



Written by and for employees of the IEEE

Conducting business electronically

by Lyle Smith

Since November, the IEEE Web Integration Team (WIT) has made giant leaps toward helping the IEEE conduct business electronically. The WIT is comprised of staff members from a cross-section of the IEEE, including subject-matter experts who deal with various aspects of the current Web site.

The project will raise the stakes of the IEEE's Web presence to a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week operation. The project is designed to allow the IEEE to present, collect and process information over the Internet in a way that will provide continually expanding services to members and customers.

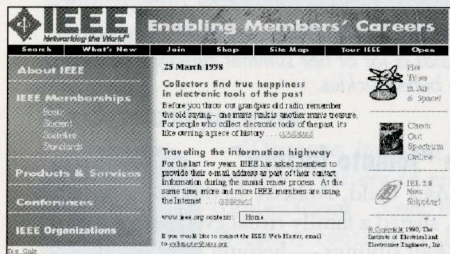
The new Internet system and its associated projects will allow member renewals, electronic catalog orders and even electronic forms of payment to be made through the Web site.

The vision

Members and customers will be able to easily locate information, order products and services, and communicate with the IEEE and its societies. In addition, the hardware and software designs will help to provide access to the most accurate and current information at all times.

The WIT has designed a framework and guidelines to be applied to all IEEE online materials.

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• New Home Page Design

360 degrees of separation

by Kathy Kowalenko

Do you ever feel like you're going in circles? Sometimes, it's intentional — and even worthwhile!

For example, this year for the first time, some areas used a performance evaluation tool called 360 Degree Feedback. It's called this because employees all around us — those we work with, supervise or to whom we report — got the chance to evaluate each of us on how we are applying the Enabling Staff Culture principles. Employees also evaluated themselves. The Feedback is a developmental tool to help determine where improvements are needed.

Evaluators ranked each person based on a set of questions regarding specific principles. Human Resources staff members and the department's Human Resources

liaisons compiled the responses to ensure confidentiality, and the results were given to the employee.

The Staff Circuit asked some employees who participated in the Feedback process what they thought about it.

Patricia Lee, IEEE-USA, says that categorizing specific criteria — tying them back to the Enabling Staff Culture principles — helped put the assessment into perspective. In that sense, it was effective, she notes.

"Of course, this process is not absolute because there are other things like the person's overall demeanor and the nice 'little things' they do that may not have been explicitly stated, but which I tried to keep in mind as I did the assessment."

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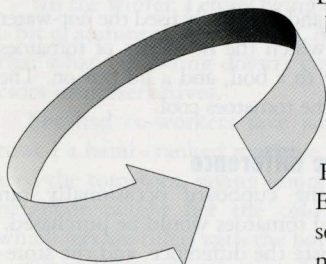
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Conducting business

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Emphasizing usability, an all-inclusive style guide addressing the look and feel of the site has been developed. The project also will integrate a new search engine called "VERITY" to make the site easily searchable. The framework calls for standard words and phrases for tagging to aid in searching, and an intuitive layout of information.

Ordering products

Via the Internet, members and customers will be able to order the products on file in the IEEE database. The electronic catalog portion is entering the market-test development phase and is expected to go online later this year.

Renewing memberships

The Web site also will give members the option of renewing their membership online. At present, this section is undergoing internal testing and will be ready for the 1999 renewal cycle in September. Initially, online renewal will be available to a test group of members in Regions 3 and 8. As the system becomes established and demand for the service increases, it will be offered to more members.

The current design of the electronic catalog and online renewal functions work as an electronic collection system for orders and renewals. For example, an order placed

360 degrees

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Linda Matarazzo, Press, notes that the assessment was an effective method because employees below management level sometimes feel that they are held to a different standard than their supervisors.

"This puts all of us through the same process and subject to the same level of scrutiny," says Linda.

"Since you are receiving feedback from the people who you frequently work with, it's critical to your success as an employee to be aware of how you and your work performance are perceived," adds Bill Van Der Vort, Electron Devices Society.

Suzanne Stiles, Financial Services, cautions that individuals answering the questions need to look at the whole year — not just the last few weeks.

Although some employees expressed concern that a manager could somehow find out who gave them a low score, more were confident that the process was handled discreetly and questions could be answered candidly.

Some employees did not always agree with a rating they received. Scott Grayson, IEEE-USA, summed it up best about a rat-

online will generate an email message to Customer or Member Services for fulfillment, similar to mail-order fulfillments.

Paying electronically

For these new services to be most useful, members and customers must be able to pay electronically. The WIT is working to implement a cybercash system that lets members and customers use credit cards over the Internet with confidence by verifying credit-card accounts online in a secure environment.

Building the foundation

Several new production Web servers will be installed soon to support the new site. The project also calls for the establishment of an internal Web support group to maintain the hardware and software infrastructures. This group also will support and continually enhance online services.

The new infrastructure, useable business functions such as credit-card processing, and additional Web-server capabilities will enable enhancements to be made to existing services and the introduction of new ones targeted at specific member and customer markets.

The Internet project extends well beyond just the look of the current Web site. The IEEE's approach establishes both the building blocks for an expanding array of electronic commerce capabilities and a launching pad for innovative electronic communications services. ♦

ing that surprised him. "I don't think of myself in that light, but if someone else does then it is important for me to address that area," he says.

Suzanne says, "I can look at where my perceived weaknesses are and work on them. I can also look at my strengths and try to capitalize on them."

Employees who assessed others outside their area did not always feel qualified to judge another person's performance and suggested the selection process of employees from other areas should be improved. Others liked that opportunity.

"I think it's a good idea because reviews are often performed on a downward basis and this gives us a chance to assess laterally or upward," says Linda. "I certainly like the opportunity to single out others who make my job easier by making teamwork a reality and not just an empty phrase."

Next year, all employees will be assessed. Improvements to the process are already being made such as placing the forms and instructions online. Because the entire staff will be participating in the 360 Degree Feedback, the assessment period will begin earlier than last year. ♦

Summer in a jar

by Nancy T. Hantman

In these days of fast food and prepackaged meals, there are still those who value the taste of home- or locally-grown fruits and vegetables. Some employees know how to preserve nature's bounty by canning, freezing or pickling it, and they shared both their memories and secrets with *The Staff Circuit*.



• In her garden, Kathy Kowalenko proudly holds a jar of her summer bounty — bread & butter pickles.

The "tomato factory"

As a child, Annette Codisoti, *The Institute*, shared a family ritual every August with her four siblings — helping their parents can tomatoes. In a good year, they preserved about 15 bushels of local farm tomatoes.

All the children were expected to help unless they had part-time jobs.

"Obviously that was a no-win situation," recalls Annette.

When Annette was too young to work near the stove or with a knife, she washed the tomatoes in buckets of water. The clean tomatoes were placed on sheets and towels to dry in the basement — the family's "tomato factory." After the tomatoes were diced, the pieces were packed very tightly into jars to prevent bacteria from developing and spoiling the vegetables. Dicing was done manually until her parents bought a machine to separate the pulp from the seeds and skins.

Annette and her family used the hot-water method in which the filled jars of tomatoes are brought to a boil, and a lid put on. The jars seal as the tomatoes cool.

Tasting the difference

When the cupboard occasionally ran bare, canned tomatoes would be purchased.

"I can taste the difference, and the store-bought tomatoes are not very good," notes Annette.

In a nutshell, this is why many people preserve food.

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A click away from a college degree

by Tatiana Garnys

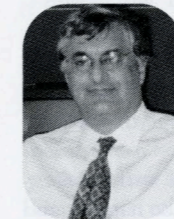
You're at home wearing your favorite sweats and "bunny slippers." You turn on your PC and click the mouse a few times. Suddenly, you are attending a class that takes you a step closer to a college degree. Welcome to the world of distance learning!

Distance learning is not a new concept. It has been in existence since the 1800s in the form of correspondence schools. As technology advanced, so did distance learning. Radio, television, video and satellite technologies all have been used to offer distance-learning courses.

Many companies, as well as colleges and universities, are taking advantage of technology to create distance-learning environments. Some universities even offer entire degree programs targeted to non-traditional adult students who could not otherwise continue their education because of full-time jobs and families.

Up close and personal

"Distance learning can involve a variety of media combinations," says Peter Wiesner, continuing education director, Educational Activities. Peter is quite familiar with distance learning since he supervises the development of such programs for IEEE members.



• Peter Wiesner

Summer in a jar

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Run hot, run cold

Kathy Kowalenko, Corporate Communications, started canning last summer when she harvested tomatoes from more than 50 plants in her garden and ran out of freezer space for tomato sauce.

"In the winter, I enjoy being able to taste a bit of summer," says Kathy. "Also, I know that what I'm eating doesn't contain pesticides or preservatives."

She had co-workers save jars. She borrowed a hand-cranked machine to skin and seed the tomatoes, saving hours of work. A neighbor taught her the cold process in which jars are filled with the hot sauce, then sealed and immediately placed in a sink full of cold water. The jars are constantly turned and cold water run over them. The jars are soaked for a few minutes upside-down, the sink drained and the process is repeated with the jars turned right-side up. The process causes the vacuum lids to seal, or

"The key word is 'distance,' not only as a measure of geographic space but also distance in terms of time and scheduling," explains Peter.

The World Wide Web, textbooks, video and email are very often incorporated into today's distance-learning courses, according to Peter.

Michelle Meeh, Transactions, who is taking some distance-learning courses at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, says her classes involve participating in online discussion groups.

"We call the group a virtual classroom. Our discussions can be compared to sitting in a classroom talking about the topic," she notes. "I've been able to develop friendships with my fellow students. When we finally meet, it's fun to match the writing style with what that person looks like."

Distance-learning courses provide students with continuing education equal to most classroom programs, with an added bonus of learning at their leisure.

"Taking distance-learning courses allows me to set my own pace," says Michelle. "I can do my schoolwork at midnight or during a weekend afternoon."

The only problem Michelle encounters is conquering her procrastination.

"pop," because of the temperature difference between the hot liquid and the cold water. The sealed jars are placed upside-down on a towel to cool. Those that don't seal properly are refrigerated.

"I was very nervous the first time I tried canning because I worried the jars wouldn't seal," says Kathy. "But after a few times, I got the hang of it."

Kathy also had an abundant crop of cucumbers, so she made dill and bread-and-butter pickles to can.

"Canning brought back memories of my childhood and the times I spent helping my mother," says Kathy.

A minty preserve

An outbreak of mint rampaging across the garden, combined with a *New York Times* recipe for mint syrup, prompted this reporter to try a different form of preserving.

A simple recipe of boiled sugar syrup flavored with the stems and leaves of mint is drained, poured into jars and allowed to cool. It is then refrigerated for several weeks before use.

"Sometimes after a full day's work, I would rather do anything but study," she says.

Michelle adds that distance learning allows students more freedom to focus on topics of interest because the learning format is less rigid than in a traditional classroom.

Learning for the future

"Students are drawn to distance learning because of its convenience," says Peter. "If my work schedule did not permit me to attend class regularly, I would opt for distance learning. However, for distance learning to be effective, all logistic issues must be taken care of."

According to Peter, to ensure that classes run smoothly, instructors must provide students with the course outline, assignment schedule, textbooks and other resources before the course begins. Also, the media used must be tested ahead of time to help prevent technical mishaps that could inconvenience both the students and the instructor.

Almost every educational organization is heading toward offering a mixture of traditional and distance-learning courses in their programs.

Next semester, this reporter will be taking two distance-learning classes. I am a bit nervous because distance learning is totally new territory for me, and I am worried about both keeping up with the pace and motivating myself to do the assignments. However, upon learning that the classes I'm taking will be distance delivered, my first thought was: "At least I won't have to put miles on my car or fight for a parking space on campus!" ♦

The syrup is excellent over fruit or ice cream, in tea or lemonade, or even in cookies. An adventuresome colleague discovered that it even goes well with that favorite summer party combination, watermelon and vodka!

In years when the mint threatens to take over the entire garden, a few hours in the kitchen provides enough jars of syrup to share with friends and saves the herbs.

Do it yourself help

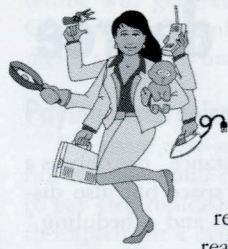
For readers without someone to show them how to can, local agricultural cooperative extensions may provide classes.

Libraries also carry books on canning and preserving. Some cookbooks even provide basic information too. A traditional how-to book is the "Ball Blue Book, Edition 30" published by the Ball Corporation, Muncie, Ind., 1977.

Take it from some of your co-workers — the mouth-watering experience is worth the time spent canning and preserving fresh seasonal bounty. ♦

A balancing act

by Laura Durrett



Work and everything outside of work. These make up our everyday lives. The question is, how does one balance these two? It isn't being a "superman" or "superwoman," it's having the right attitude.

John L. Beckley, founder of Ecomotics Press, an organization that provides information to help people work better and enjoy their jobs, wrote in his article, "My Blessing, Not My Doom," that "Work is the main course, the meat and substance of our lives. Recreation is the dessert; we like it best in modest portions at the end of a good meal. When we try to substitute the dessert for the meal itself, we lose our taste for it. What is work, anyway? The fellow who goes fishing every once in a while thinks it's great sport. The man who has to fish for a living thinks fishing is work. Which is it?"

Last year's Guest Speaker, Roger Mellott, referred to an energy pie that we start with each day. He said activities such as work, taking care of ourselves, spending time with our families, having fun and getting involved in our community takes a bite out of the pie.

Wasn't he also saying that we should think before we act or react? Our reactions to a bad driver, traffic, an impolite person on the phone, an issue at the office, a tight project deadline, and five new projects determines how much of our energy pie is spent

during the day.

Positive reactions refuel us while negative reactions just use up some of our precious commodities — time and energy. Learning how to be flexible seems to be a key to approaching life positively, both professionally and personally.

We should all remember to make room for fun in our lives. Fun can be anything you enjoy that is not work.

According to author Mark Twain, "Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do, and play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do."

Leisure activities help keep us balanced so we can be there for our families, our loved ones and ourselves.

Watching the Olympics made me realize the participants all had one thing in common — thinking positively about their goal. That was their motivation. Their interest in their sport probably began as something they had fun doing. Tara Lipinski, the 15-year-old women's figure skating gold medalist, said she started thinking about the Olympics when she was just five years old.

A positive mental attitude helps. Some ways to approach life positively are to take mental breaks by thinking about a beautiful beach you visited, smiling, buying flowers for your home or office, or doing something

nice for yourself or others.

Approaching our work positively can only make it more enjoyable for us and those we work with. Work becomes a part of what you need personally to maintain a sense of balance.

Beckley's advice on how to make our jobs more pleasant is "to do more work and better work than you have to. Do the best job you know how."

We take pride in caring for ourselves physically and mentally, raising our children, getting along with our significant other, colleagues, friends and family members, and taking care of our homes. This same pride should apply to work. Taking pride in our work will help us feel better about ourselves.

The second way to like working, according to Beckley, "is to realize this fact: even if you didn't have to work, you probably would want to work anyway."

Think of Bill Gates, Microsoft's CEO and a billionaire. He obviously doesn't work because he has to. He probably tinkers with his computer programs because he enjoys what he does. Don't you think that his interest in computers probably started out as something fun to do?

And most of our friends and family work. If we didn't work, wouldn't we be the only one at home? Sounds lonely, doesn't it?

When we put all the things in our lives in their own compartments — *work, personal, family, fun* — we can deal with whatever life has in store for us and be happier and more content. Balancing these isn't an act; it's an attitude. ♦

Financial Advantage celebrates anniversary

by Ginger Sanchez

Five years ago, the IEEE combined its insurance and investment programs with banking services and mutual funds to launch the IEEE Financial Advantage Program (FAP).

"The program was established as a comprehensive member-benefit package that offsets the cost of membership, but also reduces the dependency of the IEEE on dues," explains Mike Sosa, staff director, Financial Services.

"We allow employees to participate in the program as well, thus providing additional benefits to what the IEEE offers," he says.

Since inception, FAP benefits and services have grown to more than 26 programs in the U.S. and various programs around the world.

FAP currently has over 100,000 member and staff participants. The investment pro-



• Top row from left: Brian Anderson, Adrienne White, Mike Sosa, Michele Pocchio
Seated: Gretchen Hauselt, Maria Mantione, Ginger Sanchez. Tom Lynch (not pictured)

gram alone has assets totaling more than \$47 million.

Over the years, the FAP staff has expanded from one to four full-time employees and one who works part-time. In addition, a

Marketing & Sales manager assists with marketing and advertising needs.

The staff develops new products and maintains and enhances existing benefits. To promote and increase participation, they attend many IEEE-sponsored meetings and conferences. The staff also supports the Individual Benefits & Services Committee, which monitors, coordinates and advises on FAP benefits.

A CD-ROM detailing the value-added benefits program was recently developed. By simply answering a few questions, a user can choose insurance and financial programs tailored to his or her unique profile.

FAP continues to offer competitive benefits and services by using its significant buying power to offer programs that are designed

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Preparing future generations

By Judith Babeu

For two days in April, the average age of people in IEEE offices in New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C., dropped significantly. On 23 April, all three sites held "Take Our Children to Work Day," and on 29 April, the Operations Center hosted — for the second consecutive year — students from a local middle school to give them an inside look at the business world.



• Myrna Mendez and son Ben

explained. "I told her that now when she comes home tired, I will make hot tea or hot cocoa — whatever she wants!"

Dean Masters joined his grandmother, Gail Gillis, Facilities, for the day. According to Dean, he was so impressed with the cafeteria food that he used

his grandmother's email to send the cafeteria staff kudos.

"It sure beats school food," noted Dean.

While the young men had a great time, some of the girls were not so sure they wanted to share their "special day." A few of the young women, along with their parents, suggested sponsoring a separate day just for boys — but while many of the girls said they do not want boys included, they still enjoyed the event.

This was the second year that Theresa Hanttz, daughter of Mary Ellen Hanttz, Corporate Activities, participated. Theresa said she was very happy to return, and Mary Ellen was just as pleased to have her at work.



• Mary Ellen Hanttz and daughter Theresa

"I love to share what I do with my daughter, and I liked exposing her to the nomination and appointment process," she commented.

One of the highlights of the day was the Electronic Wizard's kit that each child received. These kits, which were chosen because of the clarity of the projects, the graphics and the range of activities, also contained experiments such as how to construct a spinning motor.

Theresa Hanttz said she planned to report back to her teacher about the kit's projects because her class is studying similar material.



• IEEE-USA "Takes Our Children to Work" participants.

Top row from left: Arja LaShaun Birdsong, Alicia McPherson, Minoka McPherson, Marilyn Sumpter, Sharon Richardson
Bottom row: Bessy Burch, Danielle Johnson, Mabelle Johnson, Alysia Webber

Take Our Children To Work

As a result of employee comments from past years, the IEEE invited boys as well as girls to what had been the annual "Take Our Daughters to Work Day." The event was renamed to reflect this change. Fifteen boys were among the 72 children who participated at all three offices.



• Luz Molina and son Jhonattan

"Basically, it's just school and sports for him," explained Myrna Mendez, Regional Activities, who brought her son, Ben. "He now sees that the business world is a mixture of men and women."

Jhonattan Orozco, son of Luz Molina, Inventory Control, said he was very excited to come and spend the day with his mom.

"I was surprised that she has so much to do and is able to finish it in one day," he

The kit was a similar hit for the children at the IEEE-USA office.

According to Alicia McPherson, IEEE-USA, the children especially enjoyed working with the staff who helped them put together some of the projects.

A repeat visit by Quibblertown students

Less than a week after the "Take Our Children to Work Day," the IEEE gave 40 eighth-graders from Quibblertown Middle School, Piscataway, a view into the business world and training on some of the skills needed to be successful in business.

During half of the morning visit, Reggie Hands, Information Technology, taught the students how to create a Web page. According to some of the students, they enjoyed the session so much that they planned to share their pages with family and friends



• Quibblertown students create Web pages

The rest of the visit was spent with designated staff members, or "shadows," whose jobs reflect the students' career interests. The shadows explained their work and were interviewed on topics such as the educational requirements for the position, and what they liked and disliked about their jobs.

A shadow for the past two years, Debbie Schreiber, Regional Activities, said, "I was so impressed. The students were so bright and so sharp."

"This was so much fun," said another shadow, Rosemary Tennis, Standards. "There is so much hope for the next generation."

According to Stella Paone, Human Resources, and the programs' organizer, both programs were so successful this year that plans already are being made for 1999. ♦

IEEE Financial Advantage

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to help IEEE members and staff take control of their financial future through benefit portability and financial independence.

"I have been in the association industry for more than 10 years and was impressed by the Financial Advantage Program even

before I started working here last year," says Brian Anderson, manager, Member Benefits. "The benefits and services offered are truly competitive. Staff should really take advantage of them!"

As an extra information perk, representatives from the various FAP services periodi-

cally make special presentations to employees to explain some of the individualized benefits. A recent seminar was by Chase Mortgage on mortgage refinancing. Other seminars have included home buying and selling, financial planning, mutual fund investing, credit cards and travel services. ♦

Attend that reunion, or not? That is the question

by Jayne F. Cerone

The announcement about your high school reunion arrives in the mail. At first you're amazed. "How did they find me?" Then you become anxious. "Should I go?"

OK, it may not be one of the hardest decisions of your life, but the thought of going to a reunion brings reactions ranging from joyful anticipation to outright dread.

Many people choose to go with friends. Christine Kornberger, Member Services, told her friends, "I'll go if you'll go." Christine attended high school in Colonia, N.J.

For employees who do attend, many say it was a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and rekindle friendships.

"The reunion was like turning back the clock to the high school prom," says Lois Pannella, Technical Activities, who attended school in Weehawken, N.J. "I met my old girlfriends from high school at the reunion. We all left our husbands at home and had a blast."

Helen Horwitz, Corporate Communications, is attending her first high-school reunion in August in Albuquerque, N.M.

"I'll be going with my two best friends

from those days, who I'm still very close with," she says.

Not only is Lauren Lawson, Technical Activities, going to her class reunion, she's on the planning committee.

"We have been planning for a year and the reunion is not until November," she notes. The hardest part is locating classmates from the Plainfield, N.J. school, according to Lauren. She explains that the committee is using the telephone book, contacting friends and

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Profile: Facilities A change of image

by Bill Rankin

It's often a big job, perhaps a dirty job, and sometimes a difficult one. But somebody has to do it. Who's the "somebody?" Facilities. If it's broken or needs adjustment or replacing, the process is simple and straightforward. Right?

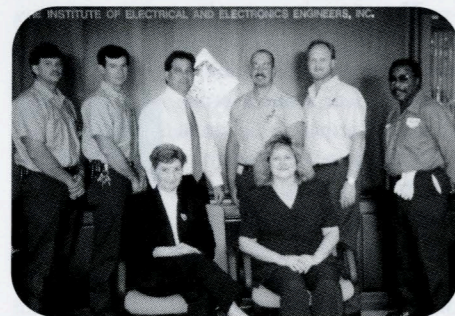
That's the image most of us have, but there are some exciting things happening in this area that will change your view.

"Our role is expanding along with receiving some new challenges," says Facilities Manager John Hunt. "As a result, we need to change the way we do business."

Facilities is responsible both for preventive and ongoing maintenance, and technical support of the Operations Center. The staff handles equipment repairs, building remodeling, workstation setups, and repair and work requests. Facilities also manages the building access and security system, and the contractors for food, landscaping and cleaning services. The area also has recently taken over the coordination of the First Response Emergency Team.

Last fall, John and Ron Ranger, maintenance operations supervisor, reviewed how work requests were being handled to understand what improvements could be made.

One way was to begin using electronic communications to decrease the response time for work requests. An email alias, *fix-it@ieee.org*, was established. Except for emergencies, a request made by telephone is not handled until it is received in the fix-it email box. An auto-reply message is sent to confirm the request was received and to advise how long it will take to correct the problem.



• Top row from left: John Turnbull, Scott Burns, John Hunt, John Gulics, Ron Ranger, George Shefton
Seated: Gail Cills, Carolyn Wald
John Minuski (not pictured)

This method allows the requests to be prioritized and provides a daily work schedule for the maintenance associates. The procedure also helps Facilities track trends, do preventive maintenance and establish metrics on the time it takes to accommodate a particular type of request. Approximately 120 messages are sent to *fix-it* monthly.

One trend that has been tracked is the recurrent problem of building temperature fluctuation at the Operations Center. A new heating, ventilation and air-conditioning company has been hired to get the temperature under control so all employees will be working in a comfortable environment.

Encouraged by the success of the fix-it alias, Facilities created email aliases for other routine requests such as conference-room reservations (*meeting@ieee.org*) and food-service orders (*brock@ieee.org*). More than 150 reservations for conference rooms are now received each month.

New uniforms also were provided to the staff to give them a more professional look. The new "Networking the World" slogan is even stitched on the uniform's shirt pocket.

To help Facilities associates learn the new technology and continue to improve their skills, they are attending Quality College classes. They also are going to off-site training classes to help broaden their knowledge of maintenance techniques and learn new skills. In addition, each worker is being cross-trained on the various tasks within the department.

Since fire safety is a major concern, Facilities employees are attending conferences and seminars to learn more on this topic too.

Of course, in the midst of all these changes, the work goes on.

Building remodeling is a major responsibility — and an ongoing process in Piscataway. Facilities employees consult with the departments on space design and floor plans. Two recent areas that have been remodeled are Awards/Fellow and Financial Services. Two new conference rooms also have been built. Over the next few months, Facilities will be making renovations in Educational Activities, Inspec, Information Technology, Marketing & Sales and Member Services.

New projects

As if this wasn't enough, here are some additional new activities.

- Ensuring the Operations Center security system is Year 2000-compliant.
- Creating a "Right to Know Center" to inform employees what to do if they are exposed to potentially hazardous chemicals.
- Creating a Web site on the Eye on the Institute to outline Facilities services.
- Converting the work requests and conference room reservations email aliases to online forms.

Jazz: a lifelong passion

by Brian Davis

Millions of Americans play or simply enjoy music as a hobby. However, for Don Messina, Publications, music is a passion he continues to pursue in addition to his full-time job as post-editor for Transactions and Journals.

"I practice each day for 1-1/2 hours before work and in the evening," says Don, giving some indication of just how dedicated he is being a jazz musician. "I get up every Sunday at 6 a.m. and drive to the Bronx to play with the same players I've played with since 1982."

In addition to working at the IEEE, Don

teaches jazz, carrying on the tradition of private musical study that he pursued for 14 years after studying at the New England Conservatory and the Manhattan School of Music.

"I started playing cello and the bass during high school. My initial interest was composition," says Don. "I knew I wanted to play jazz after I heard Charlie Parker."

Don says that after the births of his two daughters, it became very difficult to continue performing.



• Don Messina (center) playing with the jazz trio

People page

"I did more teaching, recording, and eventually taught myself how to type and went to work freelancing for AT&T. This allowed me to pick and choose where and when I would perform," noted Don.

But throughout, he has always studied, practiced and played. Don has been a student, teacher and player of jazz music for more than 25 years.

He has appeared in over 25 releases by other musicians. For the past 14 years, Don has played bass (that's stand-up bass, mind you) as part of the Bluth, Messina, Chattin Trio with Larry Bluth on piano and Bill Chattin on drums.

The trio's music is largely improvised.

"The three of us create our own melodies over the harmonies of standard jazz tunes," says Don. The trio improvises over classic compositions by such greats as Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Charlie Parker and Lennie Tristano. The trio also writes some originals.

The group will be releasing its third CD for Zinnia Records this fall. Called "Formations," it was recorded live at New York's Museum of Modern Art. The first two releases, "Live at Orfeo" (1995) and "Five Concerts and a Landscape" (1997), were successful considering the independent label on which they were released.

The trio has been reviewed in such magazines as *Wired*, *Stereo Review*, *Jazz Times* and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Stork Alert

Donna Hourican, Controller's Office, is a mother again. Samantha Kate was born on 27 May.

Gene Ksenzakovic, Shipping/Inventory is a father again. Kara Noelle was born on 26 May.

Pam Finer, Customer Service, is a mother again. Nicholas Michael was born on 12 May.

Alicia Tomaszewski, Technical Activities, has a new daughter. Rebecca Lynn was born on 21 April.

Robin Edwards, Publications, has a new son. Thomas was born on 12 April.

Lynann Hunt, Corporate Activities, is a new mother. Ashley Taylor was born on 30 March.

Laura Tucker, Periodicals, had daughter Emma Forbes on 19 March.

Cyril Hodge, Accounts Receivable, has a new son. Nikusubila Jelani was born on 4 March.



Service Awards

(April through June)

25 Years: **Nela Rybowicz**

20 Years: **Joseph Cuthie Jr.**

15 Years: **Rita Holland**

10 Years: **Rose Ann Carey,**

Judith Covino, Maryann Hoffman,

Lori Potter, Theresa Proetto, Gail Walters,

Tamara Weiss, Kerry Ann Ward

5 Years: **Mike Capaccio, Genevieve Kenna**

Yvette Policastro, Susan Tornillo



Welcome Aboard

Beth Alegret, Computer Society-DC

Dyana Barnosky, Regional Activities

Robert Bedford, Press

Catherine Berger, Standards

Theresa Braddock, Computer Society-DC

Stavros Bouziotis, Distribution Operations

Denise Burnley, Meeting Planning Services

Scott Burns, Facilities

Jeannine Calandra, Computer Society-DC

Deborah Custer, Marketing & Sales

Joseph Dillon, Marketing & Sales

Laurie Duchamp, Financial Services

Lyudmila Duvidovsky, Credit & Collections

Angelina Emberley, IEEE Central New England Council Office

Lisa Engel, Marketing & Sales

Regina Getty, Periodicals

James Grbac, Educational Activities

Greg Hill, IEEE-USA

Jacqueline Hansson, Corporate Activities

Anna Justice, Computer Society-DC

Charles Krajcsik, Treasury

Bryan King, Treasury

Christopher Klingaman, Customer Service

Christina Kuhnen, Periodicals

Pamela Lohof, Computer Society-DC

John Loiseleur, Information Technology

Ferne McClain, Accounts Payable

John McKenna, Technical Activities

Donna Mergner, Travel Services

Sara Naimpally, Information Technology

Kimberly Norlund, Computer Society-CA

Nancy Paddy, Travel Services

Laura Pohl, Technical Activities

Lisa Preshong, Computer Society-DC

Violetta Punda, Accounts Receivable

Tara Rafferty, Customer Service

Nicolas Reeve, Transactions

Darin Saunders, Computer Society-CA

Janette Skyers, Controller's Office

Lisa Smey-Mizrahi, Marketing & Sales

Lyle Smith, Sr., Corporate Activities

Jo-Ellen Snyder, Signal Processing Society

Alan Trembly, Educational Activities

Penny Trujillo, Standards Activities

John Turnbull, Facilities

Paula Tyska, Marketing & Sales

Harry Wagner, Technical Activities

Arne Wendt, Customer Service

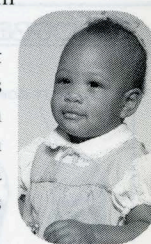
Jonathan Wolfe, Customer Service



You must have been a beautiful baby!

Who did this cuddly tot grow up to be? (Clue: This Washington, D.C. employee is a whip at handling checks and invoices.) Email your best answer to Kathy Kowalenko and perhaps you'll win a prize for being the first to guess correctly. Prior contest winners are ineligible. The employee's identity and the winner will be announced in the next *Staff Circuit*.

The baby in the first quarter 1998 issue was David Dedrick, Information Technology. The first person to identify him was Andrea Lehman, Standards. Thanks to all who participated.



Reunions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

family members, and mailing a monthly newsletter to the graduates they have located.

People tend to gravitate at the reunion toward the groups of classmates they were friendly with. However, most say they also talked with others — some who they never talked to or who would never have talked with them!

While you would think that one talks about the “good old days,” employees who have attended reunions say they talked more about what they are doing now and showed pictures of spouses, kids, vacations and houses. And, of course, there are the stories of how much people have changed. Some look basically the same and others transformed themselves.

Many who attended one reunion are planning to attend another.

“It’s always interesting to see how classmates lives have changed,” says Mark Vasquez-Jorge, Technical Activities, who attended high school in New York City.

Not everyone waits for a reunion to get together with old friends.

Robert Colburn, Publications Business Planning, still speaks to or meets with friends from his Delaware and London high schools and New York City university at least two or three times a week.

“These are lifetime, not just school friends, and friendship makes distance irrelevant,” he says. ♦

The cool sound of jazz

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

a favorite of jazz purists everywhere — *Cadence*. They also have been profiled in the Sunday New York Times.

“Our success was unexpected. We have always made music solely for ourselves and no one else,” notes Don. “To have any success is a plus given our specialized music and the small label that we are on.”

So, what does the Bluth, Messina, Chattin Trio sound like?

One reference point is the music to which the trio itself listens. The three con-

sider Bach, Bartok, Charlie Parker, Lester Young, Louis Armstrong, Lennie Tristano and Sal Mosca as their influences. The group’s music reminds one of the quintessential “cool jazz” sound of the late ‘40s and early ‘50s. Think smoky nightclubs filled with Bohemians and Beatniks.

At the same time, their music is highly intellectualized and comes from a school of jazz that began with the teachings of jazz master Tristano. Each member of the trio studied with either Tristano or one of Tristano’s students, such as Sal Mosca.

“Lennie Tristano’s piano playing, his personal commitment, mastery of jazz and sheer originality opened a whole new thing for me and countless others,” notes Don.

“Jazz is the art of expressing one’s feelings through music. I didn’t learn that in school. I learned that from Lennie and listening to the great players.”

This obviously is not a group of guys who get together on the occasional weekend to drink beer and bang on some drums or strum guitars. The trio has played at such New York venues as the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of Art, and most recently, at a private event at the Waldorf-Astoria.

There have been several radio programs dedicated solely to their music, including a recent two-hour show on WBGO-FM, based in the Rutgers University Institute of Jazz Studies in Newark.

“I was very happy with the WBGO show,” says Don. “It’s wonderful to have two hours of your music played in the New York area.”

A few IEEE staff members have assisted on the production side in their spare time. Bill Hagen, Publications, designed the trio’s Web site, <http://www.concentric.net/~bmc trio>. Cathy Teece, also of Publications, designed the layout for the second CD’s insert booklet.

As you can see, continuing to be a working musician is a labor of love for Don. What keeps him going?

“Even now that I’m a father, a homeowner and have full-time responsibilities with the IEEE, the art of improvising is still as thrilling as it was when I first started playing,” says Don.

To get a copy of a Bluth, Messina, Chattin Trio’s CD, visit their Web site or contact Don Messina at d Messina@ieee.org. ♦

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and comments to:

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