



MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

August 11, 2005, dinner (or just come to network) at 7:00 PM, presentation at 8:00 PM.

Denny's Restaurant
3315 N. Scottsdale Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ

(Also, see Editor's Message for a party announcement for August 20 at 7:30 PM.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Vaughn Treude

By now most of you have probably heard of the discovery of a tenth planet, which is bigger than Pluto and more than twice as far from the sun. Actually, the object was discovered two years ago, by a team of three astronomers – Brown, Trujillo, and Rabinowitz – of Caltech, Gemini Observatory, and Yale respectively. Because it orbits very slowly it took them two years to figure out what it was. It does not yet have an official name, just its designator 2003 UB313.

I've been following the speculations about "Planet 10" for some time. In the last few years there have been a number of large number of discoveries in the Kuiper Belt. This region, first proposed by Gerard Kuiper, is a zone of numerous small bodies similar to the asteroid

belt, located beyond the orbit of Neptune. The biggest Kuiper objects are Sedna, Orcus, Quaoar, Varuna, and Ixion, all of which are nearly as big as Pluto. Following the precedent established with Pluto, these bodies have been named after gods or goddesses of the dead or the underworld from different pantheons.

But there's been a big controversy over how to classify these things, and the arguments include Pluto at well. When Clyde Tombaugh first discovered Pluto in 1930, it was thought to be about the size of Mercury. I remember that in the 1970's the estimate was increased to possibly the size of Earth. With our improved telescopes we now know it's smaller than the Earth's moon, a mere 2250 kilometers in diameter. A lot of astronomers feel that Pluto is too small to count as a planet. And 2003 UB313, though bigger than Pluto, is still smaller than our moon.

That's why we definitely need better guidelines for classifying these things. Where should the cutoff be? Some scientists (among them Alan Stern of the Southwest Research Institute, who argues the case on SpaceDaily.com) propose that the minimum size should be determined by the laws of physics. Any object larger than around 700 kilometers in diameter has enough gravity to force its shape to be nearly spherical. Smaller bodies can be quite lumpy, like the potato-shaped moons of Mars. If you set 700 km as the lower bound, the Solar System has 16 planets, including Ceres (the largest asteroid), Sedna and

company, plus 2003 UB313. Oops, make that 17, there's another big one, 2003 EL61, which has recently been determined to be almost as big as Pluto. Considering that there may be a lot more icy objects out there, this could make it a lot more difficult for schoolchildren to memorize the names of the planets. And will we run out of names of gods of the underworld? Maybe the 700 km limit is too small, and we should demote Pluto as well.

Personally I would like to see a size limit applied to moons as well. I remember as a kid knowing that Jupiter had 12 moons, Saturn 9, Uranus 5, and Neptune 2. Now these big planets all have more than ten apiece, with Jupiter being the king at 63. Most of these so-called moons are just big rocks, with only a few being large enough to pass the planet test. By the 700 km criterion, there are only 15 proper moons, including our own Luna. Everything else we could call a moonlet, or a mini-moon. Sorry Mars, but Phobos and Deimos wouldn't make the cut.

Well, that's enough of this spacey topic. Hope to see you all at Denny's on Thursday the eleventh.

Vaughn

EDITOR ' S MESSAGE

by Clark Jones

Hmm... As for the planetary issue, things are a lot stickier than Vaughn has said. Most folks are only aware of one of Earth's three (known) "natural" moons (OK, one may actually be classified as being in solar orbit rather than terrestrial orbit) but that's because

only Luna is a "naked eye" object. I happen to be an advocate of classifying the Terra-Luna "system" as a "binary planet" rather than a "planet-moon", but that's really not appropriate to this venue.

As for the names, there's a lot of deity names available. Somewhere I have a list, that I go reference when I add a new computer. I select an appropriate one each new computer. (I'm writing this on Brangwaine, a goddess of knowledge, and my Windows 2000 machine is named "Discordia", a goddess of chaos.)

I apologize for being late in getting *The Advisor* out this month. All of the inputs were early, but my kitty, Keyboard, was in the hospital for a week, and that caused a propagation of disruptions.

There are also two announcements for this month:

- The monthly Mensa party is going to be at my house on August 20. All PACN members are invited. (See the announcement later in this issue.)
- For the month of August, American Mensa is waiving the fee for evaluating "prior evidence" (usually \$30). Over half of all Mensa members qualified with scores for tests they'd already taken.

I also want to apologize about managing to "lose" the update to Mike Jordan's phone number. (July had incorrectly reverted to his old one.) I think I have the correct one in this month's contact info list.

Clark

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IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network



Engineering Your Future Edgar Allen, Process Improvement Partners

Date: Thursday, August 11, 2005

Time: Networking begins at 6:30 p.m.

Dinner begins at 7:00 p.m.

Place: Denny's Restaurant
3315 N. Scottsdale Rd.
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

Abstract: Many who are involved in selling services think that the world of sales is a hit or miss proposition – one in which they have little or no control. The reality is that anyone selling services can control and improve their sales record by simply adhering to a few simple principles and by tracking a few simple ratios that are used in monitoring sales. If you have a consulting practice and your sales effort could use a boost, you won't want to miss this interactive presentation.

Speaker: Edgar Allen is an independent consultant who operates Process Improvement Partners out of Scottsdale, Arizona. He has been involved in selling services for the past 40 years. Locally, he is a member of the Arizona Tooling and Machining Association and serves on the advisory board of the Taser Foundation. He speaks on business related topics throughout the country.

Directions: In Scottsdale, go west from Highway 101 and Indian School Road. Turn left on Scottsdale Road to head south. It is at the southeast corner on Scottsdale Road at Osborn Road.

Contacts: Vaughn Treude Mike Jordan
IEEE PACN President IEEE PACN Program Chair

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Mensa Party

Saturday, August 20, 2005, 7:30 PM - The Mensa "Salon" (monthly party) will be at the home of Clark Jones, 834 N. Constellation Way in Gilbert. Take U.S. 60 to Greenfield, and go south on Greenfield to Guadalupe. Turn left (east) on Guadalupe. About half a mile east of Greenfield on the left is Constellation Way - it's easier to spot the "subdivision" name of "White Fence Farms IV". (If you get to the fire station on the right, you've gone too far on Guadalupe.) Turn north (left) on Constellation Way, and it's the fourth house on the left. (Look for the stylized "M" sign by the street.) Park in the yard, on the street, or even out back. Please enter the house through the garage.

The house is by no means "childproof", so it's listed as an "Adult Event", though well behaved children are welcome. It's BYOB, and you can bring bring some food to share if you like. Smoking outside. A cat lives indoors, and a dog lives outdoors. \$3 for the "owl". Wheelchairs can be accommodated (there's about a 3" step from the garage to the house - a shout should bring a couple of guys to help).

For questions, e-mail to cjones_gpm@cox.net, or call either 480-641-7801 or cell 602-369-6259.

Waiving score evaluation fee!

Know someone who might qualify for Mensa?

We're making it easy - and cheap - for your friends and colleagues to qualify for Mensa membership. During the entire month of August, they may send in the results of any standardized intelligence test they've taken in the past, and we'll evaluate the test scores for Mensa membership for free. (There is usually a \$30 fee to evaluate test scores.) We accept the results from more than 200 tests; a partial list may found at http://www.us.mensa.org/join_mensa/testscores.php3. If they qualify, they'll be sent an offer of membership. Please take this opportunity to invite your friends and colleagues to join Mensa. To take advantage of our offer, they will need to visit www.us.mensa.org and follow the instructions on that page.

**IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network
Membership Application Form**

Membership is available to anyone who is interested in the goals of the organization. Full membership entitles a member to voting privileges at business meetings, and to a web site listing. Associate members are not listed and do not vote, but receive all mailings. Note that the newsletter is distributed via e-mail.

I hereby apply for (full____ associate____) membership in the IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network.

NAME: _____
(Last) (First and initials)

IEEE member? Yes____ (Membership number _____) No____

P.E.? Yes____ (States: _____) No____

Area(s) of expertise: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Company address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

E-mail: _____

Web site URL: _____

Home address: _____

Home telephone: _____

Preferred mail address: Work____ Home____ Signature: _____

Mail completed form with membership fee payable to "IEEE-PACN" to:
William D. Morgan Fees: Full member, IEEE Member: \$25
Treasurer, IEEE PACN Full member, non-IEEE Member \$30
23 E. Fairmount Drive Associate member: \$20
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