

Hotline

The Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory is a United States Department of Energy Facility

Davidson to Step Down as Director of the Lab

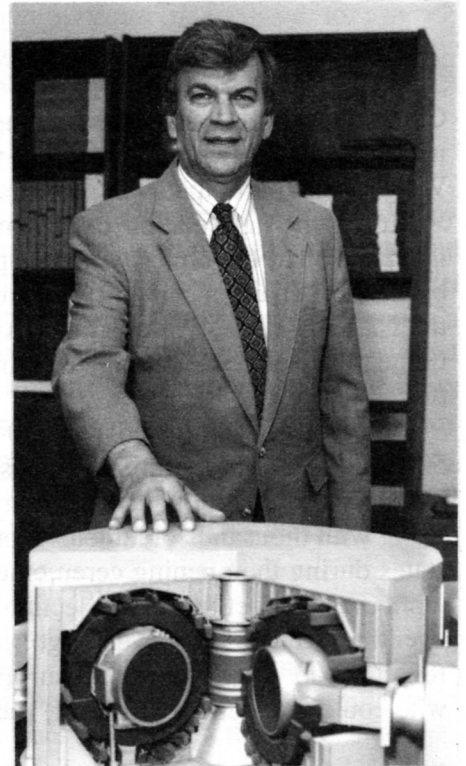
PPPL Director Ronald C. Davidson recently announced his decision to step down as Director of the Laboratory. Davidson, a professor of astrophysical sciences at Princeton, will return to research and teaching on a full-time basis effective January 1, 1997.

In a message to staff, Davidson said, "I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to lead PPPL through a period of unprecedented scientific productivity during the past six years, and I ask for your continued strong support and dedicated efforts during the remainder of my term as Director."

Princeton University President Harold Shapiro lauded Davidson for providing "exceptional leadership" for PPPL and for the national fusion effort. "We are very grateful to him for his outstanding service as Director of the Lab, and we are delighted that he will be remaining as a member of the Princeton faculty," said Shapiro in a press release.

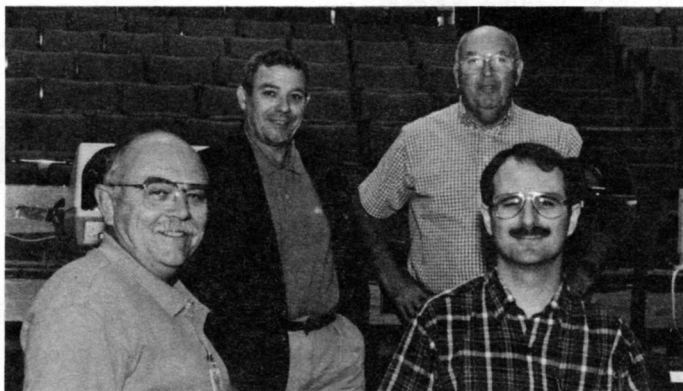
Davidson, who came to the Lab in 1991 as PPPL's fourth director, said his decision is a consequence of a strong personal desire to return to research and teaching on a full-time basis.

University officials have begun the search for a new director. ●



Ronald C. Davidson with a model of TFTR.

Renovations Complete on MBG Auditorium



Inside the newly renovated MBG Auditorium are some of the PPPL'ers involved in the project. Clockwise from left are Bob Longmuir, Bob Kress, Larry Sutton, and John Wertenbaker.

Lights, carpeting, action! The Melvin B. Gottlieb Auditorium just got a facelift. The renovation of the 19-year-old public space includes new carpeting, safety improvements, and updated lighting and lighting controllers. "Prior to the renovation, the lighting had been at 15 percent capacity," said Bob Kress, Project Engineering Manager.

The project also involved increasing the number of audio, video, and lighting control stations to provide greater flexibility for speaker presentations; adding electrical and data connections for computer use; and adding safety-related lighting improvements to facilitate entry and exit during regular use and emergency conditions. ●

[If you need to learn how to operate the new lighting equipment, contact Dietmar Krause at ext. 2090.]

Wright Garners Bronze at Transplant Olympics

By Patti Wieser

For PPPL graduate student John Wright, the challenge of plasma physics shared space with a new quest this summer. Wright took up competitive swimming — and he walked away with a bronze medal.

Wright, who is a kidney transplant recipient, won the bronze for the 500-yard freestyle swimming competition at the 1996 U.S. Transplant Olympics in Salt Lake City.

“There were a couple thousand athletes in Salt Lake City — from heart transplants running the 50-yard dash to lung transplants swimming the 500-yard freestyle,” said Wright, who participated in four events.

It was the first time the bronze medalist competed in the Transplant Olympics, which is primarily sponsored by Sandoz Pharmaceutical Company and organized by the National Kidney Foundation. Anyone with a living tissue transplant can participate in this national competition.

Wright, who competed in the 50-yard, 100-yard, and 500-yard freestyle swimming events, as well as the softball throw competition, recalled marching into the fields along with thousands of athletes representing forty-nine states during the opening ceremonies. He said the high number of competitors is a reflection of medical progress over the decades. “Forty years ago, you could never have found 3,000 people who had survived transplants and who could compete at that level,” he said.

Second Kidney Transplant

The graduate student, who plans to complete his Ph.D. in plasma physics this spring, received his second kidney transplant three years ago. “Right after I finished taking the written and oral qualifying exams, I was called about the kidney. I had been on dialysis while completing the master’s program at Princeton,” said Wright. He had received his first transplant at the end of his junior year in high school, which he lost after five years.



John Wright upon receiving the bronze medal at the Transplant Olympics held in Salt Lake City.

Wright began preparing for the Transplant Olympics after running across information about the competition while at the doctor’s office. “I practiced for the swimming for six months at Princeton University’s gym. Once I knew I was going to Salt Lake City, I started practicing three or four times a week and got some advice from friends on swim teams about how to improve my stroke. During the month before the competition, I began swimming five times a week,” he said.

While at the Transplant Olympics, he was able to swim faster than ever, which he attributed to being in a

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competitive situation. "I did my best in all three swimming events, compared to what I was doing in training," said Wright, noting that it took him 9 and 1/2 minutes to complete the 500-yard freestyle event.

Wright said beating his training time was as rewarding as receiving the bronze. "That would have been enough, but it was also nice to actually get a medal."

The graduate student said there were eight people swimming in the 500-yard freestyle event, and it was broken into a couple of age categories. "There were three people in my category, so I actually had a lock on the bronze. In the 50-yard freestyle swimming, there were two heats of eight people," he said, adding that out of 16 swimmers he finished seventh.

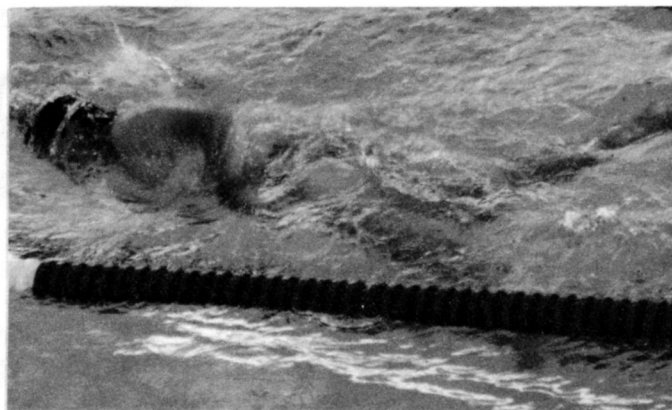
"A transplant isn't a lifetime cure – it's more like a reprieve for five or ten years. So people with transplants try to squeeze in as much as they can."

—John Wright

Often it was not the winners who received the most applause. "Some of the people who were cheered the most were the people who finished last," said Wright. For example, there was one woman in the 500-yard swimming event who was still struggling to the finish line three minutes after everyone else was out of the water. "She finished and everyone was cheering because she was actually able to do it," he said.

Transplants and Organ Donations

- **United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) statistics reveal that in 1993, on average, eight people a day died in the U.S. while on the waiting list. Estimates are that fewer than 20 percent of available organs are donated.**
- **Free Donor Cards are available from 1-800-355-shar.**
- **More information about transplants and organ donation is available on the Internet. Just start at <http://www.ew3.att.net/unos>.**
- **Contact John Wright at ext. 3789 or e-mail jwright@pppl.gov with any question(s).**



Wright competes in the freestyle swimming.

Wright said the sports events were complemented by social events, where he met both transplant donors and recipients, as well as saw a number of celebrities. He met a brother and a sister of whom the former had gotten a kidney from the latter. Donors are invited to attend but may not compete. He also met an actor from the TV series "Deep Space Nine," who is the recipient of a kidney transplant, and saw the son of baseball star Mickey Mantle, as well as actor Larry Hagman, who has had a liver transplant. Mantle had received a liver transplant before he died.

The Transplant Olympics either follow or precede the regular Olympics venues. Salt Lake City is where the next Winter Olympics will be held. The international Transplant Olympics will be held in Sydney, Australia, next fall, which is the planned site of the 2002 Summer Olympics. The Transplant Olympics are similar to the regular Olympics and include opening and closing ceremonies, athletic competitions, and a torch carried to the arena by a runner and then lit to kick off the games.

While at the games, Wright was cheered on by his parents, brother, and brother's girlfriend. Now the bronze medal winner is gearing up for the Transplant Olympics in Australia. "I may try to go. Between now and then I have to finish my thesis, get a job, move somewhere, and, of course, hope that my health holds up."

Spirit of the Transplant Olympics

In the meantime, he keeps his bronze medal on a wall with a hat that is covered with Olympic pins from different states and various sports. In addition to the medal, he has kept the spirit of the Transplant Olympics.

"The spirit of the games is pretty optimistic. Everybody there lives 110 percent. A transplant isn't a lifetime cure – it's more like a reprieve for five or ten years. So people with transplants try to squeeze in as much as they can," said Wright. ●

What's Happening at PPPL

The United Way Campaign is kicking off! Below, 1996 PPPL United Way Committee members meet with Randy Ingbritsen, Division Manager, Resource Development of the United Way of Greater Mercer County, to discuss the Campaign at the Laboratory. From left are Tom McGeachen, Steve Iverson, Patti Wieser, Chairperson Mary Ann Brown, and Ingbritsen.

The Laboratory's United Way meeting for all employees is slated for Tuesday, December 10, at 10 A.M. in the LOB Auditorium. Watch for details in upcoming issues of the **HOTLINE** and the *News Alert*. In the meantime, if you would like to make a donation of a gift to be drawn during the United Way Campaign Drive and Wrap-up meetings in December, call Mary Ann Brown at ext. 3045. Contributions in the past have included homemade craft items, tennis lessons, and gift certificates to area restaurants, exercise classes, and hair salons.



Pamela Lucas is the newly named Racial and Ethnic Harassment Advisor at PPPL. Lucas has been specially trained to assist individuals who have concerns or questions about incidents of racial or ethnic harassment at the Lab. As such, her primary role is to ensure that the Lab responds promptly and fairly to complaints of racial or ethnic harassment. If you wish to discuss a complaint or want more information, call Pamela at ext. 3049 or e-mail her at plucas@pppl.gov. Princeton University pamphlets titled "Responding to Racial and Ethnic Harassment" are available at PPPL's Human Resources Office.



Congratulations to Anthony Contino, who won the 1996 PPPL United Way Slogan Contest. Anthony received a \$20 gift certificate to Forrester at Princeton. A second slogan that was anonymously submitted was also chosen as a winning entry. Both slogans will be used in promoting the campaign at PPPL. Hats off to the winners!

Correction: In the article titled "TFTR Demonstrates New Tritium Technology" in the last issue of the **HOTLINE**, it was incorrectly stated that the TFTR tritium team completed the fuel cycle by purifying the tokamak plasma exhaust to less than 97 percent molecular tritium. It should have stated that the team completed the fuel cycle by purifying the tokamak plasma exhaust to **more than 97 percent** molecular tritium. Our apologies.