

Creighton Physics Club Celebrates 50th Anniversary

History: Just over 50 years ago, in the fall of 1962, 13 students met to draft bylaws for what was to become the Creighton University Physics Club. The charter members were: **Richard J. Brinks, Robert E. Chaney, Jr., Bernard G. Corrigan, Carl R. Distafano, Joseph F. Fennell, Jerry P. Hart, Richard E. Keating, Timothy J. Novotny, Richard W. Ott, Morris B. Pongratz, Gerald T. Schneider, Gerald L. Strohmeier, and Clifford J. Sturek.** The faculty moderator was **Thomas H. Zepf**, an assistant professor of physics in his first year at Creighton. He had suggested the club and guided its formation. By the end of the 1962-1963 academic year, membership had grown to 30 students.

The goals of the Physics Club, as stated in the original bylaws, were to promote interest, understanding and activity in physics. Members were encouraged to do original research and to give talks on topics of current interest.

On April 22, 1968, the Physics Club became a charter chapter of the **Society of Physics Students**, an American Institute of Physics replacement for its former *Student Section* organization of which our Physics Club was a member.

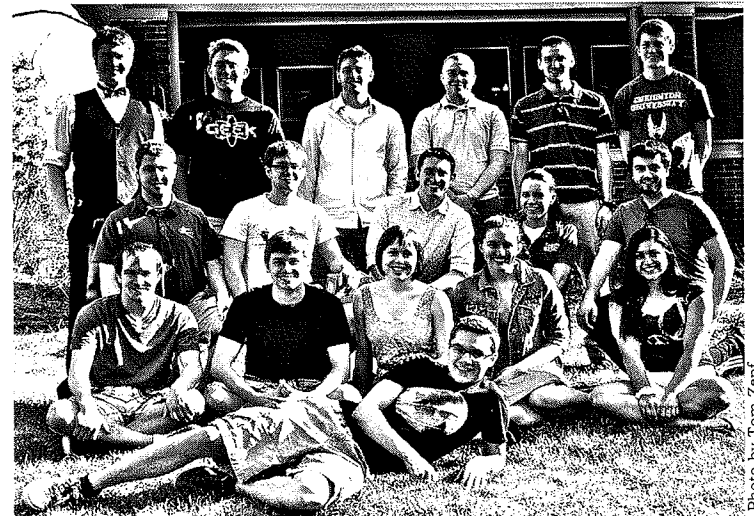
In 1982 the necessary steps were taken by **Dr. Tom Zepf**, then physics chairman, to establish a Creighton University Chapter of **Sigma Pi Sigma**, the National Physics Honor Society. An installation ceremony on December 5 saw the induction of 15 members who met the eligibility standards.

Activities: During its first year, in May of 1963, the Physics Club joined with the Math Club to run a Field Day and Open House for Omaha-area high school students. Its purpose was to encourage local high school students to take a deeper interest in math and physics and to promote future study at Creighton University. This effort evolved into an annual event that continues to this day, hosted by the Creighton University Society of Physics Students (SPS) and known as **The Physics Field Day for High School Students**. Nebraska and Iowa high school students come to compete in contests involving the basic concepts of physics they are learning about in their classes.

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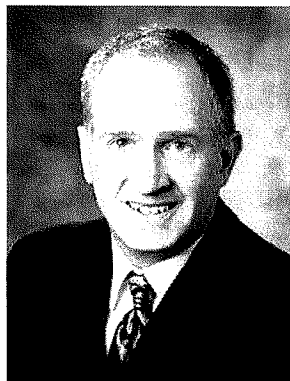
Members of the 1962-1963 Physics Club who were present for this photo from the 1963 Bluejay yearbook: Back row: B. Chaney, G. Schmeider, secretary; R. Keating, president; P. Foran, C. Maggiore. Middle row: R. Curran, C. Sturek, publicity chair; G. Strohmeier, J. Fennell. Front row: M. Pongratz, vice president; R. Brinks, R. Ott, K. Maier.



Members of the 2012-2013 Physics Club who attended the 2013 Evening of Reflection: Back row: N. Horst, M. Lehnertz, C. Meyer, J. Rogers, M. Armbruster, W. Graft. Middle row: J. Bang, vice president; N. Holman, secretary; B. Schmeidentberger, E. Borchers, G. Batakin. Front row: R. Ford, A. Hagen, K. Bauer, K. Ward, president; D. Desa. Reclining: R. Gnabasik.

... and about our Physics Alums

John A. Clifford, BS'78, wrote to express his sorrow about the passing of Dr. Kennedy. (See his humorous anecdote on p. 5.) After majoring in physics Jack attended Creighton School of Law, graduat-



Jack Clifford

ing in 1981. He went to work in Minneapolis with a small firm of patent and trademark lawyers which, 32 years later, has grown from 22 lawyers to about 105 lawyers and patent agents. And he has gone from the youngest lawyer in the firm to being the "senior partner" with the longest tenure. He says: "Studying physics and then going to law school turned out to be good for me. I am licensed as an attorney in Minnesota, Arizona, Nebraska, and before the United States Patent and Trademark Office. I have lived through the explosion of patent law. During my career, the total number of issued U.S. patents has doubled!" He says most of his practice involves trademark matters, and he has registered over 4,000 U.S. trademarks over the years.

Jack has three grown children. He loves to vacation in Scottsdale, Ariz., particularly during cold weather. He and his wife Kathleen live in Edina, Minn., with three cats and a poodle. His mom still runs The Afternoon gift shop, with two locations in Omaha and one at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn.

Fr. Andrew Ekpenyongy, S.J. Ph.D., MS'07, recently had a third article published based on his Ph.D. dissertation at Cambridge. He said the physics and research skills he learned at Creighton contributed immensely to the success of his research at Cambridge.

Andrea Schiemann Ross, BS Phy'97, was an invited guest at our 2012 Evening of Reflection. After majoring in physics at Creighton, Andrea completed a master's degree in physics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her career developed rapidly, first as a sales engineer for Universal Silencer, then as a business practices specialist at Kraft Foods Group, and now as the project portfolio manager for Mutual of Omaha. Andrea shared with us some of the highly successful and satisfying career experiences she has had using insights and skills she acquired in studying physics.



Andrea Schiemann Ross is seen here at the 2012 Evening of Reflection. Dr. Patricia Soto, Physics Club moderator, is looking on in the background.

In Memoriam

Rosemary Kellen Boyle, BSPhy '85, MS'86, died at the age of 51 on Oct. 26, 2012, 19 months after being diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. Rose was born in Le Mars, Iowa. She is survived by her husband, Mike; her children Lizzie, Connor and Kieran; her parents of Alton, Iowa; sisters; brothers; and many nieces and nephews.



Rosemary Kellen Boyle

Rose was a teaching fellow in physics while working on her master's degree at Creighton. She married Mike Boyle on Dec. 21, 1985. After moving with Mike to Seattle in 1986, she studied at the University of Washington where she earned a master's degree in genome sciences and was a research fellow in the departments of molecular biotechnology and bioengineering.

Rose was honored at the 2012 Leadership Dinner for her 17 years of volunteer services at Seattle Country Day School where her children attended. She also served on the board of directors of the Seattle Children's Theater and was instrumental in the growth of Explorations in Math, a nonprofit organization with a mission to build a sustainable math culture in elementary school.

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