the Earth's magnetic dynamo and the dynamics of the interstellar medium. He is currently studying magnetic fields and fluid motions on the Sun (see his article in *PHYSICS TODAY*, July 1987, page 36).

Parker received a PhD in physics from Caltech in 1951. He was on the faculty of the University of Utah until 1955, when he joined the University of Chicago. He is now a professor in the departments of astronomy and physics at Chicago and is a member of the Enrico Fermi Institute.

Also at the spring meeting, William R. Young of the University of California, San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography received the James B. Macelwane Medal, which recognizes contributions to geophysics by a young scientist. The award citation praised Young's theoretical work on ocean circulation, which has contributed to the "revival of serious study of the analytical theory of the [ocean's] general circulation."

Young received his PhD in physical oceanography from MIT and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in 1981. He is now an associate professor at Scripps.

Paul A. Witherspoon, a faculty



Eugene N. Parker

senior scientist at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, received the Robert E. Horton Medal, which is given every other year for contributions to the geophysical aspects of hydrology. Witherspoon was cited for being "among the first to recognize the implications of the digital computer

in the Earth sciences" and for foreseeing the importance of simulating hydrogeologic systems in engineering design. Witherspoon received a PhD in geology and physical chemistry from the University of Illinois in 1957. He then joined the faculty of the University of California, Berkeley, where he is now a professor emeritus of geological engineering. He helped organize Lawrence Berkeley's Earth sciences division, of which he was associate director and head from 1977 to 1982.

AGU presented Joel Achenbach, a reporter at *The Miami Herald*, with this year's Walter Sullivan Award for Excellence in Scientific Journalism. Achenbach was chosen for his 17 December 1989 *Miami Herald* article entitled "Second Thoughts," which describes the practical and philosophical aspects of time measurements. Achenbach received a bachelor's degree in political science from Princeton University in 1982. He then began working for *The Miami Herald*, where he now writes for *Tropic*, the newspaper's Sunday magazine.

SKUDRZYK, HOFFLER HONORED AT ASA SPRING MEETING

The late Eugen J. Skudrzyk has been posthumously awarded the Acoustical Society of America's 1990 Gold Medal, the society's highest honor. Skudrzyk's wife, Liselotte, accepted the medal at the ASA spring meeting in State College, Pennsylvania on 21-25 May. ASA cited Skudrzyk for his "extensive contributions to the advancement of acoustics—particularly structural and underwater acoustics—as a researcher, author and educator." During the early part of his career, Skudrzyk was active in designing concert halls, and he designed and tested underwater sound absorbers as part of a team led by Erwin Meyer of the University of Berlin. After coming to the US in

1955, Skudrzyk shifted to hydroacoustics, structural vibration and sound radiation. Among his contributions, Skudrzyk developed a general theorem that describes the response of complex structures to forced excitation, which he called the "mean-value theorem for complex vibrators."

Skudrzyk received his PhD in 1939 from the University of Berlin. In 1947 he joined the faculty of the Technical University of Vienna, where he was head of the Institute for Low-Frequency Technique from 1950 to 1955. He joined the applied research laboratory and physics department of Pennsylvania State University in 1955, and he remained there until his death in February.