

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Honoring the Life and Work of Science Educator, Betty Preece

College Park, MD, May 27, 2009. The physics community and AAPT lost a friend and advocate on May 17 with the death of Betty Preece of Indialantic, FL. A long-time member of AAPT and Florida AAPT, Betty was recognized for her years of dedicated service with a Distinguished Service Citation in 1997. She served on many committees, including the Committee on Minorities, the Committee on Women in Physics, and the Committee on International Education.

Betty organized events for under privileged elementary children at AAPT's Winter Meetings for many years. She enlisted volunteers including local Society of Women Engineers (SWE) chapters in these activities for students. Betty was a recipient of the 2007 SWE Distinguished Service Award. She was a Science Resource Teacher and participated in the Science Olympiad, annual Florida State Science Fair, PTRA, and the Japan China Conference. She founded the SEES program which was formerly the SEEP Program (Students to Explore and Experience Physics). The SEES program was introduced at the 1992 Winter Meeting in Orlando.

"Not only was Betty the living standard of a loyal AAPT member, but she was also a personal friend to many of us. She never said NO, and it was very hard to tell her No also. You could always count on her to do anything for the good of AAPT, children and women," said Lila Adair, AAPT Past President.

Betty was the first woman to graduate from the University of Kentucky with a degree in electrical engineering, was inducted into the University of Kentucky Hall of Distinction and was, in 1950, the first woman engineer at the Eastern Test Range, Cape Canaveral.

Betty was an organizing member of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) in 1950. She was a civil engineer with over 10,000 volunteer hours as the Handicap and Accessibility Coordinator at Patrick Air Force Base, an Adjunct Professor at Florida Institute of Technology, a physics teacher at Melbourne High for 18 years, and a science fair judge for state and county competitions.

She was a Mentor for Take Stock in Children and she was a member of and held local, state, and national office in the following: Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), Phi Delta Kappa, Delta Kappa Gamma, Environmentally Endangered Land Society (EELS), Abigail Wright Chamberlin Chapter NSDAR, Daughters of 1812, Daughters of American Colonists, American Association of Physics Teachers, National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), Women in Engineering ProActive Network (WEPAN), Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS), South Brevard Historical Society, SCSEA, Scots-American Society of Brevard and Women Engineering Society in United Kingdom (WES). Betty traveled the world as a speaker and teacher to show children that "Science could be fun." She was a cherished member in all of these organizations and will be missed by her many friends and family.

About AAPT: [AAPT](http://www.aapt.org) (www.aapt.org) is the leading organization for physics educators—with more than 10,000 members worldwide. Our mission is to advance the greater good through physics teaching. We provide our members with many opportunities for professional development, communication, and student enrichment. We serve the larger community through a variety of programs and publications. AAPT was founded in 1930 and is headquartered in the American Center for Physics in College Park, Maryland.

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