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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Paul Everett

The Our meeting this month is on April 10th. Ed Mischen is back for Part 2 of his presentation on intellectual property. Ed is a registered patent agent in addition to being a manager at Philips Semiconductor. He also has a patent application business on the side with his partner. Ed's talk will be on "Trade Secrets and Patents". He talked about trademarks and copyrights in February. These subjects are very important to all of us in the technology business whether we are independently employed or not. Also, Ed is a very good speaker, and I suspect that his presentation this month will be as interesting and informative as his last one.

As usual, the meeting will be held at Monti's at Mill Ave and Rio Salado Parkway in Tempe. Festivities will start at 6:30 PM with networking and general discussion of world events. Dinner will be around 7 with the talk about 8. At least that's the plan.

The annual PACN picnic will be held as usual at the Garrett residence in Scottsdale on May 10th starting about 3 PM. This is an event for the whole family. The Network supplies burgers, brats and soft drinks. Each family is asked to bring a contribution such as potato salad, baked beans, dessert,

chips and dip or whatever. Also, if you want something else to drink, you have to bring your own or bum it off somebody. The picnic is always a lot of fun. The Garrett backyard is big and easily able to accommodate the whole group. I hope to see everyone there. Lane usually shows all interested parties the solar power system he uses to run his home. Since we are having the picnic we will not have a May dinner meeting at Monti's.

Our membership keeps growing steadily. We have doubled our membership over the past year, and hopefully we can do it again over the coming year. Attendance at our meetings has been increasing as well, and we sort of overflowed the Senator's Room last month. Several people had to sit at the corner tables. It worked out, but I don't think we could have put many more people in there. If the trend continues we will ask Monti's to give us a bigger room. They have some bigger ones toward the back of the building.

If you haven't paid your 2003 dues, please do so now. Send a check to

William D. Morgan
Treasurer, IEEE PACN
23 E. Fairmount Drive
Tempe AZ 85282

The dues are cheap. The regular membership dues for IEEE members is \$25/yr. If you are not an IEEE member,

the cost is \$30/yr. The IEEE requires a difference in the two categories. Associate membership is available to those who are not actively engaged in engineering, and the associate member dues are \$20/yr. All in all, it is pretty cheap. When you pay your dues, Vaughn and Bruce will make a nice laminated name badge with 2003 prominently displayed. The badges are supposed to be worn at all of our meetings so please remember to bring it each time.

In a fit of insanity last month I lamented about the sad state of my computers and wondered what was the best way to backup a hard disk so when it fails (and it will and has for me) you aren't left out in the cold. The answer is RAID. If you set up RAID1, a carbon copy of your hard disk is kept on a second hard drive. Every time you write on the first disk, the same thing is written on the second disk. When you have a hard disk failure you just replace it, do a disk copy from the surviving disk and go on your merry way. The computer will continue to work off the surviving hard disk so you are never down. You have to buy a second hard disk, but with the cost so low these days it is well worth it. Just to add confusion, there is also RAID0 that uses two hard drives to enhance performance rather than provide a backup.

If you haven't already, please put your resumes together and send them to Vaughn so that he can post them on the web site. His email address is vaughn@nakota-software.com. Our web site is steadily improving, but we need your help.

As usual we will have the Executive

Board meeting at ETA prior to the Thursday dinner meeting. This seems to be a very effective way to handle things, and we will probably continue this way indefinitely, at least as long as the landlord continues to offer us these advantageous terms. ETA is located 2010 E. University, and the Board meeting will start at 5 PM. As always, any member is welcome to attend, but please let me know in advance if you are coming so we can make sure we have a seat for you. You can just send an email to

peverett@everettinfrared.com or call me at 480-706-4753.

Check out our web site at <http://www.ieeepacn.com>

See you next week.

Paul

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

by Clark Jones

Many moons ago, we talked about coming up with a series of short technical articles by some of the members. Paul put together one, but unfortunately, he sent it to me in a format (apparently Word XP) that I can't read. I finally got him to send it to me in a better format, Word 6, that my software can read, but now his "Figure 2" is messed up. Hopefully we can get this straightened out before the next issue of *The Advisor* goes "to press". I will try to put together two or three pages on digital testing, probably for the month after that. If you would like to put

together something for *The Advisor*, please do so – my email address is jone8@mindspring.com – just don't try to send it to me as Word XP.

Paul seems to have glossed over some of the power of RAID. There's actually at least four "levels" of RAID that he didn't mention, though levels 2 through 5 generally won't work with "ATA" (or "IDE") disk drives, at least not without special hardware. RAID5 is especially interesting, as it uses something called "striping" over multiple drives, and achieves redundancy, speed increases, and still allows more space than what is on just one drive. A little bit of trivia: "RAID" is an acronym, which stands for "Redundant Array of Inexpensive Drives".

A sidelight here: I haven't had a disk drive failure in many years (knock on wood). One of the keys is that mos of my computers are running 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

A related thought: there has been some recent talk in "the media" that there are many mother boards out there that have electrolytic caps that are destined to failure. Apparently something like a year ago, there were several manufacturers who got some "counterfeit" capacitors, and the chemistry was such that they would fail after about a year. Well, I know someone who last week sent a motherboard off to the manufacturer to have the caps replaced. So it is a "real" problem.

Last month I gave out 6 copies of my "digital photo album". I'll try to remember to bring a few copies in case anyone who hasn't received a copy would like one.

See you guys Thursday!

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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. Please note that the newsletter is distributed via e-mail.

I hereby apply for (full ___ associate ___) membership in the IEEE Phoenix area Consultants Network.

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Area(s) of expertise: _____

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