

Chapter News

North Central Chapter

Michael Lewandowski, CHP



The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum was the setting for the North Central Chapter of the Health Physics Society's (NCCHPS) fall topical meeting, "Reflections on the 2006 Polonium Poisoning Event," 19 October 2007. Mike Lewandowski, then chapter president-elect, and Andy Kiorpes, president of the Northland Chapter of the Society of Toxicology (NLSOT), welcomed attendees to the joint meeting of the NCCHPS and the NLSOT.

Lewandowski thanked meeting sponsors and recognized NCCHPS members Gen Roessler and David Paulu for their roles in bringing the meeting to reality. HPS President-elect Dick Toohey kicked off the day-long meeting with an interesting and detailed summary of the radiobiology and toxicology of polonium. That presentation set the stage for Michael Bailey from the United Kingdom's Health Protection Agency to provide a compelling and engaging chronology of the 2006 London polonium poisoning event and explanation of the Health Protection Agency's role in the response to that event.

Bailey was awarded the chapter's annual Robert G. Wissink Memorial Lectureship and his attendance at the chapter meeting was made possible through the generous support by contributions from Nuclear Management Company, Mayo Clinic, and 3M. Bailey held the audience in rapt attention and then fielded numerous questions. Due to the ongoing criminal investigation of the poisoning, Bailey had to defer answers to some of the questions.

After a short break where attendees spoke personally with Toohey and Bailey, visited sponsoring affiliate members, and refilled their coffee cups, Paul Schmidt from the Wisconsin Radiation Protection Section provided a brief summary of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's response, using materials graciously provided by Bob Whitcomb.

HPS Media Relations Liaison Kelly Classic discussed the HPS Media Relations activities that coincidentally anticipated the U.S. media interest in the story and positioned the HPS to be able to swiftly meet the media's needs.

Following a break for lunch, Duane Hall (retired 3M) and Fred Entwistle, from 3M, reflected on the manufac-

ture and use of static-eliminating devices containing ^{210}Po .

Dennis Walter, from Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management, invited the audience to participate in the Minnesota Citizen's Corp as a way to serve our local communities.

Another short break allowed the attendees to visit with representatives from Global Dosimetry, Image Technology, and Philotechnics, who along with MGI Pharma sponsored the meeting.

Dick Toohey ended the meeting's technical program with an entertaining and thought-provoking presentation, "Why No One Believes Us: Cognitive Neuroscience and Radiation Risk."

The meeting ended with the NCCHPS and NLSOT breaking for their respective business meetings.

Highlights of the NCCHPS business meeting included Marc Martz describing the chapter's plans for participating at the spring 2008 Wisconsin Society of Science Teacher's annual meeting and the spring 2008 Minnesota Science Teacher Association meeting. Participation will include staffing a booth sponsored by the HPS Science Support Committee and providing one or more workshops for the teachers attending the meetings.

Chapter President Dan McGrane welcomed incoming President-elect Dan Miron and incoming Councilors David Paulu and Leola DeKock.

McGrane also presented the Chapter Award to Gen Roessler for her long-standing devotion to the chapter. Among those contributions to the chapter cited by McGrane were Roessler's support to numerous chapter Nominating Committees and her unwavering support of the chapter at the Society level.

Lewandowski recognized outgoing President McGrane for his service to the chapter. McGrane ended the meeting with a few remarks regarding the health of the chapter.



Dick Toohey



Michael Bailey



Mike Lewandowski (left) and Dan McGrane