

# American Physical Society Invites Savannah to Discover Plasma

## Public invited to “Play with Plasma”

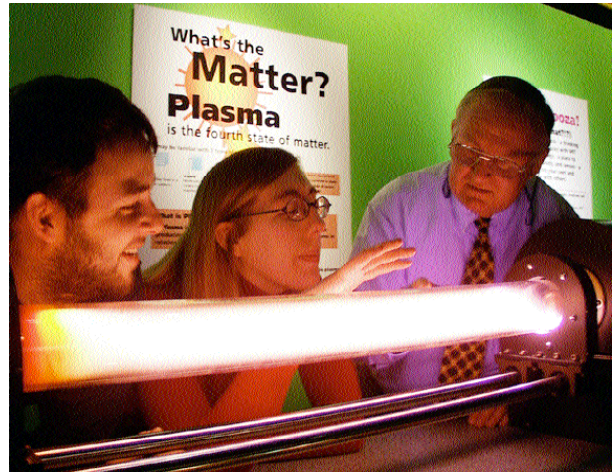
Savannah –We live on a planet where we are surrounded mainly by matter in the familiar states of solid, liquid and gas. But many of us are not aware of a fourth state of matter – plasma. In Savannah that is about to change. During the week of November 15, the American Physical Society – Division of Plasma Physics (APS-DPP), as part of their yearly meeting, has scheduled a series of educational events to encourage teachers, students and the general public to explore plasma.

Until recently plasma was rarely mentioned in high school textbooks, though matter in the plasma state makes up 99% of the visible universe. Our sun, stars, northern lights, solar flares, lightning bolts are all examples of naturally occurring plasmas. Man-made plasmas are used for lighting (fluorescent lights), sterilizing medical equipment, welding, manufacturing computer chips, fusion energy research and even surgery.

The main event for the general public will be a special Plasma Sciences Expo, November 18, 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center, geared to introduce the local community to the excitement of plasmas and the benefits of plasma research. It is free-of-charge. Scientists from around the country and the world will be there, ready to engage participants in lively hands-on demonstrations and explorations. Those attending will be able to create arcs of lightning, observe their fluctuating body temperature on a special monitor, manipulate a glowing plasma with magnets, watch an electromagnetic wave demonstration, confine a plasma in a tokamak video game. Students at all levels, teachers, parents and the general public are welcome.

The Expo will also be open during the day on November 18 and 19 for local school field trips. Almost 3500 students are scheduled to attend.

Local teachers will receive a special day of training on “Teachers Day,” Tuesday, November 16. Over 75 teachers will attend morning and afternoon workshops about plas-



MIT's Paul Thomas brings his traveling plasma lab to Savannah as part of the APS-DPP plasma education events the week of November 15.

ma and related science. Many will learn how to bring the study of plasma into their classrooms, a valuable skill given the advent of new Georgia State Science Standards that will include teaching plasma as one of four states of matter.

Education programs will also be visiting local schools. On Monday, November 15, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Plasma Lab will be engaging students at Groves School. Demonstrations will conclude with a glowing plasma pickle. The University of Wisconsin's "Wonder of Physics" program will also be in the area, presenting hands-on science experiences to local students.

Contributing laboratories, industries, academic institutions, and government agencies include: University of California, San Diego; General Atomics; Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory; Plasma Science and Fusion Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Oak Ridge Institute for Science Education; Contemporary Physics Education Project (CPEP); U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fusion Energy Sciences, U.S. Department of Energy Defense programs, and many more.

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After November 12, Westin Savannah Harbor, (912) 201-2000