

RU Physics/Physical Science Alumni Newsletter—Spring 2011

A Record Number of Graduates

A record number of physics grads

Radford University Physics on Facebook

A new building is coming

Science Days Update

Physics Research at Fall AGU meeting

Contact Information

Dr. Walter Jaronski
wjaronsk@radford.edu

Dr. Rhett Herman
rherman@radford.edu

Dr. Brett Taylor
betaylor@radford.edu

Dr. Jack Brockway
brockway@radford.edu

Ms Libby Watts
lwatts@radford.edu

Online:
<https://php.radford.edu/~physics/>



On Saturday May 7, 2011 Radford University Physics had a record number of graduates walk through the Commencement line. A total of 11 (yes e-l-e-v-e-n, $e^{2.39790}$, 14,641^{1/4}) Physics majors had their names called in the ceremony with the rest of the College of Science and Technology (CSAT).

The top photo shows 8 of our newest grads in line before crossing the stage in the CSAT ceremony at Cupp Stadium. The bottom photo shows Jonathan Haines, Tyler Legat, Brian Veitz and Physics Dean's Scholar Elizabeth Gichana showing off their mortar board designs at the annual Graduates' Breakfast prior to the day's festivities.



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A New Building is Coming!

All of you have been in the oh-so-familiar conjoined Reed Hall/Curie Hall science complex for more hours than you might care to count. In the near future there will more opportunities for physics majors to not have a life outside the science buildings. Nearly two years ago the state gave permission for bonds to be sold for the planning and construction of a new science building. This building, dubbed (for now) the Radford University Center for the Sciences has been in the planning stages for nearly a year. The planning committee is composed

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of faculty from the departments and programs that will be part of the science complex composed of Reed Hall, Curie Hall and the new building. The 6 departments/programs involved are Physics, Geology, Chemistry, Biology, Anthropological Sciences and the Forensic Science Institute. Also slated for inclusion in this complex will be the CSAT Dean's Office suite and the CSAT Advising Center.

The committee spent the second half of 2010 determining the architectural/engineering (A/E) firm that would design the new building. The firm EYP (Einhorn Yaffee Prescott) was chosen by the committee and we're excited to be working with their team. This spring has seen a number of meetings that have determined the space needs for each program. For physics our current overall space is approximately 6,500 square feet. In the new complex we are slated to have nearly 11,000 square feet! That includes a **new** planetarium.

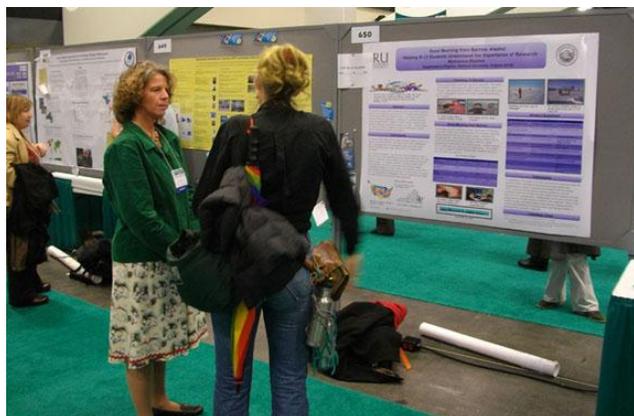
The new building will be located in the parking lot on the north (Main Street) side of Curie Hall. It will join to Curie Hall which means that part of that impossibly-bad brick shroud will actually come off. (Unfortunately the whole shroud will not come down but at least it's a start.) The new construction will have the same square footage as Reed and Curie Halls combined. Physics will remain in Reed/Curie since we need space rather than the modern fume hoods and specialized plumbing required by Chemistry and Biology. However just having our own space—our own **adequate** space—is something that we and our students will greatly appreciate and use. The move-in date for the new building is July 1, 2014. Extensive renovations of Curie Hall and partial renovations of Reed Hall are slated to start immediately after that date. Those renovations could take up to 2 years. But that means that by July 1 2016 the space for lab sciences at Radford University will have doubled.

Science Days Update

Almost all of you were here as youngsters occasionally "invaded" Reed-Curie during the year. You were puzzled at these kids wandering around as if they somehow were supposed to be there. And they were! Recent graduates know all about the RU Science Days. These are day-long field trips for local—and some not-so-local—K-12 classrooms designed to expose them to the excitement of all of the lab sciences at RU. In the calendar year 2010 we hosted nearly 2,000 Science Day visitors for planetarium shows, a physics show, a chemistry show, a tour of the geology museum and a tour of the greenhouse. In the photo at right Dr. Jack Brockway and 2010 grad Kati Abrell Melgarejo show kids how the hovercraft works. Dr. Brockway and Kati will then have the kids playing "kids hockey" in the Reed-Curie hallway.



Students and Faculty Present Research at International Meeting



In December two RU Physics faculty members and three students attended the 2010 Fall Meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco. They presented the results of their work in Barrow, Alaska in February-March of 2010. Physics adjunct instructor Ms. Mythianne Shelton (green coat at left) presented her poster about the educational outreach she coordinated in Barrow. Titled "Good Morning from Barrow, Alaska! Helping K-12 students understand the importance of research" her poster described her daily

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Skype™ contacts with several K-12 classrooms in southwestern Virginia. She coordinated sessions involving the researchers and the kids back in Virginia. After being online with the classrooms from 6-9am she then assumed her role as a full participant in the on-ice research. This experience will form the basis for further collaborations with Dr. Rhett Herman and the next Arctic Geophysics research class, to be offered in February-March of 2012.

RU physics graduate Jeremy McLaughlin (blue shirt at right), physics major Jason McLarty (beige shirt), Southwest Virginia Governor's School and RU Arctic Geophysics special topics course student Biyuan Zhaogong (black dress), and Southwest Virginia Governor's School teacher, RU physics graduate and RU Instructor of Physics Dan Blake (not pictured) presented two posters on their continuing work with Dr. Herman using remote sensing methods for studying the sea ice.



Don't forget our Physics Faculty/Alumni Scholarship Fund. You can donate to this fund at <http://www.active.com/donate/ruphysics>.

Note that some \$\$ amounts are more 'fun' than others for your donations. Be creative!

PS—Let us know how you are doing! Please email Dr. Rhett Herman (rherman@radford.edu) with an update. We would love to hear from you.