



MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

NEW LOCATION

(OK, it's really returning to an old location)
Denny's Restaurant
3315 N. Scottsdale Road (at Osborn)
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Meeting times:

Date: Thursday, April 12, 2007

Networking begins at 6:30 PM

Dinner begins at 7:00 PM

Program starts at 8:00 PM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Vaughn Treude

First I need to make an apology. I realize that a lot of you wanted the meetings to be at Monti's. Certainly the food and atmosphere are much better than most places. The problem is that Monti's is a popular location and the owners are quite aware of that fact. As such, they require that we guarantee we'll fill up the meeting rooms – they want at least 12 people ordering meals. If we don't get 12 people, we end up paying for meals we didn't order. This is what happened last month. Regardless of the merits of the particular month's presentation, sometimes it just happens that several members are sick, out of town, or otherwise committed, and

there's not much we can do about it. Our treasury just isn't big enough to subsidize Monti's bottom line.

So I've made the executive decision to go back to Denny's in Scottsdale, at least for this month. This doesn't mean we have to stay there. Lane Garrett has also offered us the use of his company's new facilities in Mesa. The drawback is that it's way out on Val Vista near the 202. We would also need to make arrangements for food to be brought in, probably pizza or subs or something similar. This works out well for the Computer Society, which meets at DeVry (east of I-17 on Dunlap.) If we decided to do that, someone (it won't be me) would have to volunteer to order and pick up the food each month.

Speaking of obligations, one of my duties as chapter president is to attend the monthly IEEE Section meeting at the Airport Hilton. It's not the most exciting event. Despite that fact, I try to make at least half the meetings (thankfully they don't meet during summer.) If the group chair doesn't attend; he's supposed to get someone else to go in his place. Personally, though, I feel bad about asking anybody else to sit through it. :-) I shouldn't complain, I guess, there's free food, and the Hilton recently changed our meal from a rather odd form of pizza (it seems I was the only one who actually liked

it) to cold-cut sandwiches.

Last week, though, we actually had a presentation, rather than the usual endless succession of chapter reports. IEEE-USA Legislative Representative Russell Harrison was there to speak about his job lobbying in Washington, and about what the IEEE's trying to accomplish there. One of the interesting things he did was to illustrate what a small percentage of the population ever deals with their Congressmen (or state legislators), giving those activists an exaggerated influence over the political system. This also can give a person connections that can come in useful later on. Harrison gave an example of how a fellow he met while volunteering for a political campaign later became a bigwig in Homeland Security. I know that as a group we don't agree on much of anything, but perhaps sometime we should try to get someone to speak about what's going on in the Arizona legislature.

The lesson here might be that political involvement is a good thing. Speaking as someone with an excess interest in the topic, I also find it maddening, because there's a pretty narrow range of what's considered acceptable discourse. For example, the IEEE-USA's lobbying helped keep the Feds from increasing the H1B visa program for these last couple years, and we have to be content with baby steps like that, rather than trying to eliminate the program entirely. Those super-wealthy CEO's could end up looking for cheap labor through regular immigration channels. Now that would be sweet!

Speaking of politics, I'm sure they'll be some good discussions at next Thursday's

meeting when Lane Garrett discusses solar energy. Hope to see you all there!

Vaughn Treude

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

by Clark Jones

As many of you may be aware, I had some computer problems back in February. I was remiss in making “backups”, so what was effectively a “disk crash” (I think it was actually a software glitch, and coincided with several UPSs “beeping” at me) was a Very Bad Thing.

Thankfully, though, it was on a Linux box and not on a Windows box. By working with a series of copies of the “original” drive, I've managed to recover most of the “important” stuff (like the PACN mailing list, and the “source code” for the February 2007 edition of *The Advisor*). The filenames all got hosed, but at least the time stamps seem to be correct.

One thing that does seem to be “lost forever” is the latest version of the program that I was using to monitor the inverter for my solar power system. I did manage to find an older version of that program, though, and have been using the loss as impetus to work on a major revision of the code that I'd been thinking about doing anyway. (Rather than one “big” program in tcl, I'm splitting it into two programs, one in C which will actually talk to the inverter and log the results, and can easily have a cron job set up to restart it if it crashes, and a separate program in tcl to display the

results.)

Unfortunately, I'm going to be out of town for "family obligations", and will miss Lane's talk. That's a bummer, as he does give good talks. Since May is traditionally our picnic, hopefully I can get him to fill me in then.

On a somewhat related topic, I will be the speaker for the April edition of *One Planet Magazine's* monthly lecture series. I'll be giving a presentation on my solar power project. The date of this is Thursday, April 19, at 6:30 PM. The location is roughly

Hayden Rd. and Mountain View, but to get folks to RSVP, I'm not giving out the exact address. Please RSVP to Kebba Buckley, either at 480-250-1177 or e-mail her at kebba@kebba.com to let her know you're interested. DO NOT RSVP TO ME!

Oh, yes: Not everyone thinks of Val Vista as being "way out" -- my house is actually about a mile and a half *east* of Val Vista, so that location would be MUCH closer for me!

Clark Jones

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PACN Website: <http://www.ieeepacn.com>

**IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network April Meeting:
Photovoltaic Technology Update
Note Change of Location!**

Date: Thursday, April 12th, 2007

Time: Networking begins at 6:30 pm

Dinner begins at 7:00 pm

Program starts at 8:00 pm

Place: Note change of location from last month!

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Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

Abstract: Lane Garrett, founder of ETA Engineering, will speak about the political aspects of solar energy, and give us an update on photo-voltaic technology; its availability, costs and trends. Solar energy will affect most citizens of Arizona within the next five years. Come and find out how!

For more information, contact Vaughn Treude, vaughn@nakota-software.com, or see the IEEE PACN website, ieeepacn.com.
