

# The Role of the Texas AAPT Section in the Formation of the Texas APS Section

David Gavenda

The University of Texas at Austin

TSAAPT + TSAPS + Zone 13 SPS

Spring Meeting

23 March 2007

Abilene Christian University + McMurry University

History of the Texas Section,  
American Association of Physics Teachers

How it got started:

During the early Fall of 1954, Dr. James Potter, Chairman of the Department of Physics at Texas A and M University, Dr. Newton Gaines, Chairman of the Department of Physics at Texas Christian University, and Dr. Herbert C. Schwetman, Chairman of the Department of Physics at Baylor University, met at the National Science Education Conference at Lake Texoma (at the suggestion of Dr. Potter) and discussed the possibility of starting the Texas Section of the A. A. P. T..

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Respectfully submitted, this date, March 21, 1975.

Roy Biser  
Roy Biser

Herbert C. Schwetman  
Herbert Schwetman

Fred Connell  
Fred Connell, Chmn.

# From “History of the Texas Section, AAPT”

Roy Biser, Herbert Schwettman, and Fred Connell

## Concerning the Texas Academy of Science:

Prior to the formation of the Texas AAPT, the membership and the meetings of the Texas Academy of Science were strongly oriented toward the biological and earth sciences. Participation in Academy affairs, including meetings, by chemists, mathematicians, and physicists was meager, with the result that all three areas shared one Section of the Academy and held joint sessions at the meetings, a fact which obviously had an adverse effect on any attempts to increase interest in the meetings. The success of the Texas AAPT in stimulating interest and activity in physics in the years following 1954 appears to have motivated some members of the Texas Section of the Mathematical Association of America to follow a similar approach to increased activity in mathematics in the Academy meetings, and by 1961 the activity in both fields was sufficient to cause the Academy to create separate sections, with Section I designated for mathematics and Section II for physical sciences. Partic-

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The first organizational meeting of the Texas Section of the A.A.P.T. was held on Saturday, December 11, 1954 at San Antonio College, San Antonio, Texas. The group of 25 physics teachers from high schools, junior colleges, and universities was called to order by Dr. Potter, who then presided over the election of a temporary chairman. Dr. Potter was elected by acclamation and appointed Dr. H. M. Moseley of Texas Christian University as temporary secretary.

Dr. Potter announced that the plan to organize a Texas Section of the A.A.P.T. to meet annually with the Texas Academy of Science had already received the endorsement of the Executive Councils of both the Texas Academy of Science and the American Association of Physics Teachers. A letter from the Executive Council of the A.A.P.T. endorsing the plan was read by the chairman.

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Petition sheets reading "We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Council for the authority to organize a Texas Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers" were then circulated for signatures; a total of 25 signatures were obtained.

It was then moved: That the next meeting of the Texas Section of the A.A.P.T. be on the occasion of the 1955 meeting of the Texas Academy of Science, and that a program be presented at that time. The motion carried unanimously.

# From “History of the Texas Section, AAPT”

Roy Biser, Herbert Schwettman, and Fred Connell

During the period since its founding in 1954, the Texas Section has served the physics community through a variety of activities, including:

1. It has sponsored meetings in all parts of the state where ideas concerning physics and physics teaching have been shared and exchanged.
2. It has provided an opportunity for faculty members and students of the colleges and universities to report on the physics research being carried on in Texas.
3. It has afforded a common meeting ground for physics teachers from all levels--university, college, junior

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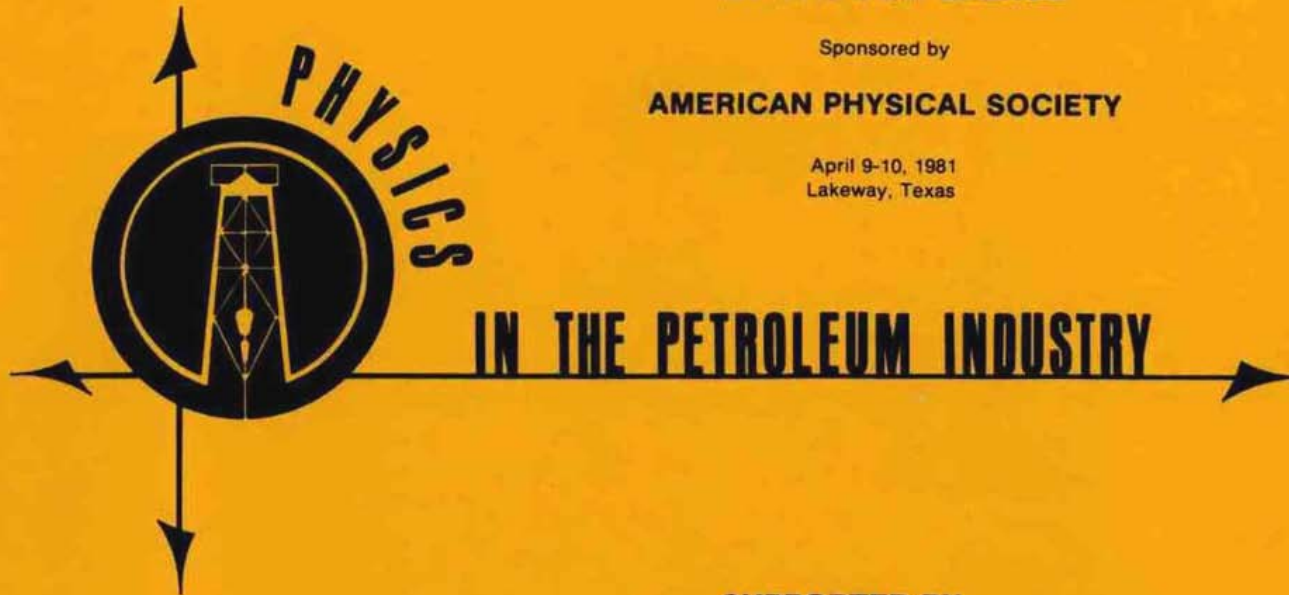
It would be inappropriate in this brief history to describe each of these activities in detail. However, concerning item #2, it is believed that the importance of the Texas Section in providing a regional forum for research in physics merits further comment. The only other organization which has sponsored broad-spectrum meetings has been the American Physical Society, but it has not provided meetings of reasonable proximity on an annual basis, and in recent years meetings in Texas or in any of the adjoining states have become quite rare. Records indicate that in the fifteen years 1956-70 inclusive, eleven national APS meetings were held in Texas or in adjoining states (Houston-3, Austin-3, Norman-2, Dallas-1, Los Alamos-1, and New Orleans-1), or an average of 0.73 per year. During the six years 1971-76, however, the only meeting in the five-state area was in Albuquerque in June 1972, giving an average for the six years of 0.17 meeting per year. With institutional travel funds limited, the professional meetings sponsored by Texas Section AAPT have become increasingly important.

# TOPICAL CONFERENCE

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Elmer Eisner - Texaco, Inc.  
Jack Golden - Shell Oil Company  
Chris Krohn - Exxon Production Research  
Jay Tittman - Schlumberger Well Service  
Lowell T. Wood - Vector/Schlumberger

### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

David Gavenda - University of Texas at Austin  
Joe S. Ham - Texas A&M University  
Charles Ivey - Abilene Christian College  
Al Osborne - Exxon Production Research  
Jay Tittman - Schlumberger Well Service



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MINUTES OF THE SPRING 1981 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE  
TEXAS SECTION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICS TEACHERS

1. The March 19 meeting was held in the Thompson Conference Center at The University of Texas at Austin at 6:30 p.m. and was called into session by R. Charles Ivey, President.
  2. The fall 1981 meeting is to be at Texas Christian University, November 12-14. The 1982 meeting is set for The University of Texas at Austin. The fall 1983 meeting is to be at North Texas State University.
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6. The formation of a Texas Section of APS was discussed. Tentative plans are to have an organizational meeting at the fall meeting at TCU. A set of labels for Texas APS members might be obtained from Havens in N.Y. A committee to carry out this organizational task is composed of Robert Clark (Chairman), David Gavenda, and Len Diana.
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# The American Physical Society

W. W. HAVENS, JR. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

J. A. BURTON, TREASURER

335 EAST 45TH STREET  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017  
(212) 682-7341

7 August 1981

Professor Robert Beck Clark  
Texas A & M University  
Department of Physics  
College Station, TX 77843

Dear Robert:

In answer to your letter of 30 July 1981, I'm arranging to send under separate cover a set of mailing labels for all Texas APS members, so you can invite those interested to attend the Fort Worth meeting of the AAPT Section, 13-14 November 1981.

I personally think it's an excellent idea to establish a Texas Section of The American Physical Society. I enclose a copy of the APS Bylaws governing the establishment of Sections. It appears as if a Texas Section could serve a useful purpose, especially if it met jointly with the AAPT Section each year.

About 15 years ago, Bob Sachs did a great deal of work on the possibility of establishing more geographical sections of The American Physical Society. He received no encouragement at all. At that time, ample travel funds were available and there seemed to be no difficulty in any physicist getting support to go from one end of the country to the other to attend a meeting on physics. However, circumstances have changed and sections may be more desirable now because of the increased cost in travel and the decrease in availability of funds for communicating results in physics research. I'll give you all the encouragement I can to proceed with the formation of a Texas Section of The American Physical Society.

Sincerely yours,



W. W. Havens, Jr.

## Letter from Havens to Clark

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# November 13, 1981 Organization Meeting

## MINUTES MEETING TO DISCUSS ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXAS SECTION OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY

MEETING HELD AT TCU ON NOVEMBER 13, 1981, AT 2:00 P.M.

1. Robert Clark (who has worked with David Gavenda and Len Diana) opened discussion by pointing out several advantages to formation of Texas Section of APS.
  - a) Increases in research papers in TSAAPT indicate a need for involvement with research oriented organization.
  - b) Rise in travel cost and decrease in availability of funds would imply need for more localized meeting.
  - c) Abstracts would appear in APS Bulletin.
  - d) W. W. Havens of APS is enthusiastic - there are 851 Texas members.
2. It was suggested by Robert Clark that the traditional Fall TSAAPT Meeting be in conjunction with the proposed TSAPS.

## November 13, 1981 Organization Meeting

3. Robert Clark read Article 9 of APS Constitution on the establishment of a section and suggested we should:
  - a) elect temporary chairman
  - b) discuss appropriateness
  - c) form an organization committee.
4. Robert Clark was elected temporary chairman  
James Crawford was elected temporary secretary
5. Concern was expressed by David Blackstock and others that inclusion of TSAPS with TSAAPT Fall Meeting might change the nature of the existing fall meeting.
6. David Gavenda pointed out that with the increased emphasis on research and with abstracts appearing in the APS Bulletin we should get both a wider spectrum of people and more participation.

## November 13, 1981 Organization Meeting

7. Max Bolen commented that the association between the research community and teaching community would be an intellectually healthy one.
8. C. E. Hathaway commented the TSAAPT is strong and should show leadership in the formation of TSAPS. Bringing the two organizations together such as with the fall meeting can't hurt us.
9. It was suggested that we collect information on how many joint members (APS and AAPT) there are in Texas.
10. C. A. Quarles pointed out that we should avoid any schism within the proposed joint meetings. Possibly have all abstracts published in APS Bulletin. We should not model our meeting after the AAPT-APS Winter Meeting.
11. Jack Wilson made a motion to form the Texas Section of the American Physical Society. The motion was seconded.

Discussion: Herb Schwetman commented that the expected increase in size will limit places in Texas where we can meet. Ed LeMaster suggested TSAPS might meet with TAS in the Spring instead of the Fall TSAAPT.

The vote was 21 in favor of formation of the Texas Section of the American Physical Society, none opposed with one abstention.

In Favor TSAPS Organization:

James R. Crawford  
Bruce N. Miller  
C. E. Hathaway  
Carl J. Rigney  
Max E. Bolen  
R. N. Little  
Floyd D. McDaniel  
Philip H. Beatty  
Robert L. Riemer  
Paul F. Bird  
H. M. Moseley  
Loyd Gourley  
Arthur W. Spear  
Len Diana  
David Gavenda  
Robert C. Ivey  
Robert Beck Clark  
Tom Hudson  
Jack Wilson  
John L. Hubisz  
Joe S. Ham

# The American Physical Society

335 EAST 45 STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017 • (212) 682-7341

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STANFORD UNIVERSITY

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

TREASURER  
JOSEPH A. BURTON  
BELL LABORATORIES (RETIRED)

TO: APS Section Officers

FROM: J. A. Burton *J.A. Burton*

SUBJECT: Proposed Free Membership in APS Sections

DATE: December 31, 1981

The suggestion made by some Section representatives that APS offer free membership in APS Sections, as is now done for Divisions, was discussed at the 22 November APS Council meeting, and the following resolution passed unanimously:

Resolution.....That the APS Council encourage further discussion with the APS Section Officers to work out details of a plan to offer free Section membership to APS members in FY 1983, and for the Society to reimburse the Section appropriately in lieu of Section Dues

The purpose of this note is to suggest that we discuss this further by phone, to decide what should be done before the Council meeting in San Francisco on January 24. This is the last Council meeting before FY 1983 Dues Bills are mailed in late March. Therefore, if this Dues Bill should make provision for free Section memberships, Council should be informed about the general plan proposed.

Perhaps we can discuss this further by individual phone calls during the next ten days, and if it seems desirable, we could then have a conference call on January 14 or 15.

Happy New Year !!

JAB:da  
enc.

xc:	C. Randall	B. C. Clark	R. Winters	H. P. Kelly
	T.M. Kelly	M. M. Shahin	F. L. Wilson	R. B. Clark ←
	I. Sellin	L. W. Seagondollar	L. Slifkin	
	W. W. Smith	E. H. Stanley	G. E. Hohenberg	

*Ref: This may be relevant to your plans for a Texas Section of APS. I will welcome your suggestions. Joe*



## Burton December 31, 1981 Memo to Clark

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*Bob: This may be relevant to your plans for a Texas section of APS. I will welcome your suggestions. Joe*

## Diana March 10, 1982 Memo to Gavenda, Hudson, Quarles

I saw Dr. W. W. Havens, Jr., Executive Secretary of APS, shortly before 9:30 a.m., Sunday, March 7, 1982, and he put the matter of the Texas Section, APS, on the agenda of the Executive Committee of the APS for discussion at 2:30 p.m.

I presented our case at 2:30 p.m. and the motion to approve the Texas Section, APS, passed without dissenting vote. I assume the vote was unanimous; Dr. Maurice Goldhaber, in the chair, did not ask about abstentions.

Next the Council of APS considers the matter at the Washington meeting in April. If approved, Dr. Havens will advertise for members in the May issue of the Bulletin. Then our Bylaws will be reviewed, and full approval would come in November, 1982, upon acceptance of our Bylaws or their revised form, if necessary.

Early in May I will ask Dr. Havens about our status and seek permission for a joint meeting with the Texas Section of AAPT in November.

MINUTES OF THE NOON BUSINESS MEETING  
TSAAPT March 5, 1982

Meeting held at ASU in San Angelo.

1. Motion made, seconded, and passed to send letter of thanks and appreciation to Ray Dawson and President of ASU.
  2. Dick Bartels reported on matters of national interest. It was announced that Jack Wilson has accepted the job of Executive Officer for AAPT. Tom Hudson suggested we lobby for getting winter meetings away from eastern seaboard.
  3. Len Diana reviewed progress in formation of Texas Section of APS.
- 
8. David Gavenda discussed preparations for fall "82" meeting at UT-Austin. Members are encouraged to make motel reservations early. First call for papers will be in May. Second call will be in August. The meeting will be November 12-13, 1982 at UT-Austin. With appropriate approval, the Texas Section of APS will meet with TSAAPT.

**FORMATION OF A TEXAS  
SECTION OF THE AMERICAN  
PHYSICAL SOCIETY**

Formation of the fifth section of the American Physical Society, the Texas Section, was approved (pending approval of the Bylaws by Council) at the 25 April 1982 Council Meeting. Any Fellow or Member of the Society residing in or near Texas is invited to join the newly formed Section, without any additional dues needed to be paid.

An Organizing Committee was formed to help create the Bylaws of the Section, and they are listed below. Organizing Committee: L. M. Diana, Chairman; J. David Gavenda, Tom Hudson, and C. A. Quarles.

The initial meeting of the provisional Texas Section will be held at the University of Texas at Austin on 12–13 November 1982. Additional information about this meeting will be sent to all APS members who have returned this application form for membership in the Texas Section to the office of the Executive Secretary before 31 August, 1982. Local arrangements are being made by Professor J. David Gavenda, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Physics, Austin, TX 78712.■

# UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU!!



(Sam Houston, that is)

Join the fastest growing section of the APS with a stroke of the pen at *no* cost to you! If you have *not* already sent in your 1986-1987 APS dues bill, just print the word "TEXAS" on the line which says:

I WISH TO *JOIN* THE \_\_\_\_\_ SECTION  
GROUP

It is quick, painless and won't cost you a cent. It will also provide the Texas Section with \$2.00/year in dues from the APS to cover the cost of mailings and meetings.

# Minutes of the First Meeting of the Texas Section

Austin, Texas; 11–13 November 1982

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## PREAMBLE

The inaugural meeting of the Texas Section of the American Physical Society was held on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin on 11–13 November 1982. J. David Gavenda served as the local chairperson and the APS Council was represented by Mildred S. Dresselhaus, APS Vice-President, who announced that the Texas Section and its bylaws had been formally approved by the Council. Two hundred and eighty-nine individuals registered for the meeting which was held jointly with the Texas Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers and Zone 10 of the Society of Physics Students. John L. Hubisz of College of the Mainland served as the program chairperson.

The program featured invited presentations by Joe P. Meyer, AAPT Vice-President; Edward S. Fry, Texas A&M University; and K. W. Gentle, J. D. Meiss, and Steven Weinberg of the University of Texas at Austin. Ninety-four contributed papers were presented in nine sessions during the meeting. The luncheon speakers were Mildred Dresselhaus and Dion Shea of SPS. The banquet speaker was Harlan J. Smith, Director of McDonald Observatory and a special award was presented to Herbert D. Schwetman, Baylor University (retired) for outstanding contributions to physics in higher education in Texas. The program also included laboratory tours and exhibits.

A business meeting, following the luncheon, was presided over by Leonard M. Diana of the University of Texas at Arlington who served as the chairperson of the section organizing committee. Mildred Dresselhaus announced that the APS Council had

approved a \$1000 contribution to the section to assist with organizational expenses and presented a check to Len Diana. She also discussed the important role of sections and explained the recently approved Council policy which allows APS members to join a section at no cost and provides a \$2.00 contribution per member to the section from APS.

The following were elected as interim section officers to serve until the election in the Spring of 1983. Leonard M. Diana, Chairperson; J. David Gavenda, Vice-chairperson and Robert Beck Clark, Texas A&M University, as Secretary-Treasurer. Elected to serve on the interim section executive board were Charles K. Manka, Sam Houston State University; Bowen Loftin, University of Houston-Downtown Campus; Rogers W. Redding, North Texas State University; Ben M. Doughty, East Texas State University; and Thomas L. Estle, Rice University.

Motions were also passed unanimously that the section would hold its fall and spring meetings jointly with the Texas Section of AAPT. The spring section meeting for 1983 will therefore be held 3–5 March at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches and the fall 1983 meeting will be held 17–19 November at North Texas State University in Denton. David Gavenda also reported on the setting of fees for abstracts to appear in the *Bulletin* at \$7.00 per abstract.

Robert Beck Clark  
Secretary-Treasurer

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MINUTES OF SPRING COUNCIL MEETING  
TEXAS SECTION AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICS TEACHERS

7:00 p.m., March 3, 1983

1. The Texas Section was welcomed by Tom Callaway. He outlined some particulars of social functions as well as other items of special interest.
2. Virginia Rawlins reported that 26 AAPT papers and 12 APS papers were to be presented along with Dr. Alexander's special talk on "Mission to Haley's Comet."
3. The fall 1983 meeting will be held November 17-19 at North Texas State. All meeting rooms will be in the Physics Building as classes will be dismissed. The Holiday Inn will be the headquarters hotel. October 1, 1983 will be the deadline for AAPT papers. APS deadline will be October 21, 1983. There will be a chairman's breakfast at the Student Union. There will be another running of the Microprocessor workshop. (\$50 fee sent to James R. Crawford, Physics Dept., SWTSU, San Marcos, TX 78666). A request from U.T. at Arlington was made for a symposium discussing exemplary laboratory programs.
4. The National APS-AAPT meeting is to be in San Antonio, January 30 through February 2, 1984. The National AAPT office requested the TSAAPT have their spring meeting in conjunction with the National meeting in San Antonio. Discussion followed. Motion made, seconded, and passed unanimously to do so.
5. Tom O'Kuma reported everything going fine in preparation for the 1984 fall meeting at San Jacinto Jr. College, November 15-17.
6. Dick Bartels reported on progress in national legislation to alleviate teacher problems. He also reported Tim Ingoldsby is leaving and a replacement is needed for staff physicist at the National office. We were reminded of the summer meeting being held in Memphis, June 15-18. The 1984 summer meeting will be at the University of Maryland. The 1985 winter meeting will be at Toronto, Canada. The 1985 summer meeting will be at Flagstaff, Arizona. CAST will meet at Trinity University, November, 27-29, 1983.
7. Jack Wilson's letter of apology for not attending this meeting was read.
8. Len Diana (or possibly Robert Clark) proposed that the fall meeting with TSAPS be run by TSAAPT with a vice-chairperson from TSAPS and the the proceeds from the meeting go to TSAAPT. The spring meeting would be run by TSAPS with a vice-chairperson from TSAAPT with the proceeds going to TSAPS. Motion made and passed unanimously.

# From Minutes of the 1983 Spring TAPS Meeting

A business meeting followed the luncheon. The results of the first section election were announced and a run-off election was held for one of the at-large places on the section executive committee as specified in the section by-laws. Those who were elected and the year in which their term will be completed are listed as follows:

## Chairperson (1985)

Leonard M. Diana, The University of Texas at Arlington

## Vice-Chairperson (1985)

J. David Gavenda, The University of Texas at Austin

## Secretary-Treasurer (1985)

Robert Beck Clark, Texas A&M University

## Executive Committee Members (4 Year Term) (1987)

Arthur H. Thompson, Exxon Production Research Co., Houston

Thomas E. Estle, Rice University

## Executive Committee Members (2 Year Term) (1985)

Joe S. Ham, Texas A&M University

C. E. Hathaway, The University of Texas at San Antonio

# Happy 25<sup>th</sup>, Texas APS!

- From your mom,

*Texas APS*

- And your grandma,

*Texas Academy of Science*