May 2016

Dear all,

May is as always an intense month with a lot that needs to be completed before the summer. At the same time, it feels good when something really complicated falls into place and begins to work, even if it takes time to convince yourself and everyone else that all actual and potential problems have truly been addressed and resolved. Over the past year, we have worked extensively with a model for conducting cross-faculty activities, including research centres managed by boards with representatives from all faculties, chaired by the dean of the dominant faculty. Examples include NanoLund, CEBMMS (Biological and Medical Mass Spectrometry) and LP3, and although they are all different, they can be managed and operated similarly, in a way that is acceptable to all parties. The aim of the faculties is not to control but to ensure that important activities evolve with the faculties’ overall development.

Up next is the Doctoral Degree Conferment Ceremony and the presentation of our honorary doctors, who this year are mathematician Professor Gerd Grubb and illustrator Nils Forshed. They will each give a presentation (Nils in Swedish) in Lundmarksalen on Thursday 26 May, 10:00–12:00, and I hope that many of you will be able to attend. They were selected because of their quiet, yet significant contributions to the Faculty of Science, not for being celebrities.

Then it’s the inauguration of MAX IV on June 21 – an event that really puts Lund University on the world map of science. Mikael Eriksson, former professor of accelerator physics at the faculty and machine director at MAX IV Laboratory, has been instrumental in the invention of many of the technologies that make MAX IV so superior. When I’ve met him over the years, he has always commented that “it will be fun to see if it works”, which I took as an expression of his sense of humour. However, when he recently retired, and at a seminar in his honour was thanked for his services at the faculty, I began to understand what a high-risk project it had been throughout. Happily enough, it proved to work, so now the opening will be a real party.

Finally, I want to give you advance notice of our summer party on 25 August, as usual on a Thursday, in the Astronomy building. We will begin with some traditional scientific entertainment, this year on the theme of speed. In our research, speed is often an important factor – from the speed of light to geological speed, and everything in between, and at this event, how speed affects what we are able to study will be discussed. The participants are Villy Sundström from the Department of Chemistry, Elisabeth Einarsson from the Department of Geology and Anders Hedenström from the Department of Biology, and the discussion will be led by professional moderator Lisa Kirsebom. Afterwards, there will be food, drinks, music, and visits to the tower. Once again, I hope that as many people as possible have time and want to participate.

Olov Sterner, Dean