NETwork NEWS

Taking our own advice . . . by joining professional societies

by Jim Foglio

We tell engineers and other technical professionals that IEEE membership will help keep them on the cutting edge of their profession.

Within the IEEE's halls, there are many staffers who don't just say these words; they live them — by joining professional societies that promote and benefit their own careers.

Pender McCarter, IEEE-USA, has been a member of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) since 1986 and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) since 1994. He is a

Pender McCarter

Fellow of PRSA, has been chair of the Society's Association section, and is now chair of IPRA's United States Section. As IEEE-USA's director of communications and public relations, Pender's PRSA membership is not only highly relevant but also very important. "Being involved with PRSA and IPRA allows me to share common experiences with others in my field," he says. "It also helps me to grow and learn new and different PR strategies used worldwide."

Claudio Stanziola, Standards, is a member of the American Bar Association. Why does a lawyer work at the IEEE? Claudio, who graduated from Rutgers Law School in 1997, administers IEEE Standards intellectual property, including copyrights and trademarks. He also monitors the infringe-

Is telecommuting in the cards for IEEE employees?

by Christy Bouziotis

When I asked my supervisor if I could work from home to draft this article, I did not realize how appropriate it would be, given its subject.

So here I am: curled up in my desk chair, clad in my favorite sweat suit and slippers, typing away. There are few interruptions — aside from the occasional telemarketer. And I don't have to trudge through rush-hour traffic. I could certainly get used to this! As can many workers, apparently.

According to JALA International Inc., a management consulting firm, 10 million workers were telecommuting in 1995. And, by the end of 2000, this figure is estimated to rise to 25 million. AT&T alone has 40 percent of its employees working from home on a regular basis.

Why is telecommuting so popular? Reasons range from the extra work space it provides employers, to the focused work environment it offers employees. These benefits have not gone unnoticed by the IEEE. In the fall of 1999, Dick Schwartz, Business Administration, asked Mario Ripatranzone, Membership, to develop a program that would test the possible benefits of implementing an official telecommuting policy at the IEEE.

"Though many IEEE employees have been telecommuting on an ad-hoc basis, this is the first step we're taking to develop Institute-wide guidelines and standards for telecommuters," Dick explains. "With all the advances in technology, it is indeed possible that workers can remain 'connected' to the office when working from home. But we need to test the process to make sure it benefits not only employees but the IEEE as a whole."

The Telecommuting Pilot Program is being conducted among Business Administration departments only. However, if approved and implemented, it will be rolled out to the entire organization.

Getting underway

After a Telecommuting Pilot Program Team was formed from across the Institute in late 1999, Business Administration department heads were asked to recommend employees to

Professional societies

ment of IEEE Standards intellectual property rights. "My ABA membership helps me stay current on changing laws and other updates necessary for my work," he says.

Cate Blanchard, Member Services, and John Day, Standards, are members of the Association of Internet Professionals (AIP).

Cate Blanchard

Though they work in different departments, Cate and John value their AIP memberships for the same reason — it helps them stay abreast of new Internet technologies and trends that they can apply to their own projects.

For John, who is on the Board of Directors for AIP's New York City Chapter, this is crucial since one of his responsibilities is the daily oversight of Standards Online, a million-dollar

John Day

business for the IEEE. Cate also is involved with several IEEE Internet initiatives, most notably the Web Renewal Project.

According to Don Curtis, Human Resources, professional memberships benefit not only individual employees, but also the IEEE as a whole. "Over the years we have found it to be a great benefit to the IEEE when staff members network with their colleagues through participation in other professional organizations," he says. "As a matter of policy, the Institute continues to encourage and help underwrite such activities." ◆

Telecommuting

participate in the telecommuting pilot. These employees were screened to make sure their work was compatible with working off site, and that they had computers, fax machines and email access.

In February 2000, the selected employees began telecommuting one to two days a week, and their performances were monitored to make sure their productivity levels remained the same or greater on the days at home.

One pilot participant, Cindy Poko, Corporate Activities, says, "Telecommuting is especially beneficial for me when I need to devote my undivided attention to a particular project. And I find that, because of the focused work environment, I'm often able to complete in one day what might take me two in the office."

Preliminary findings

In June, the pilot program was evaluated by telecommuters and other employees through both a survey and focus group.

The survey asked all Business Administration employees to agree or disagree with such statements as, "Telecommuting increases employee morale," "Telecommuting reduces strain on facilities," and "Telecommuting promotes a feeling of isolation." Overall, the survey results were highly favorable to implementing an official policy.

The focus group, conducted by the Staff Learning Center, gathered telecommuters and others to discuss the possible pitfalls and benefits of allowing employees to work from home. In an open forum, participants talked candidly about how telecommuting impacts them. They raised questions and, more importantly, identified improvements to be made to the program before it becomes policy.

The impact telecommuting has on employee work output also was evaluated. The Program Team measured the productivity levels of telecommuters in Member Services, Controller's Office and Renewal Services against these departments' clearly defined metrics. All three areas showed increases in productivity.

What's next?

While the preliminary findings look positive, there are still many issues to be addressed. Will the IEEE cover expenses

associated with telecommuting? Will the IEEE require telecommuters to work 8 – 4:30, or can telecommuters work a more flexible schedule? Should telecommuters have their office phones forwarded home, or should they just call in to check messages?

"These are all questions that need to be answered before an official program can be put into place," Mario says. "Ideally, when you're working from home, it's an extension of your office. You will get calls and emails. But, just like in the office, you may not be there to answer the phone. And just as employees take breaks when they're at work, telecommuters should feel comfortable taking breaks at home. At the same time, though, your co-workers need to feel that you're reachable when you're not physically there."

The Business Administration Telecommuting Team will continue to run its pilot, monitor the results, and report findings to Human Resources. A final proposal could be presented to Management Council as early as January 2001. ◆

IEEE alphabet soup
by Laura Durrett

At the last IEEE Board Series, the BoD, EAB, RAB, PAB and TAB discussed SPARC, TAG, UPP, IEL and REP.

How many acronyms and abbreviations in the above sentence can you define?

If you, as an IEEE employee, have trouble understanding the sentence, just imagine how it might read to an external audience . . . or to a new staffer.

And, yet – try to talk about IEEE activities and products without using any abbreviations and acronyms. It's not easy, is it?

A prominent journalist recently described the business world as "drowning in alphabet soup, a hodge-podge of letters often spelling something cute but not really helping us communicate."

In their defense, acronyms and abbreviations can certainly help us conduct business

with those who know our business – because they de-clutter our sentences and generally make it easier for us to talk to one another.

But there is a danger in having too many acronyms and abbreviations. It's very easy to get carried away with using them, forgetting that not everyone knows what they stand for.

Keeping your audience in mind is one key to better communication in the jargon-filled, acronym-laden workplace. This is important not only when corresponding with an external audience, but also when communicating with someone in another department since each IEEE organizational unit has its own set of acronyms and abbreviations (see sidebar).

Another good practice is to define an acronym or abbreviation the first time you mention it. Here's an example: "The Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources

Acronym: when the initial letters or parts of a series of words form a new word. Here are some common acronyms used at the IEEE: (Notice how each can be spoken as a word.)	
BORI	Books of Related Interest
ExCom	Executive Committee
POP	Proceedings Order Plan
PAB	Publications Activities Board
RAB	Regional Activities Board
RAD	Regional Activities Department
REP	Reference list of Educational Programs
SAC	Student Activities Committee
SPARC	Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition
TAB	Technical Activities Board
TAD	Technical Activities Department
TAG	Technical Activities Guide
UPP	University Partnership Program

Abbreviation: when a group of words is reduced to a shorter form that is not pronounced as a word but as a series of letters. Here are some common abbreviations used at the IEEE:	
AMQ	Author's Marketing Questionnaire
ASPP	All Society Periodicals Package
BoD	Board Of Directors
BCC	Back Cover Copy
EAB	Educational Activities Board
IEL	IEEE/IEE Electronic Library
ISF	Institute Strategies for the Future
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
RFP	Request for Proposals
RSR	Regional Student Representative
SSC	Self-Study Course

Coalition (SPARC) is an important activity of the Technical Activities Board (TAB). The next SPARC meeting is in November."

Finally, check your use of acronyms and abbreviations. Do it ASAP, PDQ and WFD! ◆

In-House Investing & Procurement
by Christy Bouziotis

Listen carefully the next time you pass a group of co-workers chatting around the water cooler, and you're bound to hear that question of questions — "What the heck is all that stuff in Mike Sosa's office?"

In this unusual Operations Center pad, you'll see four computer screens, each with a different pattern of squiggly lines and bar graphs; a television suspended from the wall, tuned in to live stock market coverage; and Mike — wearing a wireless headset and saying things like, "Sell the Sep par 94 strangle."

This is the center of the IEEE's in-house investing operation.

Earlier this year, the in-house investing and purchasing functions of the IEEE were brought together to form one new department: In-House Investing & Procurement, with Mike as staff director. These two functions work together to protect all IEEE investments.

In-House Investing

The IEEE began its investment program in 1966 with US$3 million that came from

Mike Sosa uses the most high-tech equipment to monitor the IEEE's financial investments.

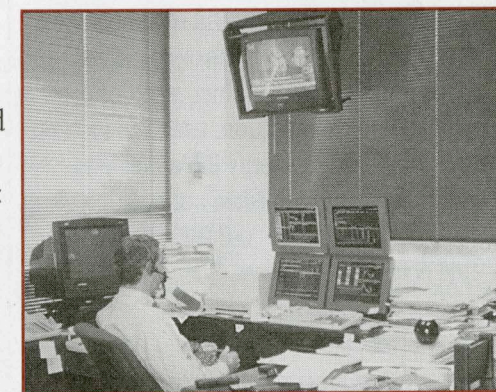the sale of office space of IEEE predecessor society the Institute of Radio Engineers (IRE).

Today, the IEEE has over US$200 million in total investments — not including employee retirement funds. The success of the IEEE investment program is owed in part to Mike, whose philosophy is simple: re-invest your gains rather than spend them. Because the IEEE is a non-profit organization, it uses its surplus to support program activities that benefit members and the engineering community.

Mike manages the "fixed income" or bonds portion of the investments — a total of over US$50 million. Three outside managers oversee the remaining US$150+ million that is in equities or stock. Mike and the three managers report in regularly to the IEEE Investment Committee.

"My daily objective is to out-perform the market," Mike says. "If the market's up one percent, I want the IEEE to be higher. If the market is down one percent, I want the IEEE to be down less."

Why pair In-House Investing with Procurement?

According to Gary Willan, manager of Procurement (formerly "Purchasing"), the pairing of the investing and procurement functions makes perfect sense. "While In-House Investing obviously manages the IEEE's financial investments, Procurement supervises all other IEEE investments — from technical and operational purchases to vendor contracts," he says.

Profile

Technical purchases, handled by Debbie Mai, include computers, software and printers. Operational purchases, handled by Rose Nelidin, include stationery, business cards, toner and other office supplies.

Handling all IEEE vendor contracts is a new responsibility for the In-House Investing & Procurement staff. In the past, each IEEE organizational unit managed its own contracts. The decision to centralize the process in one department was approved at the June 2000 Board of Directors meeting.

According to Mike, there are big advantages to this change. "Cap-

The In-House Investing & Procurement staff: (from left) Mike Sosa, Sandra Ulinksky, Sue Ciccone, Rose Nelidin, Debbie Mai and Gary Willan

turing all IEEE contract information into one database puts us in a much more powerful position to negotiate discounts and services, " he says. "For example, at any given time in the conference business, there are 1,200 conferences being planned or implemented — all of which need hotels, conference centers, and printing companies to produce proceedings. By centralizing the contract review process, we can say to a certain hotel, 'Hey, we gave you $10 million in business last year. We want a standard discount just because we're IEEE before we even start negotiating!'"

That's a bold statement, but it says a lot about why the IEEE is one of the best managed, most successful technical professional societies in the world. ◆

IEEE *Xplore*™: Why it's so important

by JoAnn Kilyk

Just think: engineers, scientists, students, professors and librarians from around the world could all be using IEEE *Xplore*™ at the exact same time for vastly different reasons. While a student at the New Jersey Institute of Technology is researching material for a final paper, for example, an aerospace engineer at NASA could be checking the latest information on IEEE Standard 686-1997 to complete a project.

Rolled out in May 2000 to institutional customers and subsequently to all IEEE members, IEEE *Xplore* contains the most comprehensive collection of IEEE publications online. It is not actually a product, but rather a delivery system.

Now, through a single interface, IEEE members and customers can access their online subscriptions to the IEEE/IEE Electronic Library (IEL), All-Society Periodicals Package (ASPP), two Proceedings Order Plans (POP), *IEEE Spectrum*, *The Proceedings of the IEEE*, OPeRA and Bibliographies Online.

Users can access IEEE *Xplore* and browse tables of contents of all publications free of

charge. In order to conduct a search or view an abstract or document, users must identify themselves as subscribers or IEEE members. Identification is handled either with a username and password or by the IP (Internet Protocol) address of the subscriber's computer. The IEEE *Xplore* authentication system is so robust that it is able to identify a user and know immediately which collections he/she should have access to.

There are approximately 210 organizations (i.e., corporations, universities, libraries) from around the world that use IEEE *Xplore* to access their IEL subscriptions; another 100 organizations use it to access ASPP and POP. Within all of these organizations, there are hundreds of end-users. So, the number of people who use IEEE *Xplore* each day is well into the thousands.

Some organizations and members have been using IEEE *Xplore* for unexpected purposes as well. One customer, a major communications corporation, uses it to look up articles in order to verify job applicants' claims of being published authors.

Other corporations use IEEE *Xplore* to find potential employees. They research the latest technical articles on a given subject, and, if they like a particular author's work, try to recruit him or her into their company.

IEEE employees can access the site too. Log on to http://www.ieee.org/ieeexplore to

learn more about IEEE *Xplore* or browse the tables of contents. Employees who would like to access IEEE *Xplore's* full-text content should send a message to Barbara Lange, Publications Business Development, at b.lange@ieee.org. ◆

Book group offers enlightening discussions . . . and great food!

by Michelle Meeh

Oprah's been doing it for years. Now IEEE employees are doing it too!

In January 1999, about a dozen Operations Center employees united to form a book group. Since then, they have met regularly to share their views on various titles.

Barbara Lange, now with Publications Business Development, suggested forming the group after she took part in an informal discussion with her Sales & Marketing colleagues about their favorite books.

Participation quickly spread beyond Sales & Marketing to Corporate Communications, Corporate Activities, Technical Activities and other departments. The group meets every five to six weeks, usually over lunch, and each member takes a turn suggesting a book and leading the discussion.

Book group participants discuss Memoirs of a Geisha over a sushi lunch. From left: Marsha Longshore, Judy Brady, Barb Soifer and Terry Burns.

"We vary the books to meet the broad tastes of all the participants — which gives us exposure to titles we might not have selected on our own," Barbara says.

At each meeting, participants enjoy a potluck meal that is based on the theme of the week's book. For example, when it was time to discuss *Confederacy of Dunce*s, a Pulitzer prize winner set in New Orleans, each member brought in dishes with a southern flare. After reading *Memoirs of a Geisha*, the group shared their thoughts over sushi and beef Teriyaki.

Sometimes the group holds a dinner meeting after work, like when they discussed *Angela's Ashes* at a local Irish pub.

Other books the group has read include *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Accordian Crimes*, *Under the Tuscan Sun-At Home in Italy*, *Death of the Banker* and *The Color of Water*.

For Barb Soifer, Sales & Marketing, the best thing about the group is the opportunity it provides to interact with colleagues about non-work-related subjects.

"You can learn a lot about people by the perspective they have on a book you've also read," she says. "The book club gives us an opportunity to see and understand our work associates' points of view in a new light." ◆

Computer Society International Design Competition 2000: A team effort

by Mary-Louise Piner

It took teamwork by five engineering students from McMaster University, Ontario, Canada, to create "Heart Mate" — the information appliance that took the US$25,000 top prize in June at the first IEEE Computer Society International Design Competition (CSIDC). However, a team of more than 100 Computer Society employees and volunteers worked for more than a year to make the CSIDC a success.

A unique opportunity for students

Conceived by longtime Computer Society volunteer Bruce Shriver, the competition invited students from around the world to design and implement computer-based solutions to real-world problems.

CSIDC organizers provided 50 teams from a pool of 180 prospective competitors with identical toolkits to create unique healthcare information appliances. Each team consisted of three to five undergraduate students.

The students were challenged to develop a device that, if manufactured and marketed, could make positive changes in public health. Projects ranged from units for patients to access complete health records to a hand-held skin disease diagnostic system that operated with an attached digital camera.

The first round of evaluations was conducted long-distance through the mail. Students submitted written reports describing their projects, and submission evaluators eventually narrowed the pool from 50 to 20, and then to 10.

The finalists gathered at the Crystal City Marriott, Arlington, Va., from 26 - 27 June to present their projects to a live audience and a judging panel of 11 computer engineering professionals from industry and academia.

From vision to reality

"The IEEE CSIDC would never have happened without the hard work and dedication of Computer Society staffers in Washington, D.C., and California," says Anne Marie Kelly, who coordinated the staff's efforts.

Countless hours were committed to supporting the volunteers who planned the competition, assembling and mailing project kits

Lunch breaks — food for thought

by Christy Bouziotis

At least four times a week, Carol Coffey, Sales & Marketing, brings her lunch back to her desk and eats as she works.

"I'm usually caught up in a project, and I don't want to lose the momentum," she says. "It's just too hard to get back up to speed after a lunch break."

Carol is not alone. In a recent nationwide study of 700 U.S. employees conducted by Office Team, a staffing firm based in Menlo Park, Calif., 19 percent (or 133 people) said they work through lunch every day. Forty-three percent (or 511 people) work through lunch at least once a week. And their reasons are as varied as their appetites.

Some say there's just way too much work to do. Some are looking to put in extra time. Others believe they are looked down upon if they take a break.

But is working through lunch a healthy habit? Recent studies show that employees are actually more productive when they take a lunch break and less likely to experience "burn-out" in the afternoon.

Most IEEE employees who completed a Staff Web survey about how they like to spend their lunchtime agree. Of the 96 respondents, 88 said they believe employees are more productive when they take a break. Yet, despite this high number, 25 of the 96 respondents said they usually do not take a break. Like Carol, they eat at their desks while doing IEEE-related work.

Of the 71 respondents who do take a break, 37 prefer a social lunch with friends/co-workers. Fourteen said they use the time to run personal errands or walk.

For others, taking a break doesn't necessarily mean getting away from the desk. Twenty respondents said they prefer to spend their lunch breaks at their desks doing personal activities such Web surfing, reading or doing schoolwork.

Design competition

— each valued in the thousands — and arranging accommodations for the world finalists.

Before mailing the kits, Computer Society Customer Service employees researched the customs requirements of 35 countries, and eventually shepherded 50 project kits to teams in all ten IEEE Regions. In the end, 16 unique customs requirements and postal services were involved. Staffers John Reimer and David Jundt were instrumental in ensuring the safe and timely arrival of all kits.

As the World Finals drew near, staffer Stacy Saul took the lead on such tasks as organizing a retreat for the judges, posting updates to the CSIDC Web site, and arranging for the final competition.

In the weeks leading up to the event, staffers John Daniel, Kristine Weiand, Mary-Kate Rada, Frank King and Stacy Wagner worked to organize the final details and logistics. They also were onsite during the event to make sure it ran smoothly.

Some Computer Society employees who brought the CSIDC from vision to reality are, from left, Anne Marie Kelly, Stacy Saul, Mary-Louise Piner, Kristine Weiand, Frank King, John Daniel and retired Executive Director T. Michael Elliott.

For more information on CSIDC 2000, go to http://www.computer.org/csidc. ◆

ROVING REPORTER

What is your favorite book and why?

Rae Toscano, Educational Activities:
"The poetry collection *Leaves of Grass,* by Walt Whitman. I treasure this book so much that I collect versions of it. Whitman writes about life, people and diverse cultures in such a way that I can actually experience what his words describe. To read his Civil War poems is to learn the true meaning and profound tragedy of war. To read his tributes to Abraham Lincoln is to really know the impact of the death of this beloved leader. Most of all, throughout its 'leaves,' the book reminds us of the never-ending newness of life."

Dave Morton, History Center: "By far the best book I've read in recent months is *The Secret Life of Plants,* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird. It explains how plants supposedly respond to our voices and can even communicate with us telepathically. The book cites several prominent electrical engineers who proposed commercial and military applications for telepathic plants, such as plant-based garage door openers and aircraft auto-p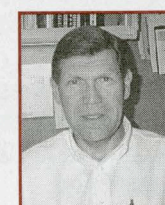ilots. A best-seller in its day, *Secret Life* had millions of Americans talking to their begonias! It's a great snapshot of the New Age Movement of the 1970s."

Lauren Hall, Sales & Marketing:
"*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison. This is a story of a black female coming of age in the 1940s who wants more than anything to have blonde hair and blue eyes like her idol, Shirley Temple. She becomes so obsessed with that particular idea of 'beauty' that she insanely believes she has blue eyes. This story taught me to love myself and not to strive for other people's ideas of beauty."

Robert Danco, Controller's Office: "My favorite book is *The Bible.* From Genesis to Revelations, God reveals all we need to know about Him, the created world and the purpose of life. It has given me purpose, direction and an understanding of life, death, and how we can obtain life after death. It's the greatest book ever written!"

Smita Desai, Technical Activities:
"My favorite is *The Firm*, by John Grisham. It's a legal thriller about the struggles of a newly graduated law student. It's very exciting and suspenseful. Once you start reading this book, you will not put it down. I finished it in four-and-a-half hours." ◆

You must have been a beautiful baby!

Who did this cuddly tot grow up to be? (Clue: This New Jersey employee demonstrated leadership qualities — as well as informality — even back then!)

Email your answer to Christy Bouziotis (c.bouziotis@ieee. org), and win a prize if you're the first to guess correctly. Prior contest winners are ineligible. The employee's identity and the winner will be announced in "Circuit Board." ◆


Choosing the adoption option

by Angie Tsung

Adoptive parents face many hardships that other parents do not. Costly travel, complex legal proceedings and invasive visits from social workers are just a few. But, on the upside, adoptive parents don't have to deal with morning sickness or swollen ankles. And . . . they can dine out the night their child is born!

They also can get some help from the IEEE.

Bruce and Kathy Worthman, two IEEE Communications Society staffers, recently adopted two baby boys from Guatemala. The twins, Nathaniel and James, were referred to the Worthmans by Christian World Adoption, an international agency. The adoption process lasted 14 months.
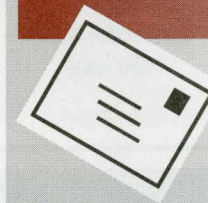
"The biggest difficulty is the waiting time between when a child is referred to you and when the child comes to you," Bruce says. The boys were nine-and-a-half months old when they were brought to Bruce and Kathy in April.
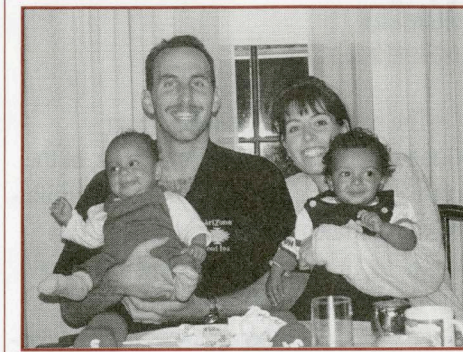
Bruce and Kathy Worthman with twins Nathaniel and James

MAILBAG

In this column, your questions about IEEE procedures, policies and products will be answered. Submit a question to c.bouziotis@ieee.org, and we'll take it to the appropriate manager for an answer. Your identity will remain anonymous, unless you request otherwise. Here are this quarter's questions and answers:

Q: What is the rule about capitalizing the first letter in such terms as "student member," "fellow," "senior member," "associate" . . . and just plain old "member"? For as many times as I've seen the "m" in "member" uppercased, I've seen it lowercased. The same is true for words like "society," "region," and "section." When should these terms be capped, and when should they not?

A: To CAP or not to cap — by Bill Hunter, Regional Activities

You should capitalize the "m" in "member" only when referring to a specific grade of IEEE membership. Do not uppercase the "m" when speaking about IEEE members in general.

Each grade title of IEEE membership uses the uppercase, but not all grades have the word "member" as part of the grade title. If the word "member" is not part of the official title, then the "m" is kept lowercase.

Here are the proper grade titles for IEEE members: Student, Associate, Member, Senior Member, Fellow or Honorary Member.

So, in the term "Student member," only the "S" is capped because the official grade title is "Student." The term "students" (lowercased) refers to students in general.

In the term "Senior Member," both words are capped because they are both part of the official grade title.

An IEEE Society Affiliate is a member of an IEEE Society who is not a member of the IEEE. When you use the term "Affiliate" in reference to this group, the "A" should be uppercased since it is a status title.

Finally, the first letters in the terms "Region," "Society," "Section," "Chapter," "Student Branch," "Student Branch Chapter" and "Council" should all be uppercased when they are referring to IEEE organizational units. This is true when discussing a specific unit, such as, the IEEE Communications Society, and when referring to IEEE organizations in general. So, in the sentence, "There are 36 IEEE technical Societies," the "s" in "Societies should be capped. The "t" in "technical" remains lowercase, however, since it's not part of the official organization name.

Q: What happens at IEEE Board meetings?

A: By Julie Cozin, Corporate Activities

The IEEE Board of Directors normally meets three times a year in February/March, June/July, and November/December at various locations throughout the world. Because approximately one half of the Board members rotate into office each year, the first Board meeting is a time for getting to know one another and each other's different working styles. IEEE legal counsel provides an orientation to fiduciary responsibility and the duties of directors. The Board sets goals for the coming year and finalizes or confirms liaison appointments.

The second Board meeting is usually held in conjunction with the IEEE Honors Ceremony where the IEEE's highest awards are presented to distinguished recipients. At this meeting, the Board finalizes issues related to the annual election, and Board members present interim reports on projects begun earlier in the year.

The third or final Board meeting is by far the most hectic. This is when the Board makes annual appointments, presents for approval numerous recommendations (including the budget for the following year), elects Senior Members to the position of IEEE Fellow and approves award recipients. ◆

Adoption

continued from page 7

The couple chose to adopt from Guatemala for several reasons. First, of the countries their adoption agency was affiliated with, Guatemala was the closest. This was a big help when they had to travel to the country to be interviewed.

Second, while other countries require adoptive parents to stay in their country as long as a month before adoption takes place, Guatemala required that Bruce and Kathy stay only three days. Finally, adopting from Guatemala was less expensive. The Worthmans paid about $35,000 in total adoption fees. In other countries, the fee is at least $20,000 per child.

To help defray these costs, the IEEE has adoption benefits to assist all regular full- and part-time employees. Bruce and Kathy were reimbursed $5,000 per adopted child. "It was a huge help," Kathy stresses. "We definitely want to adopt again . . . preferably a girl this time!"

According to Kathy, little Nathaniel and James are adjusting extremely well. "Like all children, sometimes they get a little whiny and cranky, and you just want to pull your hair out," she says. "But all it takes is one little smile from them, and it makes everything worthwhile."

For more information about the IEEE adoption assistance program, go to http://staff-web.ieee.org/human-resources/staffpoliciesmanual/adoptionassistance.html. ◆

NETwork NEWS

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Take me out to the ballgame!

by Charlotte McCue

Work as a team, celebrate as a team. This seems to be the philosophy of Chris Santos, Customer Service, who recently took the Subscription Processing Group to a Somerset Patriots baseball game to reward them for their teamwork and dedication.

"Despite the many challenges the group has faced in the past few months — with the launch of IEEE *Xplore*™ and several new products, as well as new staff — they have pulled together to get the work-in-process numbers down to practically zero," Chris says. "They cross-trained each other and took

Customer Service staffers enjoy a visit from "Sparky," the Somerset Patriots Mascot, during their baseball outing. From left: Steve Nabors, Carol Heaney, Chris Santos, Arlene Klimik and Geraldine Piserchia.

on new responsibilities in order to meet the metrics. I couldn't think of a more appropriate way to say thank you for working as a team than taking them to a baseball game!"

So, on Wednesday, 28 June, after enjoying dinner at Applebee's, the group headed over to the Commerce Bank Ballpark in Bridgewater, N.J. The few sprinkles of rain couldn't dampen their spirits, and the Patriots won the game!

Arlene Klimik says of the outing, "It was a great team-builder. And when you are recognized for your work efforts, it only makes you want to accomplish all the more. I'd like to see more outings like this in the future!" ◆

Write in & win!

The answers to the following questions appear in this issue of *Network News*. Answer them correctly, and you could win a special prize!

1. What's the difference between an acronym and an abbreviation?

2. Is IEEE *Xplore* a product or a delivery system?

3. According to Mike Sosa, what's the benefit of centralizing the contract review process in one department?

Email your answers to Christy Bouziotis at c.bouziotis@ieee.org by 14 October. Correct entries will be placed in a drawing, and the first five selected will be winners. Good luck!

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