

Issues requiring action by the Region 3 Committee or ExCom

The Western North Carolina Section does not have any issues requiring action from the Region.

Successes/Opportunities for engaging the member, volunteer, non-member, public

The WCN Section's last Strategic Planning Meeting reviewed the previous 4 years of technical programs (2014-2018) and yielded the summary below. The 2019 activities have been added to this previous analysis used to derive the strategic plan (below) future year's planning going forward:

ANALYSIS OF PAST MEETINGS (2014-2019)

Electrical and Electronics - 5

Technical Education, Technical Publications and other related topics - 6

DIY and Maker Topics - 6

Automotive - 6

Solar, Alternative Energy and related - 5

Medical Technology – 2

We have been using this analysis to focus on technical interest areas that seem to give us the best results for member engagement for 2020 and beyond in offering technical programs in these broad areas:

1) **Musical/Artistic/Culinary/Brewing “Maker” Community**, i.e., better liaisons with the Asheville Makers and other craft artists – particularly the culinary and brewing growth in the South Slope/River Arts District eating, drinking and entertainment business. Or said another way, how do we support more programs that attract the River Arts small craft, service and tech shops and studios locating in and around the new multi-million dollar UNC-A STEAM Studios (modeled on a Makerspace by UNC-A and UNC Board of Governors) in the Asheville River Arts District. We plan to exhibit again this year at the Asheville Maker Faire 2020 also, but like Southeastcon 2020 that has been postponed.

We also want to address the Moog Music/DIY Synth/Electronic Music community in Asheville that is also in and around Asheville's River Arts District and especially the Moog Synthesizer Company that is in the Asheville area. To that end, we offered a private IEEE tour of the new Moog Foundation's new museum (“Moogseum” - <https://moogfoundation.org/projects/the-moogseum/>) in September 2019 to our membership and guests in conjunction with a rooftop event in a single outing.

2) **Medical Technology** - more medical technology programs similar to events held in the past seem to have a great turn-out and are particularly interesting to the larger OLLI community over at the Reuter Center (<https://olliasheville.com/>).

3) **Robotics and Advanced AI** - more programs on these advance technologies (autonomous vehicles, smart homes and smart cities) found in products like Amazon Alexa AI, Tesla semi-autonomous EV's and other robotic and AI tech as it appears in the general public. This included in 2019 the use of an “AI Assistant” (Voicera EVA) to help with taking notes in our regular EXCOM meetings until Cisco Webex acquired that company at the end of the year.

4) **Solar and Alternative Energy** - in the past these have been well attended by the public guests as well as IEEE membership. Looking forward to something in this area in 2020 like a "Behind the Scenes" tour of a large ground solar system (Biltmore Estates Solar Farm that is visible from I-40 and provides a large amount of the estate's energy needs these days) or perhaps just a large commercial rooftop installation like that added to the Asheville Eye Associates building in South Asheville.

We held quarterly socials generally in craft brew and other locations throughout the year. These are very popular in Asheville and Hendersonville area with our regular membership. We are working to expand our use of IEEE web services (Sites, IEEE Collabratec, vTools, OU Analytics) and social media efforts. We are working with our IEEE Student Sections at UNC and WCU to support their continued involvement with IEEE activities like financial grant support provided for attending the student competitions at SoutheastCon each year.

Some notable section technical activities that meet the members needs

Our meetings from previous years included some of our excellent Power Engineering Society (PES) Chapter presentations in conjunction with WCU Engineering including Power Systems Communications, the new Gas Insulated Power Distribution substation being built in downtown Asheville and an on-campus presentation on Power Generation Protection at Western Carolina University in 2019. We are looking forward to continuing this series with a presentation on Grid-Tied Alternative Energy (solar, wind, etc.) in 2020 to meet the needs of our Power Engineering members that make up half of the IEEE WNC membership through the excellent work of our PES Chapter in arranging these events.