

# *The Advisor*

Newsletter of the IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network

**July 2000, Volume 7, Number 7**

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## IEEE PHOENIX AREA CONSULTANTS NETWORK MEETING NOTICE

### WHEN:

Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2000  
Social and check in at 6:30 PM  
Dinner at 7 PM (Choice of six seafood dinners plus filet mignon and char-broiled chicken)  
Business meeting starts about 8 PM

### WHERE:

Pier d' Orleans Restaurant, 61 East University Dr., Mesa, AZ 85201  
(On the south side of University, between Country Club and Mesa Drive.)  
Phone: (480) 844 0666

### COST:

There are two menu choices. Meal cost will be \$14 or \$17 per person. If you come at 7:30 or so and do not eat, there is no charge. **NOTE:** As of January 2000, each visitor will be allowed three "free" meetings (that is, the same cost as members), after which there will be a \$10.00 surcharge.

### PROGRAM:

**ENTREPRENEURIAL SEMINAR SERIES:** We will view the last of the Entrepreneurial Seminar Series video tapes which have been provided by the IEEE. The topic is "Retraining and Revitalizing the Mature Engineer." (All engineers are welcome, even immature ones.) Afterwards, we will hold a discussion and idea session.

### RESERVATIONS APPRECIATED:

We need to make proper arrangements with the management at Pier d'Orleans. Therefore, *please call Bruce Johnson at 480-759-2826* (or e-mail [bruce.johnson@ieee.org](mailto:bruce.johnson@ieee.org)) *if you know you will attend.*  
If you decide to come at the last minute, please do so. Any restaurant can always serve one more meal.

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### Member Poll on Meeting Places

In last month's *Advisor*, we solicited members for ideas on possible alternative meeting places. Not that Pier d'Orleans hasn't been a good place, on the contrary. But its location so far to the east was a concern for many members. Unfortunately, we haven't had many alternate suggestions so far. One member has suggested the Black Eyed Pea. The location at The Pavilions in Scottsdale has been advertising meeting rooms, and there is another location in Tempe. My wife and I (Editor) have personally been to the one in northwest Phoenix, and we thought the food was quite good. Perhaps someone else has an opinion. Preferably, it would be a centrally-located restaurant with good food at reasonable prices, available meeting rooms and (hopefully) no minimum attendance requirements. Please send suggestions to the editor at [v.treude@ieee.org](mailto:v.treude@ieee.org).

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*C B Johnson*

Our June 8th meeting featured Al Tobin, who shared his accounting expertise with us and spoke on "Accounting Insights for Consultants." Al is one of the founding fathers of the PACN, and he has extensive experience not only as a professional consultant and advisor, but as an educator as well. There were many questions and interactive comments regarding different types of organization structures, related tax and financial tradeoffs, and etc, during Al's presentation. Thanks to Al for an interesting and informative evening.

Our next networking/dinner meeting will be held on Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2000, starting at 6:30 pm, at **Pier d' Orleans Restaurant, 61 East University Dr., Mesa, AZ 85201**. We will view and review the sixth and final video tape in the Entrepreneurial Seminar Series. The tape is entitled, "Retraining and Revitalizing the Mature Engineer."

I hope that some of you were able to register with Teltech's "Expert Marketplace." It is partly a way to obtain a free listing for your practice, and it facilitates selling your consulting expertise. If you haven't looked into what Teltech has to offer, more information is available on their website at [www.teltech.com/expertmarket/default.asp](http://www.teltech.com/expertmarket/default.asp). Teltech is a well regarded and relatively old expert consultant organization that is now making use of the web to a greater extent.

Your executive committee works to offer presentations and develop programs of general interest and usefulness to our members. Somehow we also need to find ways to make our practices more successful. With this in mind, please attend our meetings as an active member, whenever possible, and bring your practice improvement ideas and comments with you to share with the network. To advertise our practices we do have a local web page, with individual member listings. Please come to our meetings prepared to discuss new ideas and approaches for improving the consulting activity for our members

As always, all members are encouraged to submit newsworthy items to Vaughn Treude, for inclusion in our newsletter, so please be on the lookout. Humor is welcome as well, especially if it relates to consulting. [Note: Executive Board meetings are usually held at 8:30 am on Saturday mornings 12 days prior to each monthly meeting. These meetings are open to all members. Please contact Bruce Johnson if you wish to attend.]

Our informal meetings are designed for networking, to communicate with each other on a personal and professional level, and to enjoy a program and a meal together as a group with a common interest and dedication to the enterprise of consulting. Summaries of the next few monthly meeting programs are listed separately in this newsletter. Be sure to mark your calendars now for the next regular PACN meeting on **Thursday, July 13th at Pier d' Orleans, in Mesa**

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### URL's Of Possible Interest

The home of the IEEE's Consultant's Networks, plus resources for entrepreneurs, researchers, and others seeking information on grant and business opportunities is: [www.ieeeusa.org/business/](http://www.ieeeusa.org/business/).

A web page for consultants is located at [www.consultme.com](http://www.consultme.com). Services are listed by skill, specialty, name company name or professional title, and by location and availability. There is a fee for this service.

IEEE-USA's Web Employment Services Offered Worldwide: IEEE-USA's benchmark Web-based employment services are being made available and promoted to IEEE members worldwide. A new global employment services Web page describes how job seekers and employers outside the United States can avail themselves of the organization's Job Listing Service, Resume Referral service and consultants database. The site, located at [www.ieeeusa.org/employment/global](http://www.ieeeusa.org/employment/global), also contains an invitation for non-U.S. regions and sections to contact IEEE-USA for assistance in promoting these services to their members.

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### EDITOR'S NOTES

#### Fun On the Web

This year, I promised myself that I would once again have a web page for my consulting business. It was a task I'd been avoiding for some time. I'd had a web page a few years ago (in the "free" space that came with my ISP subscription) but it was a quick-and-dirty job. At that time, I wanted a page mainly because everybody else was getting one. I'd planned to take time later to polish its appearance, and add new content occasionally to keep the search engines interested.

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### *Editor's Notes - Continued from page 2*

Fortunately, I had plenty of business already, but I also had very little free time, so I let the page go without change for over a year. I didn't get any business from it (though I did get one or two inquiries for work outside the realm of my expertise.) Mostly what I got was ads for business services (including spamming software) and for contract programmers from Russia and India. Then I changed Internet providers, and the new server inexplicably wouldn't run the inter-page links in my site. Complaints got me nowhere ("we're not in the business of debugging peoples' HTML code") so I simply took it down, promising myself I'd get a "real" web hosting service and do it right. That was over two years ago.

I'm still keeping busy. But lately, I've wanted to get some variety in my contracts, preferably something on a system-design level. A Web site would certainly be a cheap way to advertise. The first thing I did was to sign up for my own URL. I'd heard advice from colleagues that if you're an unknown company, you shouldn't use your company name (which nobody knows), you should describe what you do (these guys wisely registered "casetools.com.") Maybe so, but I think it's important to have the rights to your company name, too. To my dismay, I found that "nakota.com" was already taken (by whom I don't know—the name didn't appear at all in the Federal trademark register when I checked.) So I registered both "nakotasoftware.com" and "nakota-software.com." Good news: the price of registration has come down since Internic privatized the service and introduced competition. I went with Domain Discover. It only cost \$60 for each URL for the first two years.

The next step was to organize my content. The old page was hopelessly out of date, so I had to redo it completely. That reminded me of updating a resume, which has always been an irritating task. Maybe it's because I hate using the stiff, formal style people for resumes. Yet I never have any good alternatives of my own. So I scanned the Web for examples of what other consultants had published. There were a lot of impressive sites out there (including some of the ones published by our members), and they gave me some good ideas. I also found out what I *don't* like, like lots of tiny text, dozens of graphics, and long pages that require a lot of scrolling.

So I put together some text, all of it informal and organized into short topics. This time, I decided not to craft the HTML code by hand. First of all, people expect sites to be much more polished now than they were in the early days. And I just don't have the time to do that manually. I went to Fry's, and checked out Microsoft's "Front Page", which was around \$170. There had to be a better deal! Then I saw "Web Express", by Microvision Development, priced at only \$60. This one had a testimonial from John Dvorak of *PC Magazine*, so I decided to try it. It's been very easy to use. Some of the operations—like figuring out how to add a text label to a button—were a little confusing at first, but I soon figured out the method to their madness. By the way, I later saw a survey of customer satisfaction for major software packages (this was *PC Magazine* again) where "Front Page" got low marks.

Next I need to choose a Web hosting service, so I can use start using my own domain name. I checked out [www.webhostdir.com](http://www.webhostdir.com), which seems to have a pretty good listing. Most of these hosting services charge from around \$10 to \$20 a month for small businesses. One-time startup fees vary from nothing to \$50, and many of them advertise limited-time discounts for new customers. Others have testimonials from people I've never heard of.

One thing that interested me was reading each company's "acceptable use policy." Most of the rules are not surprising, such as those forbidding illegal activities. Some don't allow the customer to provide downloads of software or multimedia, or they restrict the traffic of these types of files. Another common restriction is against "spam", but it worries me when they define it too broadly (on linuxwebhost, spam is "any unsolicited message to someone with whom you had no prior business relationship.") I hate spam (my definition is "mass mailings by unethical morons") as much as the next guy, but don't mind the occasional unexpected but well-targeted solicitation. I was afraid that if I went with a place that was too strict, I might send mail to the wrong person and accidentally get lumped in with the moron group. I finally picked WestHost, whose rates seemed reasonable (\$15.95 a month, paid quarterly) and whose spam rules didn't sound as fanatical as some of the others.

OK, some I'm a bit picky. But I'm sure I'll get the site up and running soon. Then I'll have the fun of submitting the URL to all the major search engines. (Some of the web hosts say they do that for you.) And maybe I'll even buy one of those "rotating banner" ads somewhere—if I can afford it. I'll keep you all posted on the results.

*Vaughn L. Treude, Editor*

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### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The Executive Board did not meet for the month of June. The next meeting is scheduled on July 29<sup>th</sup> at Bruce Johnson's residence. **Note:** These meetings are open to all members. Please contact Bruce Johnson if you wish to attend.

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## MEETING NOTICES

### JULY 13<sup>th</sup> MEETING

We will view the sixth tape in the Entrepreneurial Seminar Series. The tape is entitled, "Retraining and Revitalizing the Mature Engineer."

### AUGUST 10<sup>th</sup> MEETING

We have tentatively scheduled a roundtable discussion on the new high-speed options in Internet access, their pros, cons, and costs. Lane Garret has agreed to moderate the discussion.

### SEPTEMBER 14<sup>th</sup> MEETING

The topic is consulting opportunities in Linux. We are hoping to find a speaker who is currently making money in the Linux field.

### OCTOBER 12<sup>th</sup> MEETING

Consultants' Network member (and alternative energy expert) Lane Garret will speak on exciting new opportunities for consultants due to utility deregulation.

### NOVEMBER 9<sup>th</sup> MEETING

The topic for this meeting will be the Palm Pilot and other Personal Digital Assistants. No speaker has yet been assigned; a round table discussion is a possibility.

### DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup> MEETING

As always, we will have our annual business meeting in December. Members will vote to select executive committee members for the following years, and accept or reject changes to the by-laws (if any.) There will be other program or guest speaker, but non-members are still welcome to attend.

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## OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

We will gladly list other meetings of interest in this space. Contact the editor of this newsletter. We only ask that the meetings be of professional interest to our members. They do not have to be IEEE meetings.

*The IEEE Phoenix Section Executive Committee* usually meets on the first Monday of each month at 6 PM, and all IEEE members are welcome to attend. These meetings are currently being held at the SRP facility on Priest Road, between Washington and Van Buren.

The Phoenix Chapter of the **Independent Computer Consultants Association (ICCA)** meets the second Tuesday of each month with programs of interest to computer consultants, programming contractors, and others in the computer industry. Meetings are held at the West Coast Executive Park Hotel, 1100 North Central Avenue (just south of the Deck Park over I-10.) Meetings start at 6 PM for cocktails, 6:45 for dinner and 7:15 for the program (usually a guest speaker.) The cost of dinner is \$20 for members and \$25 for guests. Attending the meeting only is free for members and \$5 for guests. Call the ICCA hotline at 942-0667 for more information.

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## INTERNET TOPICS

The IEEE Phoenix Area Consultants Network maintains a web site with resumes of all members who wish to post one. It is a member benefit that is paid for in your membership fees. In addition there is a national directory of consultants and a national web site maintained by IEEE. The Phoenix network web site is:

[www.amug.org/~lanegarr/ieeephx.html](http://www.amug.org/~lanegarr/ieeephx.html)

[www.etaengineering.com/ieeephx.html](http://www.etaengineering.com/ieeephx.html)

[www.accessarizona.com](http://www.accessarizona.com) (select from groups menu)

## MEMBER WEB SITES

Several members have given us their URL's. If we have omitted anyone, please let us know. The "http://" prefix is implied for all addresses below. For non-standard URL's (those not beginning with "www") this may need to be entered explicitly.

Paul M. Everett	<a href="http://www.everettinfrared.com">www.everettinfrared.com</a>
Lane S. Garret	<a href="http://www.etaengineering.com">www.etaengineering.com</a>
Daryl Gerke	<a href="http://www.emiguru.com">www.emiguru.com</a>
Mark A. Goldstein	<a href="http://www.researchedge.com">www.researchedge.com</a>
C. Bruce Johnson	<a href="http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/CBJOHNSON">ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/CBJOHNSON</a>
Andrew J. Maltenfort	<a href="http://www.arowave.com">www.arowave.com</a>
William D. Morgan	<a href="http://www.amug.org/~bmorgan">www.amug.org/~bmorgan</a>
Robert C. Rose	<a href="http://www.gshelp4u.com">www.gshelp4u.com</a>
Arthur H. M. Ross	<a href="http://www.cdg.org/tech/a_ross">www.cdg.org/tech/a_ross</a>
Richard L. Tannehill	<a href="http://members.firstinter.net/rickw7rt">members.firstinter.net/rickw7rt</a>
Vaughn L. Treude	<a href="http://www.nakota-software.com">www.nakota-software.com</a>
Stan Vollertsen	<a href="http://www.stantronix.com">www.stantronix.com</a>
Walt White	<a href="http://www.southwestsoftware.com">www.southwestsoftware.com</a>

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## *The Advisor*

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### Executive Board

**President:** C. Bruce Johnson (480) 759-2826

**Vice President:** Lane Garrett (480) 966-1380

**Secretary:** Russell Johnson (480) 991-3787

**Treasurer:** Gene Baxter (480) 832-7744

**Member:** Paul Everett (480) 706-4753

**Member:** Vaughn Treude (602) 750-3662

**ADVISOR MEMBER LIST****June 2000**

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Garrett, Lane S., PE, CEM	480-966-1380	480-966-1516	lanegarret@aol.com	New product development, alternative energy
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Johnson, Dr. C. Bruce	480-759-2826	480-759-2826	bruce.johnson@ieee.org	New product development, night vision, optical sensors
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Morgan, William D.	480-921-4094	480-921-4094	bmorgan@amug.org	Software design and development- Macintosh
Narud, Dr. J. A.	480-949-1748			Computer hardware, semiconductor technology
Polischuk, Andre	602-482-0890	602-482-3979	apolischuk@aol.com	
Pyska, Michael S.	480-283-6286		m.pyska@ieee.org	Microelectronics and embedded systems
Ritchey, Robert R.	480-460-2652	480-460-2653	rrritchey@acm.org	FPGA devel., Mac/PC specialty cards, networking
Rose, Robert C.	480-595-1187		bob.rose@ieee.org	
Ross, Dr. Arthur H. M.	602-371-9708	602-336-7174	a.ross@ieee.org	CDMA, wireless communications
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Trelewicz, Jennifer Q.	480-832-7422		trelewicz@asu.edu	Embedded systems, DSP, Unix device drivers & nets
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Vollertsen, Stanley A.	480-774-0803	480-774-0809	stan@stantronix.com	Power conversion and prototyping
White, Walt	602-791-8029	602-494-3585	walt_white@southwestsoftware.com	

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