

# 2010 ICPS–Graz, Austria

*by Daniel Glass, Elon University*

The 2010 International Conference of Physics Students was everything except your typical physics conference. Even though there were over 400 students from about 50 countries, everyone had just one reason to meet in Graz, Austria; their love for physics. The week included professional lectures, undergraduate lectures, a city tour, a day for an out of the city excursion and themed parties among other activities.

## Professional Lectures



To start the week off, we had a guest lecture by a professor Peter Zoller, an Austrian theoretical physicist whose research focuses on quantum computing. Throughout the week there were other scientific lectures by renowned physicists from across the country as well as a demo show by the Technical University of Graz's very own Garry Pottlacher. The demo show included anything that could be exploded, imploded or could have an electrical charge run through it; all in the name of science!

## Student Lectures

The majority of the time was spent on student lectures. Lectures ranged from astrophysics to geology and everything in between. There were a total of seven student lecture sessions throughout the week. Each session had presentations in three rooms running concurrently. Each room had about 5 speakers per session. The attendance for the student lectures ranged anywhere from 10 people in the room, to about 70 people for some of the more popular talks (usually in the field of Astrophysics).



My presentation was the second session, on Tuesday afternoon. Judging from the quality of questions asked after my presentation (some very in depth that showed a strong understanding), I think my presentation went very well. Students seemed to show an interest and an understanding for the need and size control of magnetic Microparticles.

## IAPS General Meeting

The IAPS General Meeting was the official meeting of the representatives from each country that would make up this year's International Association of Physics Students. Although there were about 50 countries represented at the conference, only about 20 had a delegation at the general meeting. The majority of the meeting was spent voting for an executive council for the coming year and voting on where the 2012 ICPS would be held. With bids from the Netherlands and Finland, the Netherlands won the vote and will be the host of the 2012 ICPS.

## Excursion Day



One day was dedicated to getting out of the city and seeing more of Austria. Participants could choose from a list of six things to do. I chose to participate in a hike through the highest gorge in the Styria region of Austria. The climb lasted about three hours and concluded with some R&R time on a beautiful lake.

### Other Events

To see the city of Graz, the local committee organized a scavenger hunt that would take us around the city and learn about some of the most important and beautiful sites in Graz. One sight that was seen was the glockenspiel atop a hill in down town Graz; the photo to the right was taken at the summit of the hill, under the glockenspiel.



There was a party every evening to keep all 400 students occupied in the evenings. The one party that stuck out for me as the best was the nations party. The idea behind this party was that every nation would bring traditional food and drink from their home country to be shared with everyone else. The United States came prepared! We had s'mores, root beer and peppermints among a few other items that represented the US very well. After all the food had been tried there was time for each nation to perform a skit for all others to see. Performances ranged from traditional song and dances from the nation to a quick skit that defined that nation. Overall, the parties were a lot of fun and gave everyone to meet students from all around the world.

Overall, the ICPS was an amazing experience to share my research and physics experiences with students from around the world. Everyone who attended had a great time and was able to make friends from all corners of the world.

-Daniel Glass