



VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN SECTION NEWSLETTER

IEEE Region 3, Council 09, Section 65

May 2004

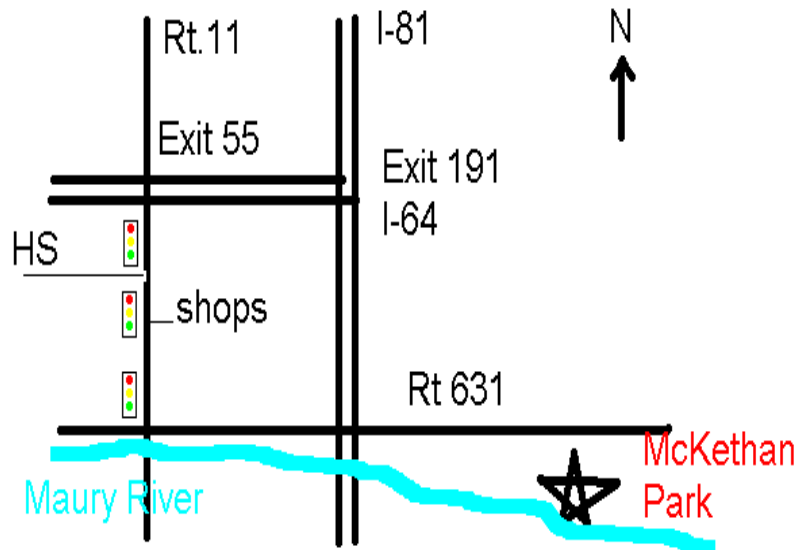
May 13, McKethan Park, Lexington, VA

Spring Picnic



VMI Communications and Marketing

VMI RATS on Breakout Hill,
McKethan Park, January 2004.
Not a picture from our last picnic



Following a tradition begun last year, the IEEE Virginia Mountain Section May Meeting, to be held on Thursday, May 13, will be a catered picnic in McKethan Park in Lexington, VA. (PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS THE 2nd THURSDAY IN MAY, RATHER THAN OUR NORMAL MEETING DATE ON THE 3rd THURSDAY.) Reservations are required by May 10 (see information below).

Date: May 13, 2003

Time: 6:30 pm - ??

Location:

McKethan Park, 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 10

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

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

Report from April Meeting

About 20 members and guests were in attendance at the April meeting for a fascinating talk by Reagan MacVaugh, Product Line Manager GE Energy Systems on "Photovoltaic Market Trends and Applications." Ms. MacVaugh discussed the growing application of solar power, and General Electric's large involvement in this growing field. Specifically in Salem, GE is developing a 3.5 KW inverter (to convert DC to AC) with the challenging objectives of a peak efficiency greater than 94%, and a mean-time-to-failure exceeding 10 years.

GE trivia note: GE has more than 315,000 employees worldwide, and is the only company that has been continuously on the Dow-Jones index since its inception.

New ECE Head at Virginia Tech

James S. Thorp, a member of the National Academy of Engineering, will become the head of Virginia Tech's Bradley Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE), effective July 1, 2004.

Thorp, who has spent most of his professional life at Cornell University where he received both teaching and research awards, anticipates that Virginia Tech's electrical and computer engineering program will be "considered as one of the nation's top ten departments in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

"To do so would mean continuing the department's leadership in existing areas and to focus on selected emerging areas such as nanoscience, complex systems, and

energy and environment," Thorp said.

Hassan Aref, Dean of Virginia Tech's College of Engineering, announced Thorp's appointment after a nationwide search. "The college is extremely fortunate to attract a researcher and administrator of the caliber of Professor Thorp to our campus. His record of administration at Cornell is superb. I believe his vision for our Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering will complement our overall goals to make the engineering college truly outstanding."

Thorp said he plans to build upon the ECE community "through effective recruitment, the provision of common space, presentation of events and activities, innovative teaching, effective advising, leadership opportunities, professional development, and academic support, all critical in establishing a sense of community and collegiality."

Thorp served as the Director of the School of Electrical Engineering at Cornell from 1994 until 2001. Thorp also increased his department's funding substantially and participated in the planning of a new \$100 million building for nanoscience.

Since 1994 he has held Cornell's Charles N. Mellows Professorship in Engineering. At Virginia Tech, he will hold the Hugh and Ethel Kelly Professorship.

Among his honors, Thorp is an IEEE Fellow and received the 2001 Power Engineering Society Career Service Award. He earned his bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Cornell in 1959, 1961, and 1962, respectively.

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[mountain](http://www.ewh.ieee.org/r3/virginia-mountain) **Chris Bonadeo** is our new Webmaster, and website will be updated over the summer.