



IEEE and Y2K

by Stephen Phillips

The last day of December, 1999, and the first day of January, 2000, are probably the most important dates in the Y2K computer problem equation, but there are other important dates as well:

JANUARY 3, 2000—

The first business day of 2000

FEBRUARY 28, 29 AND MARCH 1, 2000 —

The days concerning the leap year date

OCTOBER 31—

The first two-digit day and month of 2000

JANUARY 1, 2001—

The first day of the 21st century
(the true first day of the third millennium)

The first most critical day preceding all of the above is September 9, 1999 (9-9-99). In the early days of computer programming, a sequence of nines was often used to signal the end line of a program. It is possible that some computer systems may recognize this number as an "end" code rather than a date, and end the program.

Like most Y2K problems, the extent of this date problem is unknown. As a result, the IEEE is doing extensive testing before September 9th occurs. There are less than 300 days remaining to 2000.

In anticipation of the new millennium, some larger companies are putting a travel embargo into effect for the latter part of this year and early next year. This could significantly impact registration numbers for meetings and conferences that are scheduled to occur during the period beginning around September 9, 1999, and ending some time in March, 2000. Only time will tell what will occur.

180 Attend Electrifying Utility Deregulation Panel Session

by Allen G. Morinec

On Wednesday, March 3rd, 1999, the Electric League of Ohio sponsored a panel discussion on deregulation at the Independence Holiday Inn. The panelists included Anthony J. Alexander (Executive VP & General Counsel at FirstEnergy Corp.), Craig Glazer (Chairman of the Public Utility Commission of Ohio), and Ralph Day (President of Day Electric Co.). A fiery presentation from Ralph Day and pointed questions from electrical contractors and electrical union representatives from Local 38 and Local 270 dominated the evening. The session ended at 10:30 p.m., when program moderator Lewis Tagliaferre, a deregulation consultant, called a halt to the discussions. Few in the audience seemed ready to leave.

Ralph Day, who successfully transformed his family's business into a \$12 million electrical contracting firm, spoke first. Day is concerned that fairness is being compromised by deregulation legislature and practices. His first concern is that large industrial customers will reap the savings and residential customers will be the big losers. Another concern of his is that the utility company is becoming so big so fast, buying so many new companies and offering so many contracting services that the mega-utility will negatively affect local communities. He is also worried that the utility could be unfairly competing against local contractors if it is subsidizing the contracting services with equipment and advertising from its electric revenues. Day's final concerns are that the utility will move jobs out of the community, not pay the prevailing wage for highly skilled labor, bust unions, and lower workmanship and standards. Ralph Day demanded that deregulation legislature offer fairness to all parties from the start.

Tony Alexander, FirstEnergy's representative in all deregulation discussions at the state and national level, spoke next. Alexander expects an Ohio deregulation bill to pass this year. He stated that some of the tough issues yet to be worked out include tax revenue replacement for the loss of excessive utility taxes in Ohio and stranded cost



IEEE Cleveland Section CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by Stephen Phillips

The Cleveland Section is continuing its efforts to provide more prompt dissemination of Section activities via electronic media. Bill Schultz is leading this effort and would welcome your help. A significant difficulty is the frequency with which many members change e-mail addresses. This has caused the IEEE's national database of e-mail addresses to be rather out of date. I would encourage each member to establish an [ieee.org](http://www.ieee.org) e-mail address which he or she can keep for a lifetime. This service is free and allows you to forward your e-mail to the address or service provider of your choice. When changing internet service providers, simply update this forwarding address without changing the basic [ieee.org](http://www.ieee.org) e-mail address.

Our current thinking about an electronic newsletter would include two components. First, the newsletter would be posted to the Section website for members to access via an internet web browser (<http://www.ewh.ieee.org/r2/cleveland>). Second, an e-mail alert would be sent to all Section members, consisting of a www link to the newsletter as well as an attachment including a pdf version of the newsletter. The pdf (portable document format) is readable from nearly every platform (Mac or PC) using free software from Adobe. In addition to these electronic newsletters, we will continue to provide a semi-annual hard copy newsletter which will be sent via U.S. mail as usual. This approach should allow us to reach all members while reducing our printing and mailing costs significantly.

In another development, Eric Bobinsky is establishing a Communications Society Chapter in the Cleveland Section and will include the Akron and Youngstown/Sharon sections as well. The executive committee fully supports this effort and looks forward to new activities in this technical area of increasing importance. In addition, we are looking for chairs for our Industrial Applications and Vehicular Technology society chapters.

Finally, we need your input! We need to increase the number of Cleveland Section events and activities. Our goal is to serve you, the members, so please let us know if you are willing to help create an event or simply have a suggestion about an activity that would be interesting. If you have any comments, suggestions or are willing to help in any of these efforts, please contact me (stephen.phillips@ieee.org) or any of the other officers or organizers listed on the back page of this newsletter.

New IEEE-USA Resume Referral Service Engineers the Right Match

Washington, Feb. 10, 1999. High-tech professionals have a new tool for career advancement: the IEEE-USA Resume Referral Service. And like its popular cousin, the IEEE-USA Job Listing Service, <http://www.ieeeusa.org/jobs.html>, the service is free to U.S. IEEE members.

"Over the past few years, we've developed the nation's premier job-posting service for technical professionals; it was a natural next step to introduce a top-of-the-line resume database for our members," said IEEE-USA Employment Assistance Committee Chair Gary Johnson. "With industry claiming a lack of skilled high-tech workers, we expect the database to become very quickly a hot property for employers seeking access to the IEEE's rich talent pool."

The IEEE-USA Resume Referral Service is administered by Resume-Link, the largest publisher and distributor of resume databases in the world. IEEE members who enroll remain in the database for one year, with the option to renew. Every six months, they will be asked to update their information or, if they choose, to remove their information from the database. The confidentiality option allows members to exclude specific companies from reviewing their information. Companies which express an interest in a member's resume credentials will contact the member to further discuss possible opportunities.

U.S. IEEE members can enroll via the Web at URL <http://www.ieeeusa.org/EMPLOYMENT/resume.html> or by hard-copy form. To request a form, or for more information, contact Resume-Link at (614) 923-0608 or socmember@resume-link.com.

Employers seeking skilled technical professionals should contact Resume-Link's Dave Meagher at (614) 923-0600, ext. 329, or dmeagher@resume-link.com for access to the IEEE-USA resume database.



All Hogs Go to Heaven

by Michael Garvey

Most people recognize the sound of a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. In fact, the sound is so distinctive (some might even say annoying) that Harley-Davidson has applied to register the sound as a trademark. Other distinguishing features of Harley-Davidson motorcycles include the bar-and-shield logo. But what about the name “hog?”

Many people refer to Harley-Davidson motorcycles as “hogs.” Harley-Davidson obtained a trademark registration for “hog,” alleging first use in 1990. Thus, it appeared the company had fairly strong rights to the trademark “hog.”

Ronald Grottanelli has run a motorcycle repair shop in western New York since 1969. He calls it “The Hog Farm.” Over the past 15 years, Grottanelli has also sponsored events known as hog holidays, and sold Hog Wash engine degreaser and a Hog Trivia board game. For the past 20 years, he has used variations on the Harley-Davidson logo bar-and-shield logo in association with his shop.

Harley-Davidson wasn’t too pleased with Grottanelli’s behavior. After a number of objections and years of correspondence, Harley-Davidson finally sued Grottanelli for trademark infringement.

The trial court ordered Grottanelli to stop using the bar-and-shield logo and to limit his use of “The Hog Farm” to a small geographic area. Grottanelli appealed.

The appeals court agreed with the trial court, but only in part. The appeals court affirmed the order requiring Grottanelli to stop using the bar-and-shield logo. That was the easy part.

The appeals court then addressed the use of the word “hog” as a trademark. Harley-Davidson presented evidence that the public, in particular motorcycle enthusiasts, associate the word “hog” with its motorcycles.

The court, however, noted the word “hog” had been a generic term for any large motorcycle long before it became associated with Harley-Davidson. A dictionary and published articles from the late 1960s used it generically. In fact, it wasn’t until the 1970s that Hell’s Angels and other groups began using “hog” to mean Harley, a usage which Harley-Davidson specifically disavowed.

It is very unusual for a generic word to become a trademark. Occasionally, a word that was a trademark then became generic has been rescued by extensive efforts of the original trademark owner. This occurred with the mark “Singer” for sewing machines. It is nearly unheard of for a generic word that was never a trademark to become a trademark. Yet that is what Harley-Davidson was claiming: that the word “hog,” never before a trademark and generic for large motorcycles in the 60s, had become their own

trademark by the 90s.

The appeals court was not convinced and reversed the trial court. So, Grottanelli was allowed unrestricted use of The Hog Farm and other “hog” marks.

The appeals court, which is responsible for federal court appeals from Connecticut, New York and Vermont, was not impressed by a conflicting decision of a trial court in California. The California district court had determined in 1993 that a motorcycle repair shop in California called “The Hog Farm” was infringing Harley-Davidson’s trademark.

Based on these decisions, the future of the word “hog” is, at this time, uncertain.

Michael Garvey is a patent attorney with Pearne, Gordon, McCoy & Granger LLP.



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The Contact Enters an Electronic Age

By Bill Schultz

The Cleveland "Contact" and its predecessor, the Cleveland Section News, in paper form have been Cleveland Section IEEE's main vehicles for informing the members of the Cleveland Section about local activities. Over the years, the Section Committee has wrestled with several problems: (1) Obtaining meeting announcements from all Section entities by the "Contact's" publication deadlines; (2) coping with printing and mail delivery delays; (3) endeavoring to keep the publication deadline as late in the previous month as possible, and (4) trying to reduce the total cost of publication (as high as 80% of the Section's annual budget!). Now there is a new option, an electronic option, that resolves many of these problems.

An earlier attempt to use e-mail as a vehicle for the delivery of "Contact" content was not well received. Complaints included the lack of formatting; it was a text-only version. For those with slow modems, its size was also a burden in download time. In recent years, however, a new product called Adobe Acrobat has become the defacto standard for the electronic transmittal of documents. This software and attendant format are used by a majority of manufacturers for displaying catalog and specifications information on the Internet web. Adobe Acrobat is easy to use both by the publisher and the reader. The result, which is identical in appearance to a printed page, may be transmitted as an attached file, stored or archived as a web page, transmitted as a fax, and viewed or printed using freely downloadable reader software.

We will use this issue and the next of the "Contact" to tell you about the new plans, outlined as follows.

The "Contact" will now be a color document containing both meeting announcements and articles by our membership. There will also be a member forum for the purpose of discussing topics relevant to our society and profession.

The "Contact" will be published in the week prior to the first of the month so that meeting announcements for the

entire month will be available on time.

The "Contact's" distribution list will be obtained from the IEEE national member list. All changes or updates to the list will be done via National Headquarters, so that a member of the Section need change his distribution information in only one place.

Society Chairs and others with information to be published will be able to submit their contributions via e-mail as well as fax (e-mail preferred!). The deadline for meeting announcements will be made as near to the end of the month as practical. The intended result is that all IEEE meetings will be publicized via the "Contact" in a timely fashion.

At present, the concept is still evolving. Next month, we plan to have our web page updated, complete with some back issues of the "Contact" available to be downloaded. Your input in the form of comments or critique are welcome. Please send them via e-mail to w.schultz@ieee.org.

Finally, much credit and thanks is due our outgoing editor, Doug Bahniuk, for his tireless efforts in keeping the "Contact" in print for many years. Our new editors, Jeff and Marilyn Greene, who have been a significant part of the "Contact" in the past, will move us forward with this new electronic format.

"Science can amuse and fascinate us all, but it is engineering that changes the world."

— Isaac Asimov

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180 Attend Electrifying Utility Deregulation Panel Session

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reimbursements to the utility for mandated capital investments. Alexander expects utilities in general to purchase more companies and have more mergers and acquisitions. He stated that FirstEnergy is positioning itself to be a leader in energy products and the service industry by becoming a leader in HVAC, telecommunications, refrigeration, roofing, and natural gas industries. Alexander gave examples of other utilities poised to offer these same services in Ohio and explained that FirstEnergy will need to compete in this arena.

Craig Glazer, representing Ohio utility deregulation initiatives, spoke last. Glazer stated that regulators are putting together a plan; he expects legislation to be introduced this month. He said that deregulation is actually re-regulation, because the transmission and distribution lines will still be regulated. Glazer expects deregulation to be publicly debated and decided because it is such an important issue. Glazer said Ohio must proceed with deregulation because other states are proceeding; Ohio will be the big loser if it doesn't deregulate.

Panel members fielded many concerns from attendees, including: lost jobs in Ohio, diminishing reliability, how we can have any savings with so many separate pieces/parts associated with deregulation, why aren't engineers involved with deregulation legislation, and how can we expect "The Market" to determine the rules when electricity follows the laws of physics, resulting in "chaos". The subject of deregulation is sure to be hotly debated in the months to come.

Seminars at CWRU's Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

1999 SPRING SEMESTER SCHEDULE

All are welcome at these talks, which are held in the White Building, Room 411, from 11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Please contact Stephen Phillips, (216) 368-6248, for more information.

April 15 Christos Chassandras, Manufacturing Engineering Department, Boston University, "Discrete Event Dynamic Systems."

TBA Kul Bhasin, NASA Lewis Research Center, "Satellite Computer Networks & Architectures."

TBA Hausi Muller, University of Victoria, "Software Re-Engineering."



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Please note: if you are trying to contact the IEEE Cleveland Section by FAX, dial 440-473-6557. The line is open twenty-four hours per day.



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CSN Editor

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