



Montana Section News

September, 2005

Chair's Message

Jason Daughenbaugh

Last fall at the IEEE R6NE area meeting, I was introduced to the IEEE Micromouse Program. This is a competition program designed primarily for college students. Teams of engineering students build small robots that navigate a maze. The robots can range from very simple to very sophisticated. This program is not only a great learning facility for engineering students, but it is also a great way to get other people excited about engineering. Many areas have very active Micromouse programs, but Montana does not, primarily due to the lack of a maze. I would like the Montana Section to take on this project and provide a maze to the MSU ECE department for use of all IEEE student members in the state. Building the maze will require a lot of time, so many volunteers are needed. If you are interested in helping out or even heading up this project, contact me.

Thanks Northwest Energy! Northwestern Energy Corporation - Bozeman Division, Montana (NWE), has been selected as a recipient of the 2005 Supporting Friend of IEEE Regional Activities Award. The IEEE would like to recognize Northwestern Energy - Bozeman Division, for its consistent support in sponsoring various IEEE activities. This award consists of an engraved plaque which carries the following citation: "To the Bozeman Division of the Northwestern Energy Corporation for continued support of the IEEE Montana Section."

Some Highway History - For those who never saw the Burma Shave signs, here is a quick lesson in our history of the 1930s and '40's. Before the Interstates, when everyone drove the old 2 lane roads, Burma Shave signs would be posted all over the countryside in farmers' fields. They were small red signs with white letters. Five signs, about 100 feet apart, each containing 1 line of a 4 line couplet, and the obligatory 5th sign advertising Burma Shave, a popular shaving cream. Here's the first one:

DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD
TO GAIN A MINUTE
YOU NEED YOUR HEAD
YOUR BRAINS ARE IN IT

Burma Shave

Humor of the Month – (Some more thoughts on Montana by Jeff Foxworthy.) If your town has an equal number of bars and churches, you might live in Montana. If you have had a lengthy telephone conversation with someone who dialed a wrong number, you might live in Montana.

You *know* you are a true Montanan when:

1. You install security lights on your house and garage and leave both unlocked.
2. You carry jumper cables in your car and your girlfriend knows how to use them.

Section Meeting

September 22, 2005, 6:30 PM @ Northwest Energy

Mitch Hobish (SM)

Scientific Foundations for a Multisatellite Mission: An Historical Look at NASA's Earth Observing System

A new field of study has emerged in the last 20 years, the foundation of which is this: Instead of treating such fields as meteorology, oceanography, biology, geology, etc. as discrete, self-contained knowledge bases, recognize that they all address part of the same larger system, that of the Earth itself. The practitioners of "Earth System Science" participate in joint studies and laying out specifications for acquiring both *in situ* and remotely sensed data. This has resulted in development and launch of a family of remote-sensing satellites that comprise the Earth Observing System (EOS) program, itself but a piece of a larger international effort to understand our planet and its phenomena.

Mitch will discuss the scientific background that led to the organization of EOS, and show why a multisatellite constellation of platforms with complex sensors and a robust data and information system are needed to support potentially applicable research.

We Hope You Know

That the Montana Section now has a Life Members Chapter? So, if you're a Life Member, join the group at 6 p.m. just before the Section meeting on the 22nd.

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