



## MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

Thursday, July 13, 2006, network at 6:30, dinner (optional) at 7:00 PM, presentation at 8:00 PM.

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Net Neutrality: Argle-Bargle or Fooferaw? \***

by Vaughn Treude

Network Neutrality is one of the big buzzwords of the day. There are numerous blogs and radio ads warning us that we need to “save the Internet” from the evil machinations of huge corporations. In reality, it's not so black and white. There are huge corporations and little guys on both sides of the fence.

The term “network neutrality” refers to the traditional flat-rate pricing scheme for Internet services. In this system, service providers transport all data packets on a “first come, first served” basis, and give equal access to all sources of content. Customers may pay extra for more bandwidth, but everything they access is treated the same.

The issue became controversial when broadband providers such as AT&T, Verizon, and Comcast proposed offering different tiers of service for information providers. This would supposedly give the telcos incentive to improve infrastructure, and provide better throughput for media applications such as streaming audio and video. In opposition to this idea are not only political activists such as MoveOn, but giant corporations such as Microsoft, Google, and Yahoo. They say that discriminatory pricing will end the Internet's role as a free marketplace of ideas, and subject it to the dominance of advertisers and media conglomerates.

In principle, I'm against government-enforced neutrality, in part because it's the position taken by most network engineers. It makes sense to allow providers to give priority to bandwidth-intensive uses like streaming audio and video. It's a phenomenal waste of resources to force scientific, educational and medical data to be on an equal footing with chain emails and endlessly-forwarded jokes. Differential pricing makes economic sense, too, providing for efficient allocation of a limited resources. It also might be a solution to the spam problem – providers could give their messages the lowest priority.

But I do have some concerns. Well-funded businesses could try to monopolize the Internet, squeezing out the little guy. Bandwidth providers could engage in censorship – they've done this in the past. (An example: AOL recently blocked emails mentioning a website that was critical of its policies.) More horrifying, spammers might pay for *higher* priority.

One solution would be to regulate only against the extremes, forbidding providers from censoring content and requiring them to reserve a certain percentage of bandwidth for non-premium services. In principle, one could argue that the use of public right of way justifies this. Hopefully current trends will make it a moot point. Neutrality will not be a concern if broadband choices continue to proliferate, no longer forcing us to choose between the monopoly telco and the cable franchise. There will be a wide assortment of wireless services, satellite and terrestrial. Then we can choose one that satisfies our needs as consumers, not those of the big media conglomerates.

Vaughn Treude

References:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net\\_neutrality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_neutrality)

[http://www.andykessler.com/andy\\_kessler/2006/06/weekly\\_standard.html](http://www.andykessler.com/andy_kessler/2006/06/weekly_standard.html)

<http://www.lewrockwell.com/orig7/internet-market.html>

[http://www.civic.moveon.org/save\\_the\\_internet](http://www.civic.moveon.org/save_the_internet)

\* Title inspired by *The Simpsons*, “Last Exit to Springfield”

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

by Clark Jones

You're getting this month's edition of *The Advisor* early because I'm going to be going out of town again this coming weekend. I'll be going to the Arizona ham radio “state convention” and hamfest in Williams. It's the first time in several years that I'll be able to attend the whole thing. The past two years it's been scheduled the same weekend as the Mensa “Annual Gathering” (the national convention), and for a couple of years before that work conflicted with it. I'm really looking forward to it!

The last weekend in June I went with the MARCA (formerly that stood for Motorola Amateur Radio Club of Arizona, but since so few members work for Circle-M Ranch any more, they just changed the name to “MARCA, Inc.”) for ham radio Field Day. For those of you not into ham radio, Field Day is officially a “demonstration of emergency preparedness”. Unofficially, it's the largest “contest” of the year. Basically, you see how many other stations you can contact during a specified 24 hour period. (This year MARCA's count was about 1600. I was on the VHF station, and we were blessed with some wonderful propagation, logging a total of 68 contacts on 6 meters, including stations as far away as Rhode Island and Connecticut.) The one downside to Field Day was that maybe 20 miles south of Payson, I passed by a motorcycle accident a few minutes after it had happened, and there was clearly at least one fatality.

I went to the Components, Packaging and

Manufacturing Technology Society's meeting on June 21<sup>st</sup>. The speaker was Dr. William T. Chen, who gave a very interesting presentation. One thing he pointed out was that memory that thirty some years ago would have cost the equivalent of a house would today cost less than a "Post-It" note. He also pointed out that our three most valuable treasures are health, education, and our network.

Some of you may have been aware that I was running for "president" of the local Mensa group (or, in Mensa parlance, "Local Secretary"). I'm pleased to report that I was fortunate enough to lose the election, so now I'll have time for some other things I've been wanting to do.

Which brings me to next month: although

I'll be able to send out *The Advisor* (albeit early – I'll have to set a deadline for any submissions of 5:00 PM on July 28, 2006), I will miss the meeting. I'll be at the Mensa World Gathering in Orlando, Florida. I'm going to be driving, and am planning on after the WG going down the Keys (where I've never been), then to visit my aunt in Ft. Myers, maybe up to visit another aunt in Georgia (her health may not be up to it), cousins in Tennessee, and more cousins and some friends in Dallas before returning to the Phoenix area.

See you Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, at the PACN meeting!

Clark Jones

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**IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network July Meeting:  
Building the World's Largest Solar Power Plant**

**Date:** Thursday, July 13, 2006

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

Dinner begins at 7:00 p.m.

Program starts at 8:00 p.m.

**Place:** Denny's Restaurant

3315 N. Scottsdale Rd. (at Osborn)

Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

**Abstract:** Our July meeting will feature Lane Garret, founder of ETA Engineering, an Arizona leader in the field of renewable energy. Lane will speak about his latest venture – the construction of the world's largest photo-voltaic power plant to date, in Deming, New Mexico.

For more information, contact Vaughn Treude, [vaughn@nakota-software.com](mailto:vaughn@nakota-software.com), or see the IEEE PACN website, [ieeepacn.com](http://ieeepacn.com).

