



Montana Section News
December, 2003
Chair's Message
Jon Koon

Greetings, IEEE Montana Section Members

After a week of leftover turkey, I hope you will be ready for some pizza again! Executive Director John O'Donnell of the Technology Venture Center-Tech Ranch will speak at our December meeting. He will be hosting our meeting on location at the Tech Ranch. This presentation will be a great chance to find out what roll the Tech Ranch serves in developing technology based companies in our area.

In addition to our speaker, we have a couple of active agenda items for our business meeting. One committee is working on a program to sponsor ECE Department Senior Design Projects. We hope to have a follow up report on that effort. By-laws have become bygones and so we will be looking for ideas for our Section Operations Manual. We will also entertain another idea for sponsoring a robotics competition at the grade school level.

I hope you plan to join us at the meeting. Remember, if you know of someone who is interested in our activities, please invite them to join us. This month's meeting concerning the Tech Ranch might be of interest to many tech companies in our area. Just make sure you sign them up as a guest so that we get enough pizza! Happy Holidays!

November Program

The Tech Ranch is at 910 Technology Blvd (the extension of South 23rd south of College), Suite A. **Please call Sharon at 994-2505 (or e-mail: sharona@ece.montana.edu), or via <http://ewh.ieee.org/r6/montana>, to make reservations by noon, Thursday, December 4.**

Did You Know

That the first eight county license plate number assignments were based on county population (in 1929). At that time, Silver Bow County was by far the most populous county in the state (at the turn of the Century, Butte's population exceeded 100,000). The remaining 48 county numbers were assigned more or less randomly. The quiz question for the next meeting is: What county would have been #9 if the population sequence had been continued?

THE IEEE VIRTUAL MUSEUM

Designed to teach the general public—and particularly the pre-university crowd—about IEEE technologies and their social and historical importance, the IEEE Virtual Museum (VM), which opened in 2002, continues to draw thousands of users monthly and to attract critical praise. The newest exhibit, Women & Technology, opened in June 2003 to rave reviews. The two most recent awards for the VM were to be named one of the "Best Sites for Kids" by the prestigious

American Library Association and to make *PC Magazine's* "Top 101" list. *PC Magazine* named the IEEE VM one of the "Top 101 Most Incredibly Useful Sites" of 2003. The museum was among the eight sites chosen in the "Computing – Everyone" category. The review called it a "fascinating, engaging, image- and infographic-laden site" where "you'll discover the stories behind your favorite electrical engineering marvels." For more information on the list, go to <http://www.pcmag.com/category2/0.4148.7488.00.asp>. You can visit the IEEE Virtual Museum yourself at <http://www.ieee.org/museum>. Be sure to look for the next exhibit on technology and World War II, opening in December 2003.

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