The condensed matter will be located on the first floor and research labs as well as the mechanical and electrical work for the two story western extension of the building is complete. Yet to be completed is the story (basement plus six floors) research tower and the four floor corridor in the PA Building. Tom Osgood attended our weekly colloquia until he was into his 90s and many of us enjoyed conversations with him at the pre colloquium coffee sessions. When he died on October 15, 1992, at the age of 92 his heirs established the Thomas H. Osgood Memorial Award for Faculty Excellence in Teaching. Two awards are presented each year to recognize excellence in undergraduate teaching - one to a tenured faculty member and the other to a yet untenured person. The first awards were presented to Jerry Cowen and Michael Thoennessen in 1995.

The Sherwood K. Haynes Award for Outstanding Graduate Student was established in recognition of Sherwood Haynes’s strong impact on the growth of our graduate program during his ten-year tenure as Department Chair starting in 1958. Because of his unrelenting recruiting efforts the number of enrolled graduate students more than quadrupled during the period when he was in charge. Consequently, when he retired as chair this award was established to commemorate his successful efforts. Since 1970 thirty-eight students completing PhDs have been recipients of the annual SKH award. Those selected were recognized for their academic performance, success in their research and timely completion of the dissertation and promise for a successful career as physicists. Most of the awardees have indeed gone away from MSU and lived up to the promise which led to the award.

The Bruce VerWest Award was established in the early 80s with funds donated by Bruce J. VerWest (BS ’71) and has been awarded since 1983 to the outstanding student majoring in Physics or Astronomy who was entering his/her senior year. The basis of the award, as designated by VerWest, was to be strictly on performance in academic work and, in most cases, research participation during the three years leading to the senior year, irrespective of financial need. Some years we have had multiple winners of this award (in 1988, for example, Tim Wagenmaker, Robert Pelak, and Richard Radtke all had GPAs greater than 3.9 and had participated in research leading to the award). Around the Department

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Associate Chair for Operations

Eugene J. Kales
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Michigan Physics Alliance, and with programs for high school teachers and high school students (CHAMP Program); Thomas H. Osgood Teaching Award (Non-Tenured) to Rong Liu; Thomas H. Osgood Teaching Award (Tenured) to Vladimir Zelevinsky; Distinguished Staff Award to be shared by Amparo Alvarado and Janice Ridenour. Longevity recognition: Marc Conlin 30 years of service to MSU; Janice Ridenour 25 years, Eugene Kales 20, Thomas Palazzolo and John McIntyre. David Oostdyk, senior, received Leroy G. Augustin award from College of Natural Science. Emil Bozin won the “Paulting Poster Prize” at the annual meeting of the American Crystallographic Association in July 1999. Julius Kovacs received the CNS Alumni Meritorious Award. William Hartmann and Harry Weerts were named CNS Distinguished Faculty, and Bill has just been named President-elect of the Acoustical Society of America. Books have been published by Wolfgang Bauer, Phillip Duxbury, Thomas Kaplan, Michael Thorpe, and Gary Westfall. Timothy Beers has been invited to give a lecture this fall in Cambridge, England, before the Society for Application of Research as part of their Lecture Series. Edwin Kashy, University Distinguished Professor, has been selected to receive the William Elgin Wickenden Award in recognition of his paper “Using Networked Tools to Promote Student Success in Large Classes” which was published in the October 1998 Journal of Engineering Education. C. Konrad Gelbke was honored by the Michigan Association of Governing Boards as one of two MSU faculty for distinguished scholarly activity and public service. Wolfgang Bauer received the Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation Distinguished Senior U. S. Scientist Award.

Alumni News

Stuart Tessmer (above) was awarded a prestigious Sloan Foundation Fellowship as a young scholar of outstanding promise. Gary Westfall and Raymond Brock were named American Physical Society Fellows. Society of Physics Students recently elected: Jiris Stueland, President; Erik Strahler, Vice President; Desdom Kursinsky, Treasurer; Lynn Carlson, Secretary; Zachary Constan, Graduate Rep; Amanda Bayless, Senior Rep; Andy Rogers, Junior Rep. MSU Student Employee of the Year Finalist Nathan Verhanovitz, Honorable Mention Christina Bright and Michelle Busch.

Science Theatre

I thought I was going to go to the meeting, eat the free pizza and get the heck out of there. I could not have been more wrong. Even though the pizza was great, the meeting proved to be intriguing beyond my wildest expectations. Little did I know that two years later I’d become the Director of Science Theatre. At first I thought Science Theatre was some sort of weird play. Again I was wrong.

Science Theatre is a science outreach organization comprised of a group of graduate and undergraduate students here at Michigan State University. Currently there are five divisions including Engineering, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Computer Science. We travel to a plethora of K-12 schools and perform demonstrations that convey scientific principles in a fun and exciting manner. Our demonstrations come in two flavors: stage shows and hands-on demos. The stage shows are usually for larger audiences while the hands-on demos are more personalized—perfect for small groups of kids. Some of our demos include methanol cannons, hovercraft, police radar, Bernoulli’s Principle, logic gates, acids & bases, bed of nails, and color vision.

Not only do we go to K-12 schools, but we also perform on larger platforms. Our biggest show, by far, is Science Day at Meridian Mall. We bring out all of our hands-on demos and perform a few stage shows. Other events we usually participate in include Chemistry Week and Science Olympiad.

Believe it or not we have even more things going on than shows. Currently we are working on publishing our third edition of Recipes for Science. This book is a guide to our demonstrations for schoolteachers. Another activity we have is responding to “Ask Science Theatre” questions. Our webpage receives many students asking questions, such as “Why is the sky blue?” or “How do fish breathe?” Science Theatre attempts to answer all their questions in order to keep them interested in science.

Students who volunteer for Science Theatre gain amazing amounts of knowledge, pride, and confidence. Even though you may be a Physics student you can still take part in activities put on by other areas of Science Theatre. This allows students to learn demos not in their discipline. Seeing the excitement and look of realization in the eyes of kids brings an amazing sense of pride. Finally, talking in front of 10-2000 students gives Science Theatre members fantastic public speaking experience. If you would like to find out more about Science Theatre, please visit our website located at http://www.scientetheatre.org or e-mail us at sciencect@pa.msu.edu.

Phil Zecher (right) has decided to return to academia and will be enrolled in the PhD program in Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Michigan in the Fall. At this time he is in Nice, France enrolled in a language course. Damian Handzy Ph.D. ’95 and Phil Zecher Ph.D. ’96, together with another partner, have started “Investor Analytics LLC”, a company that analyses financial portfolios and provides interactive drill-down reports on the web. Much of the information they provide is the result of their own statistical analyses which concentrate on the risk taken in a portfolio. They have recently hired former NSCL REU student Sherry Campbell (nee Wolfe), and have just moved into new offices off Wall Street. They can be reached at dhandzy@iallc.com and pzech@iallc.com, and their site can be found at http://www.iallc.com. Anyone traveling to New York City is welcome to stop by.