

Expert discusses the benefits of workplace diversity

by Gina Yalicki

Did you know that, by the year 2000, women and non-white males will make up 62 percent of the workforce — and most will be middle-aged?

This changing workforce forms the foundation for future employment policies and attitudes. These policies and attitudes direct and influence a company's activities by not eliminating these differences, but by capitalizing on them.

How can workplace diversity awareness benefit the IEEE? By being increasingly attentive to our diverse staff and membership, we can form successful relationships. In the global economy, these relationships are crucial.

Because workforce diversity is such an important issue, the IEEE

invited Lenora Billings-Harris, president, Excel Development Systems, Inc., and author of "The Diversity AdvantageSM: A Guide to Making Diversity Work," to be a guest speaker.

Billings-Harris recently spent time with *The Staff Circuit* to discuss workplace diversity.

Staff Circuit: What exactly is workplace diversity?

Billings-Harris: Creating an atmosphere where all of us, regardless of our differences, are able to work to our highest potential in a respectful and trusting environment.

SC: How do you see the workforce changing by the year 2000, and what kinds of issues will that raise?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



• Guest speaker Lenora Billings-Harris

Preparing for the worst

by Lyle Smith

A crippling ice storm strikes the East Coast and businesses throughout the Middle Atlantic region are left without heat and electricity.

A fire breaks out in the Operations Center, leaving half the computer room gutted by flames and the other half damaged by water and beyond repair.

A gas main ruptures and explodes into a ball of fire as 300-foot flames light up the night sky, leaving a significant portion of a town off-limits to residents and businesses.

Not very pleasant thoughts, are they? Granted, some of these scenarios are less likely to happen than others. But these events, large and small, can be real threats to a business.

To help deal with such situa-

tions, the IEEE has developed a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) to re-establish critical business functions at an alternate site in the event of a disaster.

The BCP effort began in 1997 when a team of staffers determined what was needed to establish backups of the Institute's critical hardware and software systems. The first step was to designate alternate sites to house these systems. The team selected facilities in Carlstadt, N.J. and East Rutherford, N.J., both owned by Comdisco, Inc.

The facility in Carlstadt is where I.T. personnel will re-establish the IEEE Oracle system and databases. A hardware set up similar to the one currently in production will be used. Data from back-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

In this issue

Diversity in the workplace1

Business Continuity Plan1

Employee survey results generate new programs3

Springtime religious celebrations3

Team focuses on student members ..4

Bud O'Connor talks about customer service5

How to make education affordable8

Innovation spells OPeRa8

Profile: Awards & Fellow Activities6

People page7



Diversity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

BH: Primarily, the difference between the workplace as we see it today and as it evolves toward the year 2000, is that clearly there are more women in the workplace, particularly women in professional and management positions. There are more people of color. And we are beginning to see more people with disabilities, but not nearly enough.

The reason this is a challenge to an organization is because most have managed people the same way for the last 30 years. Essentially what happened when the *Workforce 2000 Report* was published in 1987, leaders of progressive organizations recognized that since workforce demographics would be considerably different than in the past, they needed to look at how they were managing people.

Organizations have to not only attract key talent, but keep it. People who are now in the workplace have different values and beliefs, in addition to gender and ethnicity. This creates the need for diversity awareness training and for full-blown diversity initiatives that businesses do today.

SC: How have your views on a multicultural society changed from the views of your parents?

BH: I had opportunities they did not. Being an African-American, doors that were open to me were absolutely closed to them. Also, there were more career opportunities simply because doors were open.

As a consultant, I work with senior-level

executives to look at diversity from a strategic point of view — what diversity is on a day-to-day basis. We need to turn the diversity concept into everyday behaviors. It's difficult for people to do this because it's much easier not to change.

I try to help people understand that diversity is much more than just ethnicity and gender. I help them see how their stereotypes impact their behavior in the workplace, and how that ultimately impacts productivity and performance. For example, managers may want to create a more inclusive environment where employees feel respected and have the opportunity to reach their highest level. But first, managers have to get in touch with what their biases and stereotypes are to discover whether or not they have been doing anything in the past that might inhibit people from feeling fully valued.

SC: How is workplace diversity received by the various companies that you have visited, and which companies have good programs?

BH: I am hired for one of two reasons. One is because the organization is progressive enough to recognize that if it is able to create an environment where everybody feels respected, its bottom line will be enhanced. The reception is positive because the executives are making the decision to move forward. Companies want to improve productivity, reduce turnover, and enhance team effectiveness, which happens when you have a diverse workforce that knows how to work together.

The other reason I may come in is because there was an incident. The company was either sued or an incident happened

leader, Jim Paradise, Information Technology.

The team set up hardware, loaded software and recovered data. The functionality of the recovered database was successfully confirmed in less than 30 hours.

Jim explains that the first step usually involves simply testing the operating system whereas the IEEE exercise restored the operating system as well as the Financial, Membership and Order Entry applications with the accompanying Oracle database.

"In light of such aggressiveness and the preparation work needed, the success of this first exercise exceeded our expectations," notes Jim.

Additional parts of the plan are currently being developed and will be implemented in stages. The plan will be continually updated.

Other aspects of the BCP will address procedures ranging from notifying and updating employees of the status of the situation, issuing paychecks, paying for emergency services and other expenses to keep the operation running, even at another location.

Critics often attack the expense and effort

because an employee or several employees were insensitive and the company is trying to fix the problem.

Sometimes there are employees who, at least initially, do not think they need to be in training sessions. My challenge is to show them there is absolutely no right or wrong way. Their values and beliefs are fine. Rather the focus is looking at behavior.

Companies that are well known for their diversity initiatives are AT&T, Lucent Technologies, Motorola and Avon. They deal with this issue through ongoing diversity training and management-diversity programs so those managers understand their role.

They also provide career-development training and support groups for all the different groups represented in the workplace. Companies recognize they make less mistakes simply because they have a diversity of thinking.

SC: How does having a diverse workplace benefit an international company such as the IEEE in terms of fairly representing its members?

BH: One of the advantages of having a very diverse workforce is that when a company looks at offering products and services around the world, it is more likely to have input from employees who are familiar with other countries. This gives the company an advantage over other organizations that are not as diverse.

When we are able to come together, we are more likely to come up with new ideas that none of us by ourselves would have thought of. ♦

that go into a project like this, but consider these recent events.

This year an ice storm crippled New England and parts of Southern Canada and affected residents and businesses alike. Weeks passed before many businesses were able to re-establish service because of storm-related power failures. Some smaller and ill-prepared businesses were unable to recover.

In late 1997 a water main break in Manhattan's Flatiron district shut down businesses in the area for months.

A gas main explosion in 1994 in Edison, N.J. caused apartment and office buildings to be evacuated, and the immediate area was designated off-limits for several weeks.

It is better to be prepared than to run the risk of losing virtually everything by adopting a "we'll cross that bridge when we come to it" philosophy. The IEEE has already taken steps across that bridge.

The most common remark on this topic is, "We hope we'll never have to use it."

But if we do, we will be prepared for the worst. ♦

Another look at the 1997 Employee Opinion Survey

by Stella Paone

A range of career-enhancing programs are expected to be introduced in mid-1998, as a result of some of the concerns that employees expressed in last year's Employee Opinion Survey.

Since only 50 percent of respondents said career development opportunities were clear to them, Human Resources is creating a broad-based Career Management Program that will encompass various workshops on topics ranging from personal skills assessment to interview techniques.

Sixty percent of the employees who responded to the 1997 survey said career counseling was inadequate. To meet this need, Employee Development will be offering one-on-one career-counseling sessions with trained Human Resources professionals. Human Resources also will offer employees

the opportunity to be videotaped during mock interviews — and critiqued. This is expected to help staff members practice skills they learn in the new Quality College workshops, as well as provide advice on sharpening their interview techniques. Employee Development also will be working with various departments to publish career path opportunities for their various work areas.

The response to the ease of registering for Quality College was high (75 percent). The online registration form on the Quality College Web site, an electronic confirmation and email reminders were enhancements made during 1996 and 1997.

The staff's response concerning career counseling and the new department liaison was less positive (53 percent). This was not surprising since the liaison concept was relatively new at

the time of the survey.

Once again, the questions repeated on the 1997 survey showed that employees are most satisfied with company benefits, the IEEE as an employer and individual job satisfaction.

Employees who responded indicated the greatest increase in satisfaction in these areas:

- I rate overall job security at the IEEE as high — up seven points;
- My supervisor treats my performance evaluation as important — up nine points; and
- Staff senior-level management provides effective leadership — up seven points.

Fair compensation for job responsibilities, supervisor's work evaluations helping employees improve performance, and being kept informed of important departmental issues in a timely manner were all areas that also showed a significant increase. ♦

Celebrations of renewal and reflection

by Sheila Plotnick

As spring approaches, it brings with it celebrations of renewal and remembrance for employees of many faiths. Easter, Holi, Ramadan and Passover are just some of the many religious holidays celebrated during this time of year. While the manner in which celebrants observe these days may differ greatly, their meanings have much in common.

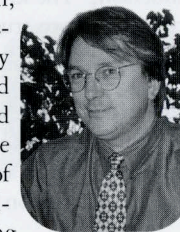
Easter is a time when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Christ after the Crucifixion. George Bouziotis, Electronic Products, looks forward to Easter Sunday as a time with his extended family.

"We fast the Saturday before, then go to Midnight Mass that night," says George. "The next morning, relatives arrive from all over to celebrate together. It's great to see the whole family together, and the kids love it. There are games and presents for them, and a huge feast for everybody. It really is joyous."

Bill Hagen, Publications, celebrates Easter with his wife and two young sons. He finds special meaning in the natural beauty of the season. "Namely," says Bill, "the green grass, the budding trees and bushes, and the springing up of Easter lilies and daffodils."

The celebration of nature is a major part of

the Hindu celebration, Holi, known as "The Festival of Color." Brightly colored decorations and clothing, folk dances and games are all part of the traditional observance of this holiday that welcomes spring. According to Smita Desai, Technical



• Bill Hagen

Activities, the first mangoes of the season, dates, roasted chickpeas and a grain called dauwar, which is prepared like popcorn, are some of the special foods.

Friendly pranks and mischief also contribute to the festive atmosphere.

"It can get messy," says Smita. "Young people like to fight each other using eggs and tomatoes, but it's all in fun."

Social harmony and community strength also are celebrated. It is customary for celebrants to visit the homes of several family members and friends, enjoying a different, specially-prepared treat at each.

This sense of community also is seen in the Islamic observance of Ramadan, which celebrates God's revelation of his word to Mohammed. Muslims observe a 30-day period of self-restraint and introspection, during which they abstain from food, drink and sex from dawn until sunset. They also do special acts of charity and recommit to abstain from offensive language and thoughts. The breaking of the fast every evening is traditionally a

festive, community event.

"I think of it almost like boot camp, or a refresher course," says cafeteria employee John Hewins, a practicing Muslim for the past eight years. "It's a time when I can really give a lot of thought to my gratitude for God's blessings, my happiness and my faith. I also concentrate on identifying aspects of my character I would like to improve."

Ramadan is not celebrated during a specific season because it is based on the lunar, rather than the Western, calendar. But Ramadan's message of self-improvement and rededication to one's faith, family and community closely parallels springtime holidays of other faiths.

Passover is an eight-day holiday during which Jews remember and give thanks for their ancestors' deliverance

from slavery in ancient Egypt. Celebrants of Passover also make a special effort to examine their lives and apply the ideals and determination that led their people to seek freedom.

During this time, Jews abstain from eating bread products containing any leavening in recognition of their ancestors' hardships. The Seder, or ritual Passover dinner, is held

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Preparing for the worst

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

up tapes created at the Operations Center will be loaded onto the systems at regular intervals and stored off-site. The East Rutherford facility is outfitted with PCs that can be used to access the system, allowing the Institute to continue its business operations and services.

"Companies that have successfully planned for a disaster have a very clear focus on business priorities and risk management, and have recognized that business continuity planning and testing are extremely critical and must be undertaken one step at a time," says John Witsken, Information Technology.

A BCP subteam, consisting of I.T., Member and Customer Service and the Controller's Office, put the first phase of the plan to a test when they traveled to the Comdisco facilities in February to conduct the first-ever IEEE exercise of a back-up system.

"In terms of industry experience, this was a very aggressive first step," says BCP team

Year of the student member

by Christy Coleman

1998 has been dubbed the "Year of the Student Member" by Regional Activities and Marketing.

This comes after some key trends in the student and Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) member population took a downward turn. Specifically, student membership declined from 52,000 in 1988 to 40,000 in 1996. The IEEE's penetration in the U.S. undergraduate market was down to 14 percent in 1996 from 22 percent 10 years ago. For the first time, in 1997 non-U.S. students outnumbered U.S. students. Also, only about 17 percent of young professionals are retained five years after they graduate.

Students and recent graduates said in recent surveys that they do not receive immediate feedback from the IEEE once they join. Furthermore, they admitted they were not even aware of the benefits offered.

As a result of these eye-opening findings, the Student/GOLD Initiative Team was formed to focus entirely on the needs of students and young professionals, and make membership more appealing and useful to them.

"It is great that attention and resources are being focused on the students and recent graduates," says Laura Durrett, Regional Activities student activities manager. "They are the IEEE's future volunteers and members so our goal is to add value to their membership through useful, quality programs and services."

Led by Natalie Thigpen, Marketing's

member and individual marketing director, the team analyzed research, brainstormed ideas and identified potential programs. Last fall, the team rigorously surveyed student branches, volunteers, and members of the Professional Activities Council for Engineers and Student Activities Committee. They were asked to vote on an array of new proposals. From this feedback, six new programs will be launched this year.

- New Student Member Welcome Kit
- Student/Recent Grad Web Site
- Scholarship Promotion Program
- Student Branch Counselor Outreach Program
- GOLD Survey
- GOLD Communication Tool

The New Student Member Welcome Kit will be provided to student members as soon as possible after they join. The kit includes a personalized letter, membership card, benefits brochure, scholarship pamphlet, volunteerism flyer, Web site flyer, Financial Advantage Program literature and a student member pin.

According to Marketing Manager Stacey Anderson, "The kit will serve as an immediate reminder to students of why they joined and how the IEEE can assist them as they begin their career." The first Welcome Kits will be mailed in September.

The Student/Recent Grad Web Site will provide students and recent graduates with online information and products of interest.

Specifically, it will have information on career development, scholarships, mentoring programs, industry news, Student Branch Activities, products and services, the GOLD program, Financial Advantage program and member services.

With hopes to elevate the perceived value of membership, currently available scholarships and awards to college students will be promoted through the Scholarship Promotion Program.

"This is the first time the IEEE has promoted society and Institute-wide scholarships directly to students in a comprehensive communication package," explains Stacey.

In addition to the Web site, brochures, posters and ads in *Potentials* and other IEEE publications will make students aware of the various scholarships and awards.

Student Branch Counselor Outreach seeks to implement a business plan that will increase the value of the Student Branch Counselor role. An email survey will be conducted to determine this group's needs. Once the results are interpreted, a program plan will be devised for the fall.

The final two programs focus specifically on improving the IEEE experience for members who have graduated within the last decade. The GOLD Survey will help determine the needs of young professional members so quality programs geared specifically for the GOLD affinity group can be developed.

The GOLD Communications Tool will help young professionals understand how the technical, professional and leadership resources the IEEE provides can help ignite their careers. ♦

Higher learning made affordable

by Ginger Sanchez

Time passes by quickly, so no matter how long it takes to complete a degree — whether attending full-time, part-time or class-by-class — why not advance your education? The IEEE makes it very affordable. Take it from one who knows.



• Ginger Sanchez

anniversary fast approaching and thought, "Now is the time!"

I consulted with Human Resources on the IEEE Tuition Assistance Program. For regular IEEE employees with at least six months of service, the company offers two tuition reimbursement options for courses taken at accredited schools. Tuition, registration, school and lab fees are reimbursed. Travel costs, books, supplies, parking charges, finance charges and late fees are not.

The Individual Course option is generally approved only when a course is related to an employee's present position or potential development within the company. Only one course taken per semester will be reimbursed.

The Approved Degree Program normally

underwrites the costs for undergraduate, certificate and graduate degrees that are applicable to the types of positions held by IEEE staff.

Once an employee has been accepted into the Approved Degree Program, he or she will be reimbursed for all courses needed to pursue that degree. The reimbursement is 75 percent of the course cost at the time of satisfactory completion, up to a maximum amount. The remaining 25 percent, up to a maximum amount, is reimbursed one year after the employee receives the degree and is still employed by the IEEE.

The reimbursement policy sounded great! Since I already held an undergraduate degree, I applied for the graduate degree program and learned my application was approved.

I've always wanted to become certified

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Higher Learning

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

to teach because teaching applies to all aspects of life. No matter what your career field or position is, one of your many roles is an educator.

I was accepted to Kean University's Instruction and Curriculum Master's Program, and I opted to become certified in elementary education. Now came the time to find a way to finance the initial out-of-pocket tuition costs.

Financing Options

In anticipation of returning to school, I had opened a mutual fund account through the IEEE Financial Advantage Program.

Employees can open a mutual fund account with as little as \$250. Biweekly investments of \$50 or more can be made by payroll deduction. A minimum balance or regular contributions must be maintained to keep the account open.

I used the money to finance my initial

tuition payments. The fund is replenished for the next semester with the tuition reimbursement, and it is surprising how fast the money accumulates!

Flexibility

As part of my course work, I had to complete a student teaching assignment, which is 16 weeks of full time teaching. This was a challenge since I work full time during the day as a senior administrator with Financial Advantage, and frequently travel.

Whenever embarking on a new adventure, routines need to be changed and ways must be found to juggle schedules to fit in everything. It is important to know you have support on a personal and professional level.

I am very lucky to work with a great team of people that allowed me the flexibility to work after business hours and granted me a travel reprieve during what came to be known as my "sabbatical." My co-workers went above and beyond the call of duty to make the sabbatical as pleasant and stress-free as possible.

I spent those 16 weeks teaching a second-grade class in an Edison, N.J., public school. My student teaching sabbatical was busy, exciting and hectic. It also was a tremendously rewarding learning experience.

I not only applied techniques learned through graduate course work, but also many business skills acquired at the IEEE.

I achieved my first goal in December 1997! It's now been one year since I began my study program. I have 24 credits and am certified to teach. I resumed my full-time position and am pursuing the master's program in the evenings.

It is amazing what you can do when you put your mind to it.

It may take quite a few more semesters to get that degree, but that's OK. I feel I have the best of both worlds.

I encourage you to take advantage of the valuable benefits of the Tuition Reimbursement Program and the Mutual Fund Payroll Deduction Plan. Each offers a way of easing the initial expense associated with tuition costs. ♦

Getting to know Bud O'Connor

by Rob Glowinski

It's been almost a year since Bud O'Connor, director of Customer Service, arrived at the IEEE. Now that he has settled in, *The Staff Circuit* spent some time getting to know him.

Although Customer Service has undergone many management changes in the past few years, Bud says he found a "pretty favorable shop."

"I had already met with Bill Cook, Member Services; Jonathan Dahl, Marketing & Sales; and Dick Schwartz, Business Administration; so I had a good idea of how the department was running," says Bud. "There weren't any surprises."

He discovered that the previous management had done well to meet productivity metrics, so Bud focused on improving quality and lowering costs associated with processing — while still maintaining productivity metrics. He also wanted other departments to see Customer Service as a business partner, not as a "necessary evil" or just people who answer the phone.

Although Bud sees willingness in the department to strive towards reaching these goals, he admits, "We just aren't there yet. Minor changes and adjustments in our aim must take place to get closer to our target."

One way is to improve the career opportunities and the career development process for

the staff. Other ways are to make sure associates like what they are doing and don't become complacent about their accomplishments. He also wants all employees to continue to look for ways to improve how both internal and external customers are treated.



Improving the tool chest

Bud also would like to improve the work environment and tools for Customer Service associates, such as:

- A new order-entry system for single sale items. While Oracle is an excellent financial accounting system, in terms of order entry it is less than desirable.
- Equip the associate's workstations with ergonomic furniture — from chairs, keyboard wrist pads and footrests to larger monitors that reduce eye strain.
- Online procedures and training manuals for each facet of an associate's job. While the "Front Line Service Professional Program" is used, he would like to see training packages created just for Customer Service staff and, specifically, for the telephone support representatives.

The Zenger Miller Basic Principles also have been implemented in Customer Service.

"The important thing to remember is that the Basic Principles reinforce not only how we treat customers, but how we treat each other," says Bud. "If we can separate business issues from personal feelings, there are no obstacles we can't overcome."

Bud credits Business Administration for helping the IEEE Enabling Staff Culture principles make an impact in Customer Service.

"Business Administration has really been a leader in spreading the word about the IEEE Enabling Staff Culture," says Bud. "The responses to the 360 degree feedback questions administered to selected staff members were very high. This is very important because management should be 'top-down' and set the example."

The future

What improvements would Bud like to see in 1998? For the IEEE to become more customer and nonmember focused. According to Bud, institutional customers have generated nearly half of the IEEE's revenue whereas members account for almost 37 percent.

"We should try to understand that our organization is not only just a membership organization, but a publisher too," says Bud. "We must recognize the role that publishing plays and the prominence our customers have within the publishing industry." ♦

Profile: Awards and Fellow Activities And the winner is...

by Annette Codispoti

Each year the IEEE recognizes hundreds of people for their achievements in electro and information technologies, and for service to the IEEE and their profession. Managing this process for IEEE's top-level awards and the IEEE Fellows Program is the job of Awards and Fellow Activities. While the staff members will tell you their jobs are "rewarding" — it's difficult and exacting work.

The awards and recognitions of the IEEE, the Technical Societies and Council, and the other Institute entities are presented throughout the year at major IEEE meetings and at the annual Honors Ceremony.

Nominations for awards are reviewed and approved by a committee of peers, with the highest of these awards requiring approval by the IEEE Awards Board and the Board of Directors.

With a staff of seven — five in New Jersey and two in New York — Awards and Fellow work with members, non-members, nominees, sponsors and awards committees to ensure that both guidelines and tight nomination and selection schedules are followed.

Marybeth Denike oversees the daily operation of the department in Piscataway, including the Awards and Fellow nomination processes. The New York office, headed by Barbara Ettinger, deals with policy and funding issues as well as all external interactions.

To provide extra service to members, Awards and Fellow Activities recently launched a Web site. The site gives members quick access to nomination requirements and provides an explanation and photo of each award, the citation and a list of past recipients.

Awards Program

The IEEE Medal of Honor and 11 Medals recognize achievement of significance to the profession. The 23 Technical Field Awards recognize significant accomplishments in a particular field.

"Being a part of the process for nomination and selection of Awards and Fellow recipients is an interesting and rewarding experience," says Marybeth. "I'm always impressed by the stature of the recipients."

"We deal with high-level individuals who are at the forefront of their technical fields," says Barbara. "Last year, for example, the IEEE honored Ray Dolby, creator of Dolby Sound."

Corporations, private foundations, individual bequests and the IEEE Foundation



• Top row from left: Kerry Ward, Lesley Payne, Lucia Baker, Barbara Ettinger
Seated: Sandra Schumacher, Marybeth Denike

support the Awards activities. A few of the corporate sponsors are Texas Instruments, Siemens AG and Sony Corporation.

"By and large, our sponsors are very loyal and generous," says Barbara.

There are two corporate recognitions — the Ernst Weber Engineering Leadership and the Corporate Innovation. The Ernst Weber Engineering Leadership recognition honors individuals for exceptional managerial leadership. The Corporate Innovation recognition is presented for outstanding and exemplary contributions by an industrial entity, governmental or academic organization or other corporate body for developing and realizing innovative products or services. Microsoft is this year's recipient of the Corporate Innovation recognition.

The IEEE also gives two awards that recognize outstanding service to the Institute, three prize paper awards, and a student scholarship.

For each award category, the staff works alongside volunteer committees, including the evaluation committee of each IEEE society that assists in the Fellow selection.

Kerry Ann Ward is the coordinator for awards nominations and committees. She processes nominations for all awards, distributes candidates' dossier information to selection committees and answers questions about awards activities such as the nomination process.

Lucia Baker in the New York office assists in the coordination of the Honors Ceremony activities and technical field awards presentations.

Joan Muzzio's main responsibility is to maintain the Awards Web site. She also provides administrative support.

While some awards have been in existence for many years with consistent support from loyal sponsors, new awards are occasionally introduced. In 1997, two new awards were presented. The Eric E. Sumner Award recognizes contributions to communications technology and the Jack S. Kilby Signal Processing Medal honors achievements in signal processing.

Capping a year of frenetic and fast-paced work for the staff is the annual Honors Ceremony where the IEEE Medal of Honor and the other IEEE Medals are presented. The ceremony is usually held during the June Board of Directors Series.

Fellow Program

Any senior member who has completed five years of service in any grade of membership is eligible for nomination to the grade of IEEE Fellow.

Lesley Payne and Sandy Schumacher are coordinators for the Fellow Program. Lesley develops and maintains the candidate database, prepares and generates statistical reports, and handles inquiries related to the Fellow process. She also maintains the archival Fellow records.

Sandy supports the activities of the Fellow Committee, maintains the Fellow Activities Web page, distributes Fellow kits and serves as a liaison to the IEEE's societies/council.

The Fellow Program receives the most nominations. Approximately 3,000 nomination packages were distributed last year — resulting in well over 500 nominations and 235 Fellows. ♦

Celebrations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

on the first two nights and features a variety of traditional, symbolic foods. The meal is interspersed with prayer and song, all of which take place in a set order. Seder means 'order' in Hebrew.

"My children experience Passover much the same way I did as a child," says Michael Geselowitz, IEEE History Center, who celebrates Passover with his wife and three children.

"There are small differences," continues Mike. "A much greater variety of 'Kosher for Passover' foods, for instance. But the significant, religious aspects remain the same. Tradition is vitally important to the Jewish faith."

George echoed this respect for tradition in his discussion of his family's Easter celebrations.

"We learned these things as children and when we teach them to our children, we remember fondly the people who taught them to us," says George.

No matter the degree of religious involvement, spring is the perfect time to reassess and renew our commitment to ourselves, our families and friends, and the communities within which we worship, live and work. ♦

Hiking and loving It

by Bernice Evans

"Bear," whispered Marjorie Springer, IEEE-USA. "What?" asked her husband Roger. "Bear!" she said louder, pointing over his shoulder.

Marjorie had just settled into the cabin porch chair and was sipping coffee when the bear came down the path at Skyland Trail, Blue Ridge National Park, Va. While Marjorie took cover, Roger took the camera and — against the ranger's stern warning — followed the bear to an apple tree.

After 14 years of hitting the trail, this was Marjorie's first bear sighting. "Of all the trails, Skyland is the place to go," she says.

Marjorie's annual hiking trips are both a hobby and vacation, she admits. Steep and slippery inclines, and encounters with snakes and bobcats are just a few of the risks. For the Springers, the lure of the Virginia mountains

outweighs the unforeseen danger.

But hiking does have its hazards.

Clouds can move very fast and severe weather can strike at a moment's notice.

While hiking back up from the bottom of the waterfall at Blue Ridge National Park's Mathews Arm Trail, Marjorie fell and injured her leg. Her first-aid kit contained no bandages large enough to cover deep cuts or sprains. Using clothing, Roger wrapped Marjorie's leg, and they continued to hike for another two hours before they reached the parking lot and their truck.

"This trail is normally a three-hour hike," she said, "but that day it seemed much longer."



• Marjorie on the Skyland Trail, Blue Ridge National Park, Va.



• A bear-ish souvenir

According to Marjorie, going hiking without proper gear is not a smart idea. Marjorie advises fellow hikers to purchase sturdy hiking shoes, wear long pants to protect against insect bites and to bring a jacket, first-aid kit, water canteen, map of the trail, and most importantly, a companion.

"I find being surrounded by clouds is breathtaking," says Marjorie. "The outdoors, the beautiful scenery, and communing with nature and the animals are exhilarating." ♦

You must have been a beautiful baby!

Who did this cuddly tot grow up to be? (Clue: This New Jersey baby networks your world.) Email your best answer to Kathy Kowalenko and perhaps you'll win a prize for being the first to guess correctly. The employee's identity and the winner will be announced in the next *Staff Circuit*.

The baby in the fourth quarter 1997 issue was Geri Small, Piscataway receptionist. Thanks to all who participated.



Wedding Bells

Esaleta Corbin, Standards, married Ronald Yearwood on 11 Oct. 1997.

Debbie Mohn, Information Technology, married Vincent Dobilas on 28 Feb.

Stork Alert

Natalie Thigpen, Marketing, is a new mother. Madeline Rebecca was born on 10 Dec. 1997.

Kristin Dittman, Standards, has a new son. Samuel Jesse Huffman was born on 11 Dec. 1997.

Sandy McConville, Information Technology, has a new daughter. Brittany Kate was born on 5 Jan.

Chih-Wen Shieh, Information Technology, is a new father. Abigail was born on 29 Jan.

Lori Lynn Becker, Technical Activities, is a new mother. Andrew Samuel was born on 14 Feb.

Joan Muzzio, Awards/Fellow Activities, is a mother again. Daughter Kelly was born on 7 March.

Service Awards

(January through March)
20 Years: **Sharon Ross**
15 Years: **Mercy Kowalczyk**
10 Years: **David Andrews, Beth Babeu, Denise Banfield, Margaret Eastman, Arlene Klimik, Joann Marsh, Sandy McConville,**

Abbas Ramandi, Virginia Sanchez Gail Walters, Tamara Weiss, Kerry Ann Ward
5 Years: **John Cost, Christine Demchak, Mark Fendrick, Linda Geppert Sharon Holloway, Jill Levy, Joan Muzzio, Samantha Padilla, Walter Pienciak, Camille Pluff, Dick Schwartz, Nancy Suszko, Mark Vasquez-Jorge**

Retired

Betty Bias, 20 Years of service.

Welcome Aboard

Nancy Barrial, Finance Administration
Michael Brady, Order Processing
Kathryn Colabaugh, Telephone Support Services
George Coleman, Warehouse
Kimberly Dante, Information Technology
Marianne Farhan, Travel Services
Stacy Kennedy, Periodicals
Lakshminath Khandavalli, Information Technology
Gregory Kohn, Standards Activities
Marie Leonardis, Conference Services
Blanche McGurr, Creative Services
Bonnie Nani, Magazines
Maria Palombini, Conference Services
John Pape, IEEE Communications Society
Douglas Razzano, Human Resources
David Ringle, Subscription Processing
Sergio Saravia, Information Technology
Linda Skeahan, Signal Processing
Barbara Soifer, Marketing & Sales
Voncille Stokes, Regional Activities



One **FREE** child's **Liberty Science Center** exhibit ticket with a paying adult.

Not valid on advance reservations or with any other offer. Redeem at LSC box office. Offer good through 7/15/98.

The nation's largest IMAX[®] Dome theater
Hundred of interactive exhibits

LSC
New Jersey Turnpike Exit 14B
For more information call 201.200.1000

Singing the praises of OPeRA

by Michelle Meeh

One of the best examples of innovation — one of our Enabling Staff Culture Principles — is the OPeRA (Online Periodicals and Research Area) program.

The Periodicals staff partnered with Electronic Products to bring the project to life. While Periodicals manages, maintains and enhances OPeRA, the two groups jointly developed the project, with Electronic Products working closely on the planning and implementation.

The program debuted in December 1996 as JOLLY (Journals On-Line Launch Year) with four societies and one council joining, and one society lending financial support. Originally, 12 publications were offered online.

Response was a bit slow at first, but participation in the program, as of March, had grown to 11 societies and 31 publications — including *The Proceedings of the IEEE*.

"Societies and councils benefit from OPeRA because they can provide timely access to their journals for member subscribers," says Fran Zappulla, Periodicals. "OPeRA also gives societies and councils a way to offer electronic formats of their journals as an alternative to print. One of the key elements of OPeRA is that it gives users tools such as search and browse capabilities."

In addition, Periodicals is working with another society, the Nuclear and Plasma Sciences Society, to add two more publications, bringing the total to 33 online.

The latest publication to appear online is the *IEEE Transactions On Professional Communication* (T-PC), which was introduced in March as part of an experiment to gauge user preferences for full text in either HTML or PDF formats.

This is Periodicals' first venture into publishing full text in the HTML format. The single-column format, which is seen by some publishers as the wave of the future, is derived from an existing archive of SGML material.

Societies can choose which publications to

make available online, as well as who should have access to the publications — such as all members or member-subscribers only.

Members can view the publications they subscribe to on the same day the print versions are mailed.

Using their IEEE member number and an assigned Personal I.D. number to log on, subscribers can select a publication or paper and view the table of contents and each page just like it would appear in the print version. Subscribers also can download the publication in the PDF format, and also in HTML format for the experimental T-PC.

The number of visitors to the OPeRA site and the number of requests for documents in both HTML and PDF formats have grown steadily since JOLLY debuted.

Meanwhile, the Periodicals staffers continue to find innovative ways to improve the program. Electronic preprints, alert services for when new publications are posted, and online author guidelines for submitting both manuscripts and accompanying graphics are all enhancements being considered.

Another new idea is *Periodicals News*, a quarterly email newsletter sent to editors-in-chief to keep them up-to-date on the latest enhancements.

Since downloading data is often a slow process for members outside North America, both print and electronic versions are offered. For those members with Internet access and reasonably fast connections, the most important benefit is that publications can be retrieved immediately, instead of the snail-like three-month delivery to some parts of the world.

"We are working with societies and councils to offer members choices in how they receive IEEE information," notes Fran. "Immediate access to publication information, coupled with the product's search capabilities, makes OPeRA a prime example of an innovative new product and service for our members." ♦

Send story contributions
and comments to:

THE STAFF **Circuit**

445 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08855

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief

Kathy Kowalenko

Coordinator

Judith Babeu

Review Board

Don Curtis

Helen Horwitz

Peter Lewis

Design/Layout

IEEE Magazines & Newsletters

Reporters

Electronic Products

Gina Yalicki

Controller's Office

Jennifer Motard

Communications Society and Office Support, New York

Catherine Kemelmacher

Corporate Communications & Awards/Fellow

Kathy Kowalenko

Customer Service

Rob Glowinski

Education

Tatiana Garnys

History Center

Sheila Plotnick

Finance and Travel

Ginger Sanchez

Human Resources, Corporate and Executive

Stella Paone

Information Technology

Lyle Smith

The Institute

Annette Codispoti

Magazines

Lynn Guarente

Marketing & Sales

Christy Coleman

Member Services

Bill Rankin

Photographer

Carrie Briggs

Press

Ken Moore

Publication Administration

Brian Davis

Regional Activities and Mailroom

Laura Durrett

IEEE Spectrum

Nancy T. Hantman

Standards

Karen McCabe

Technical Activities

Jayne F. Cerone

Transactions/Journals

Michelle Meeh

U.S. Activities, Washington, D.C.

Bernice Evans

GRANTBAND®

