

Lecture by Nobel Laureate: Prof. Emeritus Jerome Friedman

By Swasti Khuntia
LAYOUT EDITOR

One of the important events of this past week was the talk “Probing the small and large structure of the universe” by Nobel laureate, Professor Jerome Friedman. On Wednesday evening, Illinois Institute of Technology and the MIT Club of Chicago hosted a presentation by Professor Jerome Friedman, 1990 Nobel Laureate in Physics. Jerome Friedman received the 1990 Nobel Prize in Physics for his pioneering work on the inner structure of protons and neutrons in the atomic nucleus. He also was awarded the W.H.K. Panofsky Prize in 1989 for the experimental discovery of quarks. Prof. Friedman knows Chicago well, having received both his M.A. and Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Chicago. He then began his long collaboration with the late Henry Kendall (with whom he shared the Nobel Prize) at Stanford’s High Energy Physics Laboratory. Professor Friedman joined the MIT Physics Department in 1960, and served as department head from 1983 to 1988. He served as Director of the MIT Laboratory for Nuclear Science from 1980-83. Prof. Friedman’s

talk discussed the discoveries that have already been made, and the challenging questions being addressed as exploration continues.

Dr. Harvey Kahalas, Dean of the IIT Stuart School of Business started off the evening by welcoming Friedman and the audience to the IIT campus. Then, Nicholas Haschka, President of the MIT Club of Chicago spoke on how the alumni at MIT Club are helping to organizing such events. After the series of introductory speeches, Friedman started his short, interesting, and informative talk. Starting from the basics, he asked the audience what they knew about the contents of the universe. He discussed the different contents, i.e., dark energy (we know nothing about it), dark matter (we are trying to create it at accelerators) and atomic matter (research in the 20th century uncovered the structure of atom and the structure of its constituents). Then, he spoke about the great strides that have been made in advancing our understanding of the observable universe’s structure, from its outer reaches down to distances shorter than the size of an atom.

Friedman told the audience that great progress has been made in understanding the structure of the universe in the second half

of the 20th century. This has been driven by research in particle physics, probing the very small, and in astrophysics and cosmology, probing the very large. These two domains are closely related in our current theory of the evolution of the universe. In particle physics, new types of accelerators and particle detectors have made possible extensive experimental results, which along with new theoretical developments, have led to the quark model, quantum chromodynamics, and electroweak unification. These form the basis of a remarkably successful theory of elementary particles called the Standard Model. Although its predictions have been confirmed with excellent precision at present accelerator energies, this theory is incomplete and has raised a number of deep questions that need to be addressed in the TeV energy region. Lately, experimental programs searching for answers to these questions have been prepared at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), a 14 TeV proton-proton collider at CERN, which began operation in September, 2009. He emphasized that the LHC, the world’s largest and most ambitious scientific project, is expected to usher in a new era of discovery.

Friedman also discussed the



Photo by Swasti Khuntia

contribution of MIT in the field of the quark model for which he was awarded the W.H.K. Panofsky Prize. The talk concluded with a huge round of applause. It was followed by a number of interesting queries from audience, autographs and a photo session with Friedman.

MTCC Late Niite excites students

By Ryan Kamphuis
EDITOR IN CHIEF

An event that draws multitudes of students to the McCormick Tribune Campus Center for a night of activities, performances, and food, MTCC Late Niite is quickly becoming an annual tradition at IIT.

Word began spreading and buzz began building for 2012’s iteration of Late Niite, dubbed “The Final Frontier,” weeks in advance as posters with symbols from popular sci-fi hits like Star Wars, Doctor Who, and Star Trek began to pepper campus. The event took place on the unseasonably warm night of Wednesday, March 7. True to theme, guests were greeted by cardboard cut-outs of characters from various other-worldly movies and TV shows upon entering the MTCC.

People could get pictures with everyone from the eleventh Doctor and his Tardis to the Harry Potter trio. Guests were then able to get various items of Union Board swag and sign up for the raffles that were being held that night. The event began at 9 a.m. to a slow start, as few came early to take advantage of the early activities.

Those who came early flocked to the Auditorium, where the classic 1927 German film Metropolis was showing, and the chess tournament on the bridge. Despite the slow start, more people began to arrive as the live performances kicked off at 10 p.m. with the

improve group Fire in the Bathroom. Although difficult to hear due to the large number of people at Late Niite, the group was still able to entertain many members of the audience.

After Fire in the Bathroom was finished with their performance, self-described “balloon freak” John Cassidy took to the stage for the next hour. Cassidy is a balloon artist who holds multiple Guinness World Records in that field, including the record for Fastest Balloon Sculpture. Cassidy performed a show filled with creating extreme balloon sculptures, magic tricks, comedy, and doing weird things with balloons. Cassidy’s finale brought all these elements together, in a trick where Cassidy went inside of a massive balloon attempting to find a card that an audience member selected from a deck. To make the whole situation crazier, the trick also involved firing lawn darts across the room. Cassidy’s show was extremely well received by the audience, and many event attendees considered the show to be the highlight of the evening.

Following Cassidy, IIT’s A Capella club performed. Each of A Capella’s three groups performed a short set comprised of hits from their fall concert and songs that they are preparing for their upcoming annual spring concert. The vast majority of event attendees began to leave the MTCC after A Capella’s performance, leaving a small but dedicated audience to

watch the final performance of the night: Dorian Electra. A band comprised of Shimer College students, Dorian Electra played a gritty punk rock set comprised of original tracks and covers. The band was allowed to keep playing when their set was over, and switched over to playing bluesy riffs until they were done for the night.

After finishing for the night, the band talked with their dedicated audience members and newfound fans. As these performances were going on, more people arrived at the MTCC to take part in the other activities that were part of the event. A poker tournament in the Pritzker Club was well-attended and the game tables in the central area of the MTCC were being used all night.

Despite the popularity of the live performances, some activities, mainly the dance party in the ballroom, were poorly-attended.

Overall, MTCC Late Niite 2012 seemed to be well received by those who attended. The event did not seem to be as well attended as it had been in past years, but people leaving at the end of the night seemed excited and were talking about the good time they had.



Photos by Ryan Kamphuis