

## At PPPL THIS WEEK

**WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12**
**PPPL Colloquium**

4:15 p.m. ♦ MBG Auditorium

Extrasolar Planets with Small Telescopes

Gaspar Bakos, Princeton University

**FRIDAY, FEB. 14**
*Happy Valentine's Day*
**Young Women's Conference  
Registration Deadline**

School groups and daughters of PPPL employees can register for the Young Women's Conference on March 21 at Princeton University by going to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CQK53PN>. For more information: [dortiz@pppl.gov](mailto:dortiz@pppl.gov)

**SATURDAY, FEB. 15**
**Science on Saturday Lecture  
9:30 a.m. ♦ MBG Auditorium**

Blown Away: What Knot to Do When Sailing, by: Sir Randolph Bacon III (cousin -in-law to Colin Adams)

Prof. Colin Adams, Williams College

**UPCOMING EVENTS**
**Feb. 19**
**PPPL Colloquium**

4:15 p.m. ♦ MBG Auditorium

The Fate of the Land Carbon Sink

Stephen W. Pacala, Princeton Univ.

**Feb. 21 - 22**
**NJ Middle & High School  
Science Bowl**

Labwide

Volunteers needed.

 Contact [dortiz@pppl.gov](mailto:dortiz@pppl.gov), x2785

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## Marc Cohen brings his hands-on approach to head IT's User Support and Operations

By Jeanne Jackson DeVoe

**M**arc Cohen started out at PPPL as a college intern working on the Help Desk. Now 11 years later, he's the guy in charge of it.

Cohen was named the head of the User Support and Operations, which includes the Help Desk, in October and is settling into his new position. His office is still filled with cardboard boxes and he sometimes gets people asking him for help with their computers who don't realize he has a new job.

While he still has an open door policy, he is also learning to delegate more. "Trying to find out all the things that fall under my responsibility isn't always easy," he said. "I find something new every day."

But Cohen said he likes the challenge. "It's been fun," he said. "I'm definitely excited about the change. Everybody's been giving me their support and it's much appreciated as I adjust to my new roles and responsibilities. I'm fortunate to have a great team that has been patient during the transition."

As the head of the Help Desk, Cohen replaces Harry Towner, who officially retired in January after 38 years at PPPL. Cohen will oversee a staff of 10 people once the staff is up to its full contingent, including "user support" for people having trouble with their personal computer, operating systems, or mobile devices, as well as overseeing computer operations and video conferencing support.

"It's trying to coordinate these efforts, listening to our users' needs and trying to educate them about why we do what we do," Cohen said. "There's a lot that will be coming up in the future."

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Marc Cohen

## A Week of Snow



A plow in front of the security booth plows the roadway next to the upper parking lot. The LSB building is on the right. (Photo by William Gervasi).

**P**PPPL was closed due to heavy snow and ice on Monday, Feb. 3 and on Wed., Feb. 5 as the Feb. 3 snowstorm dumped around 9 inches in East Windsor and surrounding areas, according to the National Weather Service. That was followed by a deep freeze on Feb. 5 as sleet and rain created a layer of ice in the region – causing widespread electrical outages.

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## A hands-on approach

Cohen has always been known for being someone who is likely to pop up right away to help staff members with their computer problems and now he's adjusting to assigning those tasks to someone else. "It's definitely challenging but in a good way," he said. "It's a big change for me because I used to be a very hands on type of systems administrator. Now it's more of a management thing – documentation, ensuring things are running smoothly. It's a lot more administration."

PPPL's Chief Information Officer Steve Baumgartner, who is Cohen's supervisor, said Cohen combines strong people skills and great technological skills, as well as the ability to manage large projects. "He's a very vital guy – he's got great ideas, he's very popular - he actually goes out and responds to people," Baumgartner said. "He's also more of a management type – he's more open to delegating and in that way, things will operate more efficiently."

Baumgartner said Cohen's background in retail has given him a somewhat unique perspective. "He's got a very different customer service attitude and that would be something great for the IT Department: We don't exist for ourselves, we exist for our customers," he said.

Baumgartner said Cohen is heading several new initiatives to make the Help Desk run more efficiently, including a program called CrashPlan Pro, through the University, which is a cloud-based back-up service for the Help Desk.

In addition to running the day-to-day operations of the Help Desk, Cohen said he must now think about the big picture of IT Labwide from a strategic point of view and consider what makes sense for the Lab, how to keep the Lab secure and how IT can "meet all of the IT needs of NSTX," Cohen said. The Help Desk must also keep on top of changing technologies and make sure that the Lab meets quality standards in periodic audits. "I look forward to seeing how all this pans out," he said. "There's a lot that goes on."

## A job waiting at PPPL after graduation

Cohen came to the Lab as an intern fulfilling a co-op requirement for Drexel University in Philadelphia, where he was a computer science major. He spent several months on the Help Desk from March to December of 2002. When he graduated the following May, he had a job waiting for him at PPPL.

"He was very good, he's just good with computers," recalled Rose Fuchs-Smith, who was one of the people who hired him. "If I couldn't find Harry, Marc always seemed to know the right answer. Most people with Mac problems wanted Marc. If they had a Mac problem, they all said, "Where is Marc?""

From the beginning, Cohen worked well with people and was responsible and discreet whether he was working with staff members or the Lab's directors, Fuchs-Smith said. "You can count on him for pretty much all of it," she said.

Cohen grew up in East Windsor and still lives there with his family, a short distance from PPPL. His parents, Leslee and Michael, own a chain of more than 20 Party Fair stores in New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. His younger twin sisters, Sherry and Dawn, both work in the family business.

He grew up working in the family store on weekends and after school. An avid baseball card collector, he

first worked to earn cards. As he got older and began thinking about getting a car, he began working for actual money. He worked on website design and a point-of-sale system for his parents' company during another internship in college but he opted not to follow his parents into the family business, a decision his parents endorsed.

## Tinkering with devices

He was never a fan of video games growing up but he always enjoyed tinkering with computers and devices of all kinds. He had an early aptitude for all things electronic and was crazy about radio-controlled cars and trucks He would build and rebuild them – replacing certain parts to upgrade them. "I still have some cars and trucks," he said. "Every once in a while I might just tinker with them."

With such interests, it made sense for him to major in computer science at Drexel where he focused on software engineering, human-computer interactions, artificial intelligence and data structures and algorithms, which taught him how to create programs more efficiently.


Cohen said he chose to work with PPPL through the co-op program at Drexel over other workplaces because PPPL was close to home and the Lab was doing interesting work. "It just seemed like it would be a good experience, a neat place to work, and it was in line with the kind of experience I had," he said.

He did two other co-op jobs at Drexel, working as a Web master and designer at New Jersey Cyber Coupons in Old Bridge, which has since gone out of business, and for Party Fair. He received a Drexel Senior Cooperative Education award for his work at PPPL. He graduated from Drexel on a Friday and by the following Monday, he was reporting to work at PPPL. "I was thrilled to have a job," he recalled. "I thought the environment was great, the people were first-rate, and I got to play with the latest and greatest desktop computer."

In his spare time, Cohen is a bicycling enthusiast and often takes part in charity bike rides to raise money for various groups battling diabetes, multiple sclerosis or breast cancer, or doing autism research. He is also an avid jogger who tries to jog seven miles a day when he can (and hits the treadmill in the winter). He enjoys going into the city to check out new restaurants or catch a concert. He plays the guitar and has an extensive guitar collection that includes a Gibson Les Paul, Fender American Stratocaster, a Japanese Takamine 12-string acoustic and a Taylor acoustic. A self-described "beach bum," he likes to take vacations at Atlantis in the Bahamas.

## Initiated PPPL's conversion to Google apps

Cohen has worked his way up from the Help Desk to a senior IT support person to his current position. In his work for PPPL, he has focused on several initiatives, including designing and implementing web sites for the lab, ITER, and several other groups. He led the Lab's conversion to Mac OS X. His biggest project was probably converting some 780 users from Exchange 2003 email to Google apps.

"I enjoy working with the systems and people," Cohen said. "I always say that user support to me is sort of like the customer satisfaction business, which I think is the family background. Our users are our customers and we have to keep them as happy as possible." 

## Snow Days

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Not everyone got a snow day those two days. Six staff members from Site Protection were on duty each day and a dozen Facilities staff and another three staff members from D Site worked hard to make roads, sidewalks and parking lots at PPPL passable. The photos here and on page 4 were taken last week by William Gervasi, Manager of Maintenance and Operations, during the Feb. 3 snowstorm; graphic designer Greg Czechowicz the day after the storm; and ESU Capt. Howard Caruso on the second snow day on Feb. 5. (More photos on page 4). 📷



*A layer of ice coated Stellarator Road leading into the Lab and a downed tree blocked the road on Feb. 5 as ESU officers responded. (Photo by Howard Caruso).*



*The area outside the Theory Wing on Tuesday, Feb. 4 looked more like Vermont than New Jersey. (Photo by Gregory Czechowicz)*

### Science Bowl Volunteers Needed: Feb. 21 and Feb. 22

PPPL will host 48 teams of middle and high school students (about 250 students total) on Friday, Feb. 21 and Saturday, Feb. 22 for the New Jersey Regional Middle and High School Science Bowls.

We need your help! Please volunteer to help out as moderators, science/rules judges, time/score keepers, lunch attendants etc. Lunch will be provided for competition day volunteers.

Please fill out a volunteer form where you can specify what job you would like to volunteer for and when you would like to volunteer.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1smk-9-EZ1HeOxrUnjDeLsyN2e-hex8RdV-w1j756-HKU/viewform>

Contact Deedee Ortiz at [dortiz@pppl.gov](mailto:dortiz@pppl.gov) or ext. 2785 to sign up or for more information.



# Snow Days at PPPL

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*Cars in the lower parking lot are covered in snow in this view of the parking lot near Mod 6. (Photo by William Gervasi).*



*The sidewalk at the back entrance to LSB is already cleared in this view of the lower parking lot. (Photo by William Gervasi).*



*A view of the front of the LSB building facing the upper parking lot. (Photo by William Gervasi).*

Arts Council of Princeton & the Variety Theater presents:

# Jack and the Beanstalk: A Panto in the British Style

Variety theater fun for all the family

**STUART LITTLE THEATER**  
Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart  
1200 Stuart Road, Princeton

February 15 | 2pm and 7pm  
February 16 | 4pm

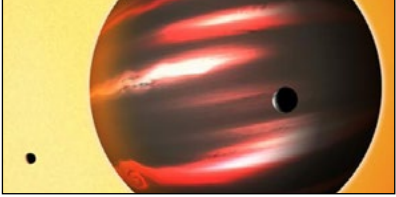
Adults: \$10 / Members, children and seniors: \$12

Tickets can be purchased at [www.artscouncilofprinceton.org](http://www.artscouncilofprinceton.org) until Friday, February 14 at noon. Remaining tickets available at the door.

**ARTS COUNCIL OF PRINCETON**  
Paul Robeson Center for the Arts  
102 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ  
609-684-8777 [artscouncilofprinceton.org](http://artscouncilofprinceton.org)

**Featuring PPPL's Gretchen Zimmer**

# COLLOQUIUM



## EXTRASOLAR PLANETS WITH SMALL TELESCOPES


**GASPAR BAKOS, Princeton University**

**Wednesday, Feb. 12**

4:15 p.m. (Coffee/Tea at 4 p.m.) • MBG Auditorium

# 2014 Science on Saturday

Princeton University Plasma Physics Laboratory Lecture Series



**Blown Away: What Knot to Do When Sailing, by: Sir Randolph Bacon III (cousin -in-law to Colin Adams)**

**PROF. COLIN ADAMS**  
Williams College

**Saturday, February 15**

9:30 a.m. • MBG Auditorium

# BROCK Café Menu

BREAKFAST ..... 7 a.m. • 10 a.m.  
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST ..... 10 a.m. • 11:30 a.m.  
LUNCH ..... 11:30 a.m. • 1:30 p.m.  
SNACK SERVICE ..... until 2:30 p.m.

— MARK GAZO, *Chef Manager*

	MON. FEB. 10	TUE. FEB. 11	WED. FEB. 12	THU. FEB. 13	FRI. FEB. 14
<b>COMMAND PERFORMANCE CHEF'S FEATURE</b>	 Louisiana Chicken Creole with Brown Rice Pilaf	 Baked Ziti with Tossed Salad & Garlic Bread	 Hearty Irish Beef Stew	 Porchetta-Style Pork Loin with Sauteed Spinach, Chick Peas & Mango	 Linguine with White or Red Clam Sauce
<b>EARLY RISER</b>	Bistro Breakfast Burger	Mediterranean Egg White Omelet	Eggs In Purgatory	Blueberry Pancakes with Crispy Bacon	Chocolate Strawberry Pancakes
<b>COUNTRY KETTLE</b>	Beef Burgundy Soup	Tomato Soup	Chicken Noodle	Vegetarian Lentil	Hot Dog Stew
<b>GRILLE SPECIAL</b>	Veggie Burger with Blue Cheese & Spinach on Wheat Roll	Cheeseburger with Chimichurri Slaw	Hot Corned Beef, Cheddar & Onions on French Bread	Fried Fish Taco with Cilantro Slaw and Black Bean Corn Salsa	Turkey Burger with Pork Roll & Cheddar Cheese
<b>DELI SPECIAL</b>	Grilled Tuna Caesar Wrap with Romaine, Tomato & Parmesan	Italian Hoagie Cut From 3-Foot Hoagie Roll	Tuna Salad, Basil Pesto, Cucumber and Leaf Lettuce on Focaccia	Traditional Chef Salad Wrap	Tofu Parmesan Sub
<b>PANINI</b>	BBQ Pulled Pork on a Kaiser Roll with Firecracker Slaw	Fried Tilapia, Pepperjack, Tomato & Tartar Sauce on Ciabatta	Grilled Hawaiian Cordon Bleu on Ciabatta	Caprese with Fresh Mozzarella	Roast Beef & Bacon Pita with Avocado & Spring Mix

MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

 VEGETARIAN OPTION

[CLICK HERE FOR A PRINTABLE WEEKLY MENU](#)

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