



# Health Physics Society

## Northern California Chapter, Inc.

### Meeting of the Northern California Chapter of the HPS

January 2009

#### **Presentation Summary: Will They Ever Learn? The Public Education Game**

We as health physicists have much at stake in the public education arena. In spite of our efforts, the public has been slow to warm to the use of radiation and radioactive material, except perhaps for some medical applications. Recently we are beginning to see a trend toward greater acceptance of nuclear power, driven largely by the exorbitant cost of oil. Now may be the time to strike with the maximum use of available recourses to educate the public about radiation risks. The specter of terrorist attacks using radiological or nuclear weapons resulted in a great dissemination of knowledge about radiation to emergency response personnel around the country. The further prospects of a nuclear power renaissance should produce a thirst for additional knowledge by many other stakeholders. The Health Physics Society is well-postured to deliver credible, scientifically accurate information that the public seeks. We have made great strides in improving our responsiveness to educational gaps/needs through several current initiatives such as the Radiation Primer. Your voluntary participation at both the national and the chapter levels will make a huge difference in just how successful we will be over the next few years.

#### **About the Speaker: H. W. Dickson, MS, CHP, CIH, CSP**

Recently retired from EG&G Technical Services, Inc., Howard Dickson received his MS in physics from the University of Tennessee in 1967. He spent the first part of his career in Oak Ridge, working first at Oak Ridge Associated Universities, then at Oak Ridge Nat Lab in both research and operational health physics, and finally with Bechtel Construction where he became Vice President (VP) of Health Services. His next duty station was with EG&G/REECO at the Nevada Test Site where he was Deputy General Manager and Sr. VP. After a brief stint at Livermore Nat Lab, Howard completed his career as VP with EG&G supporting their homeland security business line. He and his wife Rita live in Tampa and currently enjoy spending quality time with their 4 children and 2 grandsons.

