

particles and fields and physics of beams, and APS has sought funding from NSF to cover the travel expenses of invited US speakers.

In other Soviet-related activity, APS President-Elect Ernest Henley (University of Washington) was to represent the society at the First International A. D. Sakharov Conference on Physics, held in Moscow on 27–31 May.

Representing the European Physical Society, Maurice Jacob of CERN visited the APS headquarters on 3 April and met with Werthamer, Lustig and Roy Rubinstein, the chair of the Subcommittee on International Scientific Affairs. EPS is a loose federation of national physical societies in Europe. According to Lustig, its divisional structure and public affairs committees are strikingly similar to those of APS, and the officers would like to see more contact between the units of each society.

Other issues

As APS redefines its international role, Bloembergen says, one important issue to be resolved is whether the society should consider forming alliances with other major physics organizations, in addition to the reciprocal membership agreements it already has with the German, Japanese and Soviet physical societies. There is a possibility that APS could be inundated by requests from foreign societies, which Bloembergen feels

would place undue burdens on the present officers.

Another concern, says Bloembergen, is that there are now a large number of prominent foreign physicists—some of them Nobel Laureates—who are not APS Fellows. In the past fellows were nominated exclusively through the divisions, whose selection committees considered a nominee's involvement with the division as part of the criteria. Because most overseas members have no division affiliation, they were frequently passed over. To remedy this situation, the Fellowship Committee, which is chaired by Henley, recently changed the nomination process to allow nominees not associated with a division to be considered directly by the Fellowship Committee.

Werthamer feels that the society also needs to examine how its international activities are administered. "The current programs have developed in response to need, and thus the staff support for them is fragmented," he says. At his urging, the council recently authorized the creation of a 1–2 year post for a Director of International Scientific Affairs, who will help coordinate and plan APS's international activities.

"It's important to recognize that APS is an increasingly international organization," says Werthamer. "I believe our programs and operations should fully reflect that."

APS DIVISIONS STEP UP RECRUITING EFFORTS TO BOOST MEMBERSHIP

In the face of declining memberships, a number of APS divisions have undertaken strenuous recruitment efforts to attract new members and encourage lapsed members to rejoin.

The drop in division memberships resulted from the reinstatement in January 1989 of a \$5 annual fee for each subunit. Prior to 1980 APS members were charged \$2 for each subunit they belonged to, but the fees were suspended that year pending installation of a new computer system and database. The reinstatement of fees prompted some members to drop divisional affiliations, raising concern within some divisions because of new governance rules.

According to the revised APS constitution approved last year (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, June 1990, page 87), divisions are required to maintain a membership of at least 3% of the total APS membership. Divisions whose count is below or only slightly above the critical 3% level are in danger of

losing their divisional status and reverting to topical groups—a serious matter because divisions are entitled to a voting representative on the council, while topical groups are not.

Divisions whose count was below 3% at the time the constitution was adopted, such as the divisions of biological physics and high polymer physics, were grandfathered for four years. At the end of 1994, divisions that still fall short of the 3% mark will be reclassified as topical groups.

Innovative strategies

To boost their memberships, the divisions of high polymer physics and biological physics have adopted an innovative strategy: They are now encouraging members to cross-register. "A lot of our people can find scientific common ground," says Stephen H. Carr (Northwestern University), secretary-treasurer of the division of high polymer physics. His division has also mobilized a task force of 45

"hard core" members to develop other ways to raise membership. High polymer physics has now increased its membership from 2% to 2.5% of the APS total, and Carr is confident the division will meet the 3% requirement before the end of 1994.

Eugenie Mielczarak (George Mason University), secretary-treasurer of the biological physics division, says she is urging current members to actively recruit among their colleagues. And like many subunits, the division is making a strenuous effort to recruit more graduate students.

Although the division of astrophysics was well above the 3% mark prior to reinstatement of the \$5 charge, it has since dropped very close to the cutoff point. Secretary-treasurer Frank C. Jones (Goddard Space Flight Center) now plans to use the APS membership database to target potential new members.

The division of fluid dynamics is currently hovering at about 3.1% of total membership. Unfortunately, cross-registration is not a viable strategy, says secretary-treasurer Russell J. Donnelly (University of Oregon), because there are no APS divisions with related fields of interest. "Very few of our members are 'card-carrying' physicists," explains Donnelly, which also makes it difficult to recruit physics graduate students. Donnelly has written several letters to division members; the last one, which included an appeal from division chair Katepalli Sreenivasan, was moderately successful.

Although the situation is less critical for the larger APS divisions—nuclear physics and condensed matter physics—they too have seen some drop in membership, and fewer members does translate into less money to cover expenses. Accordingly, both divisions have been sending their members information about division activities, events and benefits.

APS President Nicolaas Bloembergen says that in exchange for their \$5 dues, subunit members receive substantial services, as well as the opportunity to develop important contacts within their subfields. Of the current \$5 fee, \$4 is used to support newsletters, meetings and other activities that directly benefit the subunit's members. Bloembergen also points out that subunits play a central role in organizing general APS meetings and advising editors of the various subsections of *Physical Review*. "The subunits are the vital organs of the society," he says. "I hope all members will join one or more of them to get the full benefits of APS membership." ■