

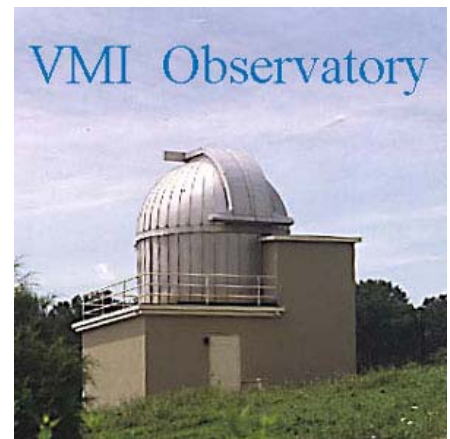
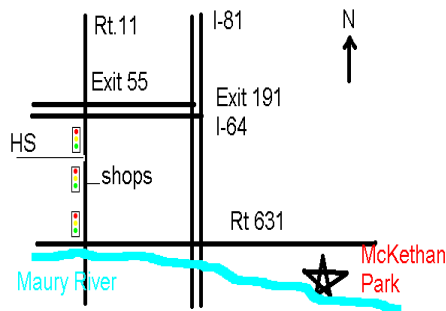


VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN SECTION NEWSLETTER

IEEE Region 3, Council 09, Section 65

May 2003

May 15, McKethan Park, Lexington, VA *Spring Picnic and tour of VMI Observatory*



For our last meeting before the summer we are keeping one tradition (plant tour) and hopefully starting a new tradition (a catered Spring Picnic).

Date: May 15, 2003

Time: 7:00 pm - ??

Location:

McKethan Park and VMI Observatory, Lexington VA

Directions: From I-81

Northbound, Take Exit 191 (I-64 W). Take the first exit (#55). Turn left at the end of the ramp onto Rt. 11 S. Turn left at the third stoplight onto Rt. 631. Proceed on Rt. 631, beyond the I-81 underpass. McKethan Park is on your right. Follow the road through the main gate and stay to the right to the picnic shelter. See map above.

Cost: \$10. Members/Guests
\$ 5. Students and children over 12 (no charge for children under 12)

RSVP: Deadline May 8

Contact - Shawn Addington,
Dawn Cochran

cochrandh@vmi.edu
(540) 464-7236

Picnic Menu:

Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Chicken, Pork BBQ, Potato Chips, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Cookies, Brownies, Iced Tea and Sodas

VMI Observatory: A tour of the VMI Observatory will be conducted (weather permitting), courtesy of Dr. David DuPuy, VMI Dept. of Physics & Astronomy.

(Note: Picnic will be held rain or shine.)

Report from April Meeting

About 30 members and guests were in attendance at the April meeting for a fascinating talk by Dr. John Bay on DARPA Information Exploitation Office (IXO) programs. IXO was established in 2001 and deals with using information for the control of weapon systems. Dr. Bay's talk included examples from the war in Iraq of software embedded control and new autonomous vehicles for use in urban areas. He also discussed tools that utilize physical models for describing very large scale software systems. (See www.darpa.mil/ixo)



Figure 1: IXO Thrusts

IEEE-USA NEWS

IEEE-USA 2003 LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

Seattle, WA, March 28-30, 2003

About 150 delegates were present for an intense round of seminars and classes. Main theme topics included Government Relations, How To Start Your Own Consultants Network, Employment & Career Services, Pre-College Education, and a wrap up including an Awards Banquet & Ceremony. I was impressed by the depth of knowledge and comprehensive approach that IEEE-USA is taking to activism in response to engineering layoffs, declining engineering employment opportunities, and the lack of engineering interest by secondary school students.

IEEE-USA is involved in both providing a greater range of career support activities as well as in influencing its individual members to be more sensitive to career issues. The impact of government on technology and careers was presented together with the various avenues available to engineers as means of making their thoughts known in large numbers to members of government. Consulting was highlighted as another career path. Sections were encouraged to publicize career services available nationally as well as developing further services based on local networking. Emphasis was put on the importance of participating in programs which bring a local awareness of engineering as an attractive career to schoolchildren and what developed materials and support is available. Awards were made as national recognition for 2002 achievements in such areas as Professional Achievement, Leadership, Literary Contributions, Education, and Technology.

Howard Moses
Virginia Mountain Section
PACE Representative

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS SKYROCKETS TO RECORD LEVEL

WASHINGTON (28 April 2003)
The unemployment rate for electrical engineers (EEs) rose to an unprecedented 7.0 percent in the first quarter of 2003, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. The rate stood at 3.9 percent in the previous quarter, and is a full percentage point above the quarterly figure for all workers.

The previous high quarterly EE jobless rate was 4.8 percent (second quarter, 2002). It's difficult to compare the figures, however, because the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has revamped its occupational classifications and reporting conventions to produce more detailed and accurate reports.

"Despite the change in the bureau's accounting and reporting methods, these unemployment figures are alarming," IEEE-USA President-Elect John Steadman said. "We knew anecdotally that things were bad for many in engineering and computer fields, and these statistics confirm our concerns for engineering employment."

The BLS report showed an unemployment rate for computer software engineers at 7.5 percent, and at 6.5 percent for computer hardware engineers, two of the bureau's new occupational categories. Computer scientists, including systems analysts, showed a slight improvement in joblessness, dropping from 5.1 percent at the end of 2002 to 4.9 percent. Computer programmers recorded a first-quarter rate of 6.7 percent.

When the number of unemployed EEs is added to each of the above computer categories, 172,000 high-tech professionals are out of work. Computer software engineers led the way with 62,000.

To help mitigate unemployment for U.S. high-tech professionals, IEEE-USA is calling on Congress to return the H-1B visa quota to its historical level of 65,000. The current cap is 195,000. IEEE-USA is also concerned about potential abuses in the L-1 intra-company visa transfer program. Business Week magazine reported in March that 329,000 people were working in the United States on L-1 visas in 2001, many in high-tech sectors.

"While we realize the sluggish U.S. economy is responsible for much of the unemployment," Steadman said, "we can't discount the role played by the continuing influx of foreign workers on temporary work visas, and the dramatic increase in offshore outsourcing. Congress needs to create incentives that help to spur the growth and retention of high-value, high-tech jobs here in the United States."

IEEE-USA is an organizational unit of The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers created in 1973 to promote the careers and public-policy interests of the more than 235,000 electrical, electronics, computer and software engineers who are U.S. members of the IEEE. The IEEE is the world's largest technical professional society. See: <http://www.ieeeusa.org>.

ENGINEERING CAREERS CONGRESSIONAL VISITS DAY 10-11 JUNE

U.S. IEEE members concerned about their careers, the effects of globalization, outsourcing and guest labor on engineering employment, and the health of the U.S. engineering workforce are invited to participate in IEEE-USA's Engineering Careers Congressional Visits Day to share their concerns with Members of Congress. The event is scheduled for 10-11 June. For more information, visit <http://www.ieeeusa.org/forum/H1Bcvd/index.html>

DATE	SPEAKER/TOPIC	MEETING PLACE
September 19	Brian Lindholm Six Sigma Methods at General Electric	Clarion Hotel Roanoke
October 17	Daniel Stilwell Enabling Technologies for Platoons of Cooperating Autonomous Underwater Vehicles	Best Western, Blacksburg
November 21	David Stocker LIDAR Technology for Fully Automatic Crane Operation	Clarion Hotel Roanoke
January 16 (postponed to January 30 owing to weather)	Undergraduate Student Paper Contest	Clarion Hotel Roanoke
February 20	Spouses' Night, 2003 Dave & Gail Geer China: Expectation & Experience	Clarion Hotel Roanoke
March 20	Kenneth Ferris A Perspective on Technology in the New Century Region	Clarion Hotel Roanoke
April 17	John Bay An Overview of DARPA and the Information Exploitation Office.	Clarion Hotel Roanoke
May 15	Spring Picnic and Tour of VMI Observatory	McKethan Park, Lexington, VA

IEEE Virginia Mountain Section

VMS OFFICERS

Chairman: Mark Shepard
<mailto:MShepard@ieee.org> 387-8710

Vice Chairman: Shawn Addington
<mailto:AddingtonJS@mail.vmi.edu>
464-3961

Sec./Treasurer: Cy Harbour
cdharbourt@ieee.org 387-8941

VMS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

David Geer
<mailto:d.geer@ieee.org> 774-4905

Dan Jackson
<mailto:d.jackson@ieee.org> 774-0484

Ira Jacobs
<mailto:ijacobs@vt.edu> 231-5620

Jim Squire
<mailto:squirejc@mail.vmi.edu> 464-7548

Junior Past Chairman:
Howard J. Moses
<mailto:Mmoses@ieee.org> 953-5069

VA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

David Geer
<mailto:d.geer@ieee.org> 774-4905

VMS CHAPTER CHAIRS

Industrial Applications
David Stocker
[mail to:David.Stocker@indsys.ge.com](mailto:David.Stocker@indsys.ge.com)

**Industrial
Electronics/Computer/Control
Systems**
David Livingston
<mailto:d.livingston@ieee.org> 464-7545

**Microwave Theory & Techniques/
Electron Devices**
Dain Miller
mailto:dain_miller@ieee.org 563-3998

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Awards:
Dan Jackson
<mailto:d.jackson@ieee.org> 774-0484

Education (Open)

Membership Development:
Dan Jackson
<mailto:d.jackson@ieee.org> 774-0484

Nominations:
Howard J. Moses

<mailto:Mmoses@ieee.org> 953-5069

PACE :
Howard J. Moses
<mailto:Mmoses@ieee.org> 953-5069

Program :
Shawn Addington
<mailto:AddingtonJS@mail.vmi.edu>
464-3961

Publicity :
Jim Squire
<mailto:squirejc@mail.vmi.edu> 464-7548

Student Activities:
David Livingston
<mailto:d.livingston@ieee.org> 464-7545

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Ira Jacobs
<mailto:ijacobs@vt.edu> 231-5620
Contact Newsletter Editor to be
added to VMS listserv
**Anyone may submit material for the
Newsletter; Deadline:**
Monday following each meeting