



IEEE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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BUILDING ON 40 YEARS OF SUCCESS — PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

BY ROGER A. GRICE

During its first 40 years, the IEEE Professional Communication Society (PCS) saw growth, evolution, progress, and a large number of successes. As a Society we have much in our past to be proud of. And as a Society, we have even greater things to look forward to—things we will need to work on together to achieve. As we complete our first 40 years and look forward to our next 40—and beyond, this is a good time to reflect on where we've been and where we're going.

A Proud History

PCS has its roots in the area of engineering writing and speech. The original goal of PCS was, Help engineers communicate more effectively. As such, our activities and publications focused on writing technical reports and making presentations. This focus was a practical one, in line with the IEEE goal of advancing the careers of engineers and the professionalism of engineering as a career.

We did well with those activities. The information, education, and work-related advice we gave were sound and useful. We were recognized as experts in our field.

A Time of Transition

Our current series of International Professional Communication Conferences (IPCCs) started in 1981. The conferences gave greater visibility to PCS. They also attracted a wider range of participants. Conference attenders were no longer just those who helped engineers, but also those who had chosen technical and professional communication as a career focus—either as

practitioners in industry and government or as teachers and researchers in academia.

During the '80s and '90s, we saw a shift in emphasis in our *Transactions* and in our conference proceedings. While not abandoning the original goal and purposes of the Society, we expanded them to include the interests and careers of our widening audience. These new members saw technical communication not as a support activity, but as a profession in itself.

At the beginning of his term as PCS President, Mark Haselkorn described his view of technical and professional communication as one that has a service component and a professional component. Helping engineers communicate better is the major goal of the service component; improving the skills, recognition, and careers of those who provide that service is the professional component.

Sharpening Our Focus; Promoting Our Identity

If we are to continue to flourish as a professional society, we in PCS must answer two major questions:

1. What is it that we do best and how can we best promote our efforts and activities in those areas?
2. What is it about PCS that makes it unique? That distinguishes it from other professional societies? In short, Why should people join PCS? Why should they attend our conferences?

I believe that by searching for the answers to these two questions we can prepare ourselves for future success and growth.

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CELEBRATING

40
YEARS

1957-1997

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PCS NEWSLETTER LOOKING FOR AN EDITOR

Professional Communication Society (PCS) *Newsletter* editor Donna Wicks is now devoting more time to her growing family and to the final year of her engineering degree. During her year as editor, Donna recruited a new columnist and contributed some of her own writing. We will miss her and her resourcefulness.

The *Newsletter* is published six times per year in the odd-numbered months. The editor obtains and edits all content and oversees typesetting and page layout by an independent contractor. Printing and distribution are handled by the IEEE. The editor must be, or become, an IEEE member.

To provide members with news of the Society and the IEEE and with information to help them improve their communication skills, the editor also:

- Attends Administrative Committee (AdCom) meetings and International Professional Communication Conferences (IPCCs)
- Documents news items and coordinates with the AdCom
- Provides a lively mix of visuals and text
- Maintains high ethical and professional standards

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Contributions are welcome. Send proposals for columns to the editor. E-mail and ASCII files are preferred.

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THE PLAYS OF JAMES LUFKIN

BY RUDY JOENK

The Slide Talk
became a movie!

James M. Lufkin is one of the Professional Communication Society's most versatile and contributing members. He was called to be President at two separate times: 1968 and 1975; he chaired the three precedent-setting IEEE Conferences on Scientific Journals (1973, 1975, and 1977; see "PCS and Scholarly Publishing" by E. K. Gannett in this *Newsletter*, vol. 41, no. 4, July/August 1997); he is credited with implementing the Society's present name in 1972; and he wrote the plays listed here which were great hits at many IEEE, Professional Communication Society (PCS), Society for Technical Communication (STC), Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP), and other organization meetings.

In addition to all this, Mr. Lufkin had a long and successful career in several divisions of Honeywell Inc. He is well known for his work on translating technical documents, a vocation he continued for many years after retirement.

The plays are listed in probable chronological order. Most of them are one-act tutorials, typically lasting 20-30 minutes, usually meant to be followed by a panel discussion. They are comical but contain serious ideas. In most cases, four actors are chosen from the group at hand and the parts are read on stage, with minimal rehearsal. Many of the plays were sponsored by PCS.

The popularity of these plays, with audiences often in the hundreds, showed that engineers are willing to learn through laughter and example. Mr. Lufkin provided much of the descriptive commentary. The places and dates of performances are far from complete.

I thank the many people who supplied or confirmed bits and pieces of this informa-

tion and absolve them of responsibility for any errors. I would be grateful to receive additions and corrections to this list.

The Symposium Recital—A Dialogue (1964)

Not really a play but a discussion between an engineer facing a violin recital (euphemism for conference presentation) and a violinist. This publication probably led Mr. Lufkin to writing his series of plays. Published in *IEEE Trans. Eng. Writing and Speech*, vol. EWS-7, no. 2, p. 1, September 1964.

The Slide Talk (1967)

A dramatic exhibit of a set of unreadable slides, such as those often presented at conferences, followed by a set of readable ones. First performed at the IEEE Group on Industry and General Applications (IGA) annual meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on 3 October 1967. Also presented at the IEEE International Convention in New York City in March 1968; at the Relating Industrial and Educational Communication Needs Conference in

Winnipeg, Canada, in November 1974; and at the PCS International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) in Banff, Canada, in September 1994. In 1974 it was made into a 16-mm movie by the IEEE Group on Power Engineering with the help of the Westinghouse Corporation. Published in *IEEE Trans. Eng. Writing and Speech*, vol. EWS-11, no. 1, pp. 7-14, July 1968.

The Co-Authors (1969)

A comico-tragico conflict between two engineers assigned to co-author a feasibility report that must be useful to both executives and specialists. One author is a glib generalizer and the other a pedantic specialist. Performed at the IEEE Power

CELEBRATING

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YEARS

1957-1997



DÉJÀ VU?

Joe and Jack are engineers, Sally is an editor.

- Joe: [Looking over Sally's shoulder as she goes through a manuscript, blue pencil in hand] Never mind the details, Sally; just get it done.
- Sally: This isn't yours; this is Jack's part. And I'm going to have to rewrite parts of it. He gets so carried away with his details he forgets to make his point. And it needs subheads.... And here's a sentence that must be 300 words long, and it doesn't track....
- Joe: Oh, forget it. Nobody will read that stuff. Here, give it to me and I'll turn it over to a typist and we can call it a day.
- Sally: No, it's not ready for typing. It has to make sense first.
- Joe: *Sense?* Jack's stuff? Since when did anything he wrote have to make sense? He's a specialist in information theory.
- Sally: Joe...
- Joe: Hey, Jack [slapping him on the back], how are you doing? Are you about through? I've done my part.
- Jack: What do you mean, *your* part?
- Joe: Well, we're co-authors, aren't we? So I wrote the Summary and you're supposed to put in all the gobbledygook. You've had plenty of time to do that, and it's 4:30....
- Jack: If by "gobbledygook" you mean the main body of the report, you've got a strange idea of co-authorship.... And how can you have written the Summary if you haven't seen the rest of the report, which I'm writing, obviously?
- Joe: I've seen enough of it.
- Jack: You can't have; I haven't written it yet.
- Joe: You what? Sally's editing page 65 now!
- Jack: That's the Introduction. I'm finishing the Theoretical Discussion now and I'm going to write the Systems Analysis tonight. Then next week we'll do the Experimental Verification and the Appendices.
- Joe: The *what*?
- Jack: The *Appendices*, and I'll do the References and the Bibliography myself; I don't trust you with them. You'd leave everything out.
- Joe: Say, this thing is *due* by the end of next week! Do you have to make such a production of it? This isn't a text book; it's just a feasibility report, and a negative one at that. And I hate to say this, but nobody will read that stuff of yours.
- .
- .
- .

And so it goes...

From *The Co-Authors* by James M. Lufkin, 1969.

Group meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida, in October 1973 and at the Minnesota Power Systems Conference in 1978. Published in *IEEE Trans. Eng. Writing and Speech*, vol. EWS-12, no. 3, pp. 83-88, October 1969.

The Fatal Abstract (1969)

The harrowing rescue of an expedition to Venus by means of an effective summary of a multi-volume set of instructions, showing how an abstract can be written to give the *point*. "It takes a short excursion into sci-fi and becomes the corniest and most farcical of all my plays." The play also makes fun of submitting the same paper to several symposia at the same time. First performed at the IGA annual meeting in October 1969. Also presented at the National Electronics Convention (NEC) in Chicago, Illinois, in December 1969, and at the IEEE National Convention in New York City in March 1970. Published in *IEEE Trans. Eng. Writing and Speech*, vol. EWS-14, no. 1, pp. 3-9, February 1971.

Chapter and Worse in the IEEE Computer Society (1969)

After presiding over decreasing membership and poor attendance at meetings and seminars, Chapter officers eventually see the "light" in matching speakers and topics to audiences. Performed at the Computer Society's meeting in June 1969.

Not Invented Here (1970)

A psycho-industrial example of what can happen when professionals speak scornfully of work done in someone else's laboratory. Performed at the IGA annual meeting in October 1970, the NEC in December 1970, the IEEE International Convention in New York City in March 1971, and the PCS Psychology of Technical Communications Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 14 February 1972.

Barbara's Polar Bears (1971; rev 1972)

Three views of a small proposed project in basic science and the problems of getting grants for "non-relevant" research. Written at the request of the IEEE Committee on the Social Implications of Technology.

Performed for the IEEE Industry Applications Group in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in October 1972, at the IEEE International Convention in New York City in March 1973, and at the STC International Technical Communication Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, in May 1974. Published in *IEEE Trans. Prof. Commun.*, vol. PC-16, no. 2, pp. 27-34, June 1973.

The Fatal Slide I (1980)

Farcical questions about the writing of abstracts and summaries but really about the unintentional prejudices that can defeat the "objective" peer review system used by technical journals. This play was written for the SSP as the society with the highest percentage of editors and authors. First performed at the annual meeting of the SSP in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in June 1980.

The Fatal Slide II (ca 1981)

More farcical questions about the writing of abstracts and summaries. Similar cast and situation as **The Fatal Slide I** but different dialogue.

The Last Word (1982)

Using a not-user-friendly word processing installation as an example, this play makes fun of an over-confident computer salesman and the over-extended budget of a publishing company. It was written purely as entertainment for the annual meeting of the SSP in Arlington, Virginia, in June 1982. Published in the *SSP 1982 Record*, pp. 69-75.

The Employment Interview (1983)

How not to conduct one. Sponsored by STC, this play makes fun of a male chauvinist who underestimates intellectual women. It was first performed at the STC International Technical Communication Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, in May 1983.

The Lord High Systems Analyst (1983)

An expanded variation on the theme of **The Last Word**, written for the annual meeting of the SSP in Philadelphia,

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*Learn through
laughter and example*

PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

(continued from page 1)

What Do We Do Best? What Are Our Strengths?

I see our major strengths as sponsoring excellent conferences; producing a useful, archival *Transactions on Professional Communication*; and producing a rich, practical, and informative *Newsletter* for our members on a regular basis. For an organization of our size, we do an outstanding job on each of these three items.

What Makes Us Unique?

Characteristics of PCS that distinguish us from other professional societies and that serve as an attraction to new members and a hold for current members are:

- Our engineering orientation, which positions us well to be leaders in a society and a profession that are clearly becoming increasingly technical
- Being a part of IEEE, which gives us visibility, stability, and benefits (such as a broad range of technical information

and publications, insurance, and travel services)—clear attractions to members if we can make people aware of them

- The size of our conferences—not too big, not too small, which allows attendees many opportunities for interacting with speakers who are known and respected leaders in their fields.

Moving Forward

PCS can best move ahead by continuing to do what we do best and by positioning ourselves to take advantage of new opportunities as they come along. To do this, we must draw on our strengths, and make sure that when an opportunity presents itself, we have the skills and resources necessary to do an outstanding job, and that we can focus our energies on getting the job done in a way that brings pride to us and recognition to PCS.

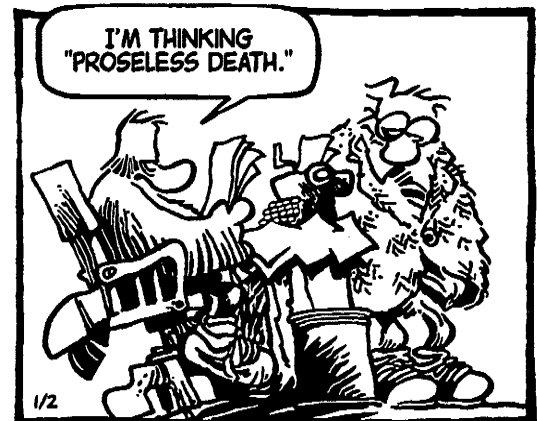
Dr. Grice is a Senior Member of IEEE and Vice President of PCS.

*Greater visibility...
wider participation*

No explanation ever explains the necessity of making one.

—Elbert Hubbard

SHOE



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TOOLS OF THE TRADE



CHERYL REIMOLD

HOW TO DELIVER WINNING PRESENTATIONS

Part 4: Using Your Voice to Connect with the Audience

We've seen that an attitude of appreciation, respect, and enthusiasm is the key to achieving the all-important connection with your listeners. In the last column, we examined ways to express that attitude with your body and face, through appropriate position, movement, gestures, and smile. This time, we'll consider the contribution your voice can make.

Briefly, you must be heard and understood; you must talk at the right speed that invites the audience to stay with you; and you must maintain an emotional bond by expressing appropriate emotions.

The Basics: Loud and Clear

You can't connect with your listeners at all if you speak so softly that they can't hear you, or so indistinctly that they miss half your words. Unfortunately, these are common problems.

The cure for the volume problem is simple: Talk to the people in the back of the room. If projecting that far drives your pitch up too much, practice talking loudly against a wall: Keep stepping back while raising your volume and at the same time lowering your pitch.

Be aware of a delicate "sound barrier," though: If you talk much louder than necessary to reach everyone, people will feel that you're addressing no one but giving a ceremonial speech. It's a most disconcerting experience for the audience.

The other basic prerequisite is clarity. Do you move your mouth enough for consonants like *t*, *p*, *s*, and *f*, especially at the end of words? If necessary, slow down until your speech becomes clear. Here is an exercise to improve clarity: Take some poems and whisper them forcefully. In a whisper the sound comes only from the consonants and not from vibrating vocal

cords. You'll be forced to put a lot of articulatory energy into your consonants.

Travel at the Right Speed

There is no one best speed. If you talk slowly the whole time, the audience will soon escape into daydreams; but if you talk fast from start to finish, you'll lose them, too. What works is variety: Slow down (and speak louder) for important points, and hurry through routine material (e.g., paraphrasing items on a bullet chart that they're reading as you talk). This skill is easily learned, and it makes your presentations infinitely easier to follow.

A related skill is the intelligent use of pauses. Pausing is a good way to signal that you're starting a new section. Also, pauses convey power: They show that you feel entitled to "occupy time." So, if you lose your point or need to think for a few seconds, don't fill the air with nervous noises like "uhm" or filler words like "and"; just pause calmly until you're back on track.

Share Emotions

Even technical projects involve dramatic feelings, such as frustration, determination, fear of failure, and the joy of success. Listeners connect to those emotions much more powerfully than to numbers. So, to reach people, you need to express proper emotions with your voice.

Many technical presenters feel uncomfortable putting emotion into their voice and therefore end up with a monotone. They often pay for this with a stalled career, because their superiors misread their attitude as lack of enthusiasm or commitment. So, it's essential to overcome any reluctance to share emotions.

In a workshop setting, we often make participants ham up a dramatic poem. In the private review of their presentation tape, they're surprised when we point out the

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*...put a lot of
articulatory energy
into your consonants.*

MORE PCS PLAYWRIGHTS

In addition to James Lufkin, two other Professional Communication Society members are known to have tried their hand at drama:

Boy Friday: Turn-About Is Fair Play (1973)

by Emily K. Schlesinger

This 30-minute play for four actors mocks traditional attitudes by portraying a sex-discrimination conflict in a company managed by women. Performed at the 20th International Technical Communication Conference in Houston, Texas, in May 1973, and published in the proceedings.



Getting There (1984)

by Ronald S. Blicq

An engineer highly praises a conference but because he doesn't directly ask to attend, his boss decides to go instead. Emily Schlesinger was the narrator. Performed at the PCS Professional Communication Conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in October 1984.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

(continued from page 7)

*...pause calmly until
you're back on track.*

many places where one of the emotions they practiced on the poem would have been appropriate in their own technical presentation. You may want to do a similar exercise on your own if you feel that your delivery tends to be flat.

Great presenters make you feel as if you are a friendly partner in an animated conversation. Think about how you would talk to a friend. Would you use a robot-like monotone? Would you be afraid to show some emotion?

Of course not! Then if you want your listeners to be your friends, why not treat them the same way?

Cheryl Reimold has taught communication skills to engineers, scientists, and business people for 17 years. She is the author of five books and more than 200 articles. Her firm offers customized in-house courses on writing, presentation skills, and on-the-job communication skills. PERC Communications, 6A Dickel Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583, (914) 725-1024, fax (914) 725-1165.

Widows 95.

—title of Royal Ontario Museum spider exhibit

The two words "information" and "communication" are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

—Sidney J. Harris

FLOCCINAUCHINIHIPILIFICATION

OUTCAST'S SONATA

BY MICHAEL BRADY

Norwegian poet André Bjerke wrote no science fiction, but in *Russian Question, Anno 2090* he predicted that a long-standing trend would continue. In prose, as I'm no poet and Bjerke's works have not been translated into English:

Little Pjotr is puzzled, and goes and asks his dad: "Who was this guy Brezhnev?"

Papa Senja ponders, and in a flash remembers: "A politician, in Solzhenitsyn's time!"

The message is not born of literary narcissism. It's an observation of the power of worthwhile words. The writer who says it and says it right is remembered, often above all others. Brief contemplation of the period so essential to modern technology—the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries—shows that. How many members of PCS, an association of educated people, can name the literary greats of the period? And how many can name the major U.S. political figures or even the U.S. Presidents of the same period? Were bets to be placed, my money would be on the literary figures and not with the politicians.

On the spur of the moment, most members undoubtedly can name the top 10 American literary figures of the period in correct chronological order: Longfellow, Whitman, Twain, Frost, H. Miller, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Hemingway, A. Miller, and Salinger (my choices), yet search their memories long to date the terms of more than a few Presidents, such as those of Generals Grant (early Twain) and Eisenhower (late Hemingway). The same holds true in other countries, as Bjerke observed. The skilled writer's work lasts.

Arguably, much written work is as short-lived as yesterday's newspapers or, at best, as the love letters of a divorced couple. Longevity most likely depends on the worth of the message conveyed, as so

often observed in this *Newsletter*. Efficient communication with the reader is the true measure of success, whatever the mode of writing.

As an aside, technology has contributed to literary success: Twain and Hemingway bracketed the first era of the use of technological aids in writing. Twain was the first to draft a book on a typewriter (*Life on the Mississippi*), and numerous photos of Hemingway at work show him as an avid key pounder.

On the current literary scene, one of my votes for efficient communication goes to Mikhail Levitin who, like Sergei Korolev, the father of Soviet space science, was born and bred in Ukraine, a country as large as Texas and three times more populous. Yet unlike Korolev, he attained no prominence at home, but fled to Canada in 1980, a refugee of the diaspora policy of the former Soviet Union.

In Canada, he assimilated well, yet keenly felt the juxtaposition of love for his homeland and the pain of rejection by it. That feeling led to an admission, which spawned his first book, *The Outcast's Sonata*, a collection of stories and poems first published in Russian in 1992, and then in English translation by John Woodsworth in 1995 (Legas; Ottawa, Toronto, and New York; paperback; ISBN 0-921252-50-1). Here, in 236 pages, in poetry and prose, are the sweetness and the fury, the loves and the pains of a soul both adrift and tethered. It can be read as history: The brutally succinct account of his father's death in World War II sets the scene for a no-nonsense, haunting approach. Or it can be read for its terse poems and enlightening stories, with upbeat titles such as "Get Moving!" and "Canada at 5."

The skeptical reader of this *Newsletter* might ask if such literature is relevant to the work of PCS. It is. For Mikhail Levitin is a mechanical engineer and a computer engineer. His daughter is a computer scientist. He's one of us.

*The skilled writer's
work lasts.*

THE PLAYS OF JAMES LUFKIN

(continued from page 5)

Pennsylvania, in May 1983. This operetta consists of dialogs, arias, and choruses written to the music of *The Mikado* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Computopia (1984)

A one-act opera buffa, not really tutorial. The libretto traces the travails of a large publishing firm which, although it has bought up its domestic rivals, is about to fail because of foreign competition, and therefore may be sold. A "message, from another part of the world, produces the most astonishing denouement in the history of opera (and of the publishing business)." The music was written by Janice Kimes and requires four soloists, a chorus, and piano accompaniment. Performed at the SSP annual meeting in Washington, DC, in May 1984.

Computopia II (1985)

A front-end addition to the original **Computopia** makes fun of the two extremes, *computerize everything* and *computerize nothing*, as they occur in the large publishing firm. The additional music was written by Janice Kimes. Performed at the SSP annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois, 23 May 1985, and at the PCS

International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) in Winnipeg, Canada, in October 1987.

The Chips Are Down (1986)

Considerable tutorial content on desktop publishing, and makes fun of the hypocrisy in the free trade-vs-import tax controversy. Pre-presentation improvisations by the first cast are included. This play was written for the annual meeting of the SSP in San Francisco, California, in May 1986.

Shakespeare Gets a Computer (1990)

The first part of a tutorial on artificial intelligence. Resurrected by a "bio-algorithmic computer program," Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway receive a demonstration of a word processor and of some of the elements of expert systems and AI. Though lacking the author's intended second act, this play was performed successfully at the PCS International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) in Guildford, England, in September 1990.

A Proposal to the Pharaoh (1991)

A tutorial on the essential factors and components of a large-scale industrial proposal

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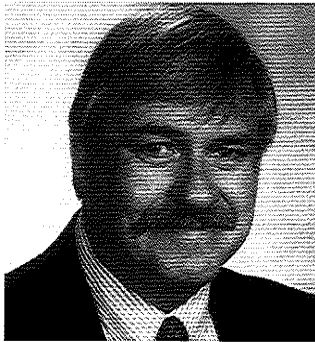
...comical but
contain serious ideas.

"SHAKESPEARE'S" LAST SONNET

Oh, tell me not that your computers think,
And then to weighty questions answers find,
For if they then their thoughts to actions link,
Dead matter will usurp the place of mind,
And man's dominion over all the Earth,
Which he has strived for ever since the Flood,
As was by God ordained in Adam's birth,
Will soon sink back into the primal mud,
And mortal wisdom's guiding light will fall,
As driverless machines in chaos rage,
And wild, untrammelled chance will rule all,
A wretched end to this our Golden Age.
Dear friends, whatever these machines demand,
Pray God that you, not they, do keep command.

From *Shakespeare Gets a Computer* by James M. Lufkin, 1990.

MASTERS OF STYLE



RONALD J. NELSON

CARL SAGAN'S LEGACY

The world is the poorer for the passing of Carl Sagan a year ago, on 20 December 1996. Yet our sense of loss must always be tempered by a person's legacy. And what a legacy he left, including the riches of his books: *The Atmosphere of Mars and Venus* (with W. W. Kellogg, 1961), *Intelligent Life in the Universe* (with I. S. Shklovskii, 1963), *The Dragons of Eden* (1977), *Cosmos* (1980), *Comet* (with Ann Druyan, 1985), *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* (1994), and *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* (1995).

He also left us the generosity of his spirit, the enthusiasm of his personality, and the value of his contributions (in astronomy, biology, physics, and exobiology [the study of extraterrestrial life]) was lavishly acknowledged while he was living by memberships in prestigious organizations, awards, and honors too numerous to mention.

Indeed, his life was a candle that shone for millions—he would have said, with self-deprecating humor, “billions and billions,” in that hauntingly nasal voice of his—on Johnny Carson’s “Tonight Show” in the early 1970s and on the PBS series “Cosmos” in the early 1980s.

Professional communicators burdened by the weight of responsibility in this relentless age of information overload can jettison some of it by turning to Sagan’s work, where they will find a revitalizing prose. Such an act would be reminiscent of Walt Whitman’s personas in *When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer*, who wearies of deadening approaches to astronomy:

When I heard the learn’d astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were
ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and
diagrams, to add, divide, and
measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer
where he lectured with much applause
in the lecture-room,

How soon unaccountable I became
tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander’d
off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and
from time to time,
Look’d up in perfect silence at the stars.

Sagan stretches our experience in far-reaching imaginative adventures. Witness, for example, the following, from *Pale Blue Dot* (a book worth delving into for its superb document design alone); he humanizes space travel:

Neptune was the final port of call of Voyager 2’s grand tour of the Solar System. Usually, it is thought of as the penultimate planet, with Pluto the outermost. But because of Pluto’s stretched-out, elliptical orbit, Neptune has lately been the outermost planet, and will remain so until 1999. Typical temperatures in its upper clouds are about -240 degrees C, because it is so far from the warming rays of the Sun. It would be colder still, except for the heat welling up from its interior. Neptune glides along the hem of interstellar night. It is so far away that, in its sky, the Sun appears as little more than an extremely bright star.

And, from his second chapter of *Cosmos*, entitled “One Voice in the Cosmic Fugue,” we find Sagan asking questions about the possibility of extraterrestrial life: On the “countless other planets that may circle other suns, is there life also? Is extraterrestrial life, if it exists, based on the same organic molecules as life on Earth? Do the beings of other worlds look much like life on Earth? Or are they stunningly different—other adaptations to other environments? What else is possible? The nature of life on Earth and the search for life elsewhere are two sides of the same question—the search for who we are.” With such probings Sagan invites the inquiring mind.

These and other questions invite the curious mind.

(continued on page 12)

...employing mind and
heart rather than
solely the intellect.

PCS MEMBER JOINS MAGAZINE STAFF

Today's *Engineer*, a new publication of IEEE United States Activities (IEEE-USA), has announced the appointment of long-time Professional Communication Society (PCS) member Joan G. Nagle as Features Editor of the magazine.

Joan has been a member of the PCS Administrative Committee for more than 10 years. From 1986 to 1989 she edited the *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*. Since leaving that post, she has been a regular contributor to this *Newsletter*, writing the "Curmudgeon's Corner" column.

In her new position, she will be responsible for all the major articles in *Today's*

Engineer. She has also committed to write a series of articles on the subject of communication skills for engineers, an area which IEEE-USA has identified as critical for the profession.

Today's Engineer, scheduled to begin publication in January 1998, is designed to deal with nontechnical issues facing engineers of all disciplines. Editor-in-chief Gus Gaynor describes it as a "connection to the new skills, strategies, and perspectives critical for success in the rapidly changing field of engineering."

The annual four-issue subscription rate is \$12.95; to sign up, call 1-800-678-4333 and ask for product number PB#331.

THE PLAYS OF JAMES LUFKIN

(continued from page 10)

in the setting of a 2600 B.C. general contractor's anticipation of the R.F.P. for a major new pyramid. Unfinished.

The Consultant's Report (1995)

Makes fun of the engineer who writes a report full of detailed mathematical observations but doesn't know how to

summarize any of his findings. Performed at the local IEEE consultants group in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on 21 December 1995.

James Lufkin joined the IEEE as an Associate Member in 1964, became a Senior Member in 1967, and is now a Life Senior Member.

MASTERS OF STYLE

(continued from page 11)

Sagan's writing has a disarming simplicity and clarity about it, a paradoxically informed naiveté open to myriad possibilities. As professional communicators, we perhaps should prepare our documents with an eye to involving the reader in the matter of information transfer, employing mind and heart rather than solely the intellect. We are, after all, simply human beings trying to function as best we can in a mysterious universe in which we have only partial knowledge of phenomena.

Beyond the kind of document that requires strict conveyance of crucial material—like warning labels and prescription fliers—we can write in such a way as to invite the reader to participate through the imagination in the adventure of our various projects. If we inform our documents with a tone of receptivity to possibilities—casting out our thoughts and feelings on a given topic in an attempt to connect with readers rather than merely to direct or impress them—we may reap unforeseen rewards both for our sponsor and for ourselves.

*Contributions in
astronomy, biology,
exobiology, and physics*

THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY— THE HISTORY OF A PCS CONFERENCE

BY RON BLICQ

Editor's Note: This is the second article in this series; Part 1 is in the July/August 1996 *Newsletter* (vol. 40, no. 4). The author is reporting progressively on his experience as general chair of IPCC 98, which will be held in Quebec City, Canada, from September 23 to 25, 1998.

Part 2: *Weathering the Middle Months*

It has been 16 months since I last wrote about preparing for our conference and we have made considerable progress since then. A contract has been signed with the conference hotel, I have a complete committee, and we have "met" regularly, sometimes by teleconference and once at the hotel. We have passed the half-way point: 23 months have elapsed since we started planning, and 10 months remain before the conference takes place.

The need to make an early start in conference planning has become

Committee and how we selected the conference hotel. In this issue I describe how the planning committee evolved and developed its conference strategy.

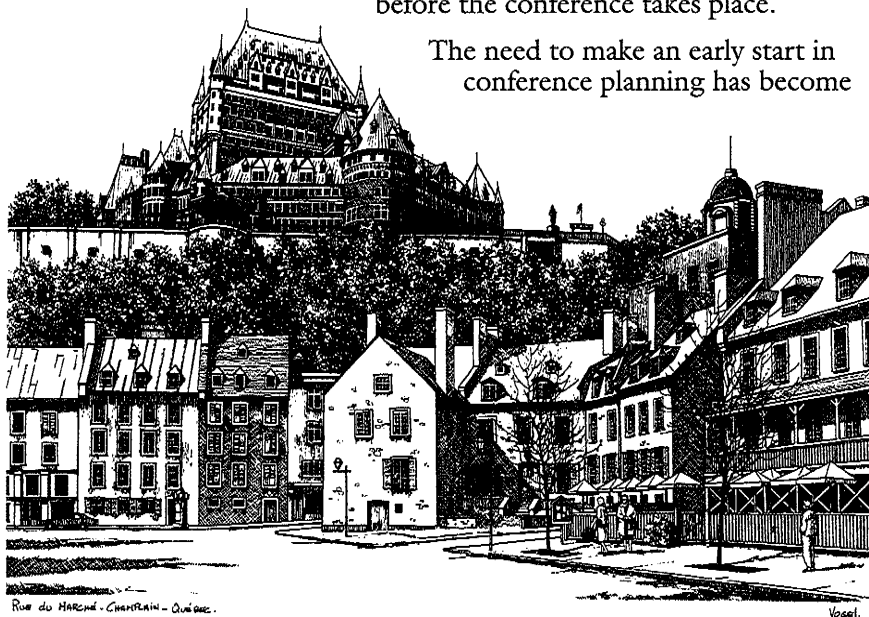
Recruiting the Planning Committee

The steering committee for an IEEE conference normally comprises a general chair and six subcommittee chairs:

- Program
- Publications
- Publicity
- Local Arrangements
- Exhibits
- Finance

Program Committee Ideally, the program committee has three members, each bringing different strengths and backgrounds to help formulate a strong program. A triumvirate is particularly useful when assessing proposals from potential speakers. They do not have to live in the same city, but they do need to get together during the paper selection stage. (For IPCC 98 in Quebec, two members are in the U.S. and one is in Canada and is French-speaking.)

Publications Committee The publications committee often is only one person, but ideally it will be two or three. This committee designs and prints the conference stationery and logo, the preliminary and final programs, and the conference proceedings. Assembling the speakers' papers and formatting them into the printed proceedings is extremely labor-intensive and has to be done within a tight time frame (hence, the need for more than one person).



Rue du Marché - Chateaufort - Québec.

The IPCC 98 banquet will be held in the famous Chateau Frontenac, high above old Quebec City, overlooking the St. Lawrence River.

abundantly clear: *Three years is not unrealistic!* This is particularly true when you have a widely dispersed planning committee and only the local arrangements chair lives near the conference site (see box).

Previously I described how we proposed the conference site to PCS's Administrative

*PCS and SIGDOC
will be running
parallel sessions.*

Publicity Committee The publicity committee should have two primary members, each with a different role. One needs to be a creative writer who will produce interesting news releases and articles that will encourage the Society's members to attend. The other needs to be a detail person who will acquire mailing lists and manage the distribution of the call for papers and preliminary program. Ideally, the latter will recruit area publicity members who will distribute the publications locally.

Local Arrangements, Exhibits, and Finance Committees The remaining three committee members normally operate as individual committee chairs. Ideally:

- The local arrangements and exhibits chairs live close to the conference site to deal personally with local businesses and the hotel, and
- The financial officer and the general chair live in the same (any) city to facilitate financial management and check-signing.

As a precaution (because people may change jobs and move, or become too busy, or be taken ill during the three years of conference planning), I recommend that each committee chair appoint a backup person who can take over if the committee chair has to step down. Just naming a person, however, is insufficient. The chair must keep the backup person continually informed of the plans and progress, so that takeover can be handled expediently. This suggestion applies equally—indeed, particularly—to the conference general chair.

For IPCC 98, I recruited the program committee first, and they decided almost immediately to introduce a unique three-pronged approach. In addition to the regular papers, they would hold:

- A Forum-style Idea Market, modeled on INTECOM's highly successful Forum 95 conference, held in Dortmund, Germany, in November 1995, and
- Some French-language sessions, to encourage attendance by engineers and technical communicators resident in Quebec and France.

IPCC 98 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

General Chair

Ron Blicq, Winnipeg, MB
rgi_ron@compuserve.com or r.blicq@ieee.org

Program

Lisa Moretto (chair), Myrtle Beach, SC
rgi_lisa@compuserve.com

Ann Christoffersen, Mobile, AL
achristoffersen@atinucleus.com

Jackie Bossé-Andrieu, Ottawa, ON
jbosse@uottawa.ca

Publicity

Cheryl Reimold (chair), Scarsdale, NY
c.reimold@ieee.org

Terry Malkinson, Calgary, AB
tjmalkin@acs.ucalgary.ca

Paul Seesing, Salem, OR
seesingPCS@aol.com

Publications

Kelly McCurry (chair), Regina, SK
kelly.mccurry@sasktel.sk.ca

Local Arrangements

Paul Fortier (chair), Quebec, PQ
fortier@gel.ulaval.ca

Finance

Rikki Maniel (chair), Winnipeg, MB
rgi@mailhub.mts.net

Advisor

Dave Kemp, President, IEEE Region 7,
Winnipeg, MB
d.kemp@ieee.org

To do this, the program chair, Lisa Moretto, first requested approval to hold an Idea Market from Ulf Andersson in Sweden, who devised and holds the rights to this Forum method. Then she asked Jackie Bossé-Andrieu, who is Vice Dean of the École de traducteurs et d'interprètes at the University of Ottawa, to coordinate a French-language session. (As past president of the Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing, Jackie has had extensive experience in coordinating dual-language conferences.)

The program committee also started planning how to integrate some sessions with SIGDOC's program, since PCS and SIGDOC will be running parallel sessions at the same hotel. (SIGDOC is the Special Interest Group on Documentation of the Association for Computing Machinery.)

Developing the Conference Budget

Developing a budget is tricky. IEEE Conference Services in Piscataway, New Jersey, provides a four-page form that is easy to follow. The difficult part is gazing into a crystal ball and predicting numerous variables:

- How many delegates will attend?
- What will be the split between IEEE members and non-members (there has to be a significant difference in registration fee)?
- What will meals and coffee breaks cost?
- How many exhibitors will sign up?
- What will it cost to print the call for papers, programs, and proceedings?
- How much will the hotel charge for meeting rooms?
- What audio-visual equipment will be needed, and how much will it cost?

To predict the number of registrants, I averaged attendance at the Society's past four conferences. (For IPCC 98, even though I expect the special location and unique program will create higher-than-normal registration, I still budgeted for

an average number of attendees. It will be better to show a higher- than a lower-than-predicted attendance when I write my post-conference report!)

For IPCC 98, a particular crystal-gazing problem is predicting an accurate exchange rate between the U.S. and Canadian dollars, and to do it 16 months before the event. The majority of our income will be in U.S. dollars, whereas most of our expenses will be in Canadian dollars. For the past few years the Canadian dollar has hovered between 70 and 74 cents of the U.S. dollar, yet financial pundits are predicting the Canadian dollar will rise by 8 to 10 cents in relation to the U.S. dollar over the next 12 months.

The audio-visual aids required by speakers cost more every year. Ten years ago the average speaker required an overhead projector or a 35-mm slide projector, and occasionally a VCR and television monitor. But during the past four years more and more speakers have brought a portable computer with them and have requested an LCD panel, which in turn requires a 3000- or 4000-lumen overhead projector. An LCD panel not only is much more expensive to rent than a slide projector or even a VCR, but also there may be compatibility problems between the computer and projector. Consequently, speakers are now asking for an LCD projector with a built-in high-lumen light source, which costs significantly more than a panel.

As conference chair or financial officer, your best friend can be your Society's treasurer, particularly when you are negotiating accommodation and meeting room costs with the conference hotel. Whereas you have visited the hotel and so are dealing with the sales representative on a personal basis, your treasurer is working at arm's length and so can be much more hard-nosed! (PCS's treasurer is Bill Kehoe, and for many years he has negotiated excellent deals for the Society.)

Establishing a Local Presence

In our respective IEEE Societies, we tend to pick a particular site, book a hotel or

*The chair must keep
the backup person
continually informed of
the plans and progress.*

*Contact the local
Tourism and
Convention Bureau
in the very early
stages of conference
preparation.*

conference center, fly in and hold the conference, and then fly out again. We briefly enjoy the local scenery and amenities, but how often do we *really* connect with the community?

I recommend contacting the local Tourism and Convention Bureau, or its equivalent, in the very early stages of conference preparation and drawing them into your overall planning. Outline your theme, expected number of participants, and projected dates, and let them arrange an itinerary for you to inspect suitable hotels and facilities. This approach proved extremely useful when first contacting hotels in Banff (for IPCC 94) and in Quebec City.

At both locations we were provided with services far beyond our expectations: tours of local activities, specially prepared brochures describing the city and its history and attractions, and a range of multi-colored publications we could have for free to distribute with our call for papers and programs. Best among these were a Banff folded card with space on which to print a personal invitation to potential speakers, and a Quebec City multifold sheet with pictures of the city and its surroundings (we could even choose summer or winter scenes!), with plenty of space for printing our call for papers, both in French and in English. It will be a unique mailing piece.

In Quebec I decided to be bold and wrote to the Mayor to suggest that the City declare September 21 to 26 as International Communication Week. Paul Fortier and I were invited to meet the Mayor during our tour of hotels (Paul is IPCC 98's local arrangements chair, and the meeting was arranged by Quebec City's Tourism and Convention Bureau). Paul outlined our rationale for the suggestion, explaining that the conference will be a major North American communications event in 1998. The Mayor at first demurred, explaining that the City rarely agreed to such requests, but then said that, because this would be an IEEE conference, he would agree to do so. Paul and I walked to our lunch *beaming!*

Holding an On-site Planning Meeting

The ideal arrangement is to have the entire conference committee located in the host city; then steering committee meetings are easy to arrange and inexpensive to hold. More often, however, the conference committee is widely dispersed (IPCC 98's key committee members are in New York, South Carolina, and Alabama in the U.S., and Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta in Canada), so holding on-site meetings is both difficult and expensive.

I recommend building sufficient funds into the budget for the steering committee to meet at the conference site approximately one year ahead of the conference. Start by asking the conference hotel to identify their low season and to quote a special rate for your preview meeting. Then plan the meeting for a Friday and Saturday, so those who fly in can take advantage of discount air fares.

An on-site meeting enables committee members to meet personally rather than only by e-mail and phone, to become familiar with the city and the hotel and its amenities, and to feel that they have a much more personal ownership of the conference.

Making a Splash at the Preceding Conference

An ideal way to promote your conference is to set up a quality marketing effort at the preceding year's conference. If that conference is run well—and PCS conferences are always significant technical and social events—delegates will be particularly receptive to news about the next year's conference. For example, at IPCC 97 in Snowbird, Utah, the IPCC 98 committee plans to:

- Provide a personal invitation to every delegate, encouraging the delegate to submit a proposal for IPCC 98,
- Offer an attractive door prize at a conference luncheon, which will be a certificate

for two nights' free accommodation at the IPCC 98 conference hotel immediately before or after the 1998 conference (kindly donated by Loews Le Concorde Hotel in Quebec),

- Present an instructional session showing how to prepare and present a Forum-style paper for IPCC 98, followed by a demonstration by experienced Idea Market presenters (this will occur on Friday afternoon, October 24), and
- Hold an IPCC 98 reception immediately after the Idea Market, complete with refreshments, during which the 1998 steering committee will "talk up" and distribute literature about Quebec City and IPCC 98.

Concentrating on the Details

Here is a reminder of four activities that need to be addressed *early* in your conference planning:

1. Create a conference logo, both as original art and as a bitmap, to insert in conference correspondence and publications.
2. Start developing your mailing list, partly by obtaining the mailing lists used at previous conferences, and partly by researching lists of potential speakers and delegates who belong to *other related societies*. For example, members of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), the Association for Business Communication (ABC), the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing

(ATTW) and its Canadian sister society (CATTW), may well be interested in PCS conferences.

3. Develop a detailed conference schedule identifying what needs to be done, when, and by whom. Be ready to update it periodically throughout the planning stages.
4. Establish roles and responsibilities clearly, so that no required activity "slips through the cracks" because two committee chairs each thought action would be taken by the other.

Preparing for the Final Year

The next 10 months will see how IPCC 98's plan evolves. As I write this, it's six weeks before IPCC 97 occurs. The IPCC 98 steering committee is resting quietly, because we do not want to upstage their efforts. Come November—when you read this—promotion for IPCC 98 Quebec will be getting into high gear. Watch for it!

Mr. Blicq joined the IEEE and PCS (then PGEWS) in 1968 and has served on the AdCom for many years. He was chair of IPCC 87, coordinator for our Moscow colloquium in 1991, coordinator for Forum 95, and also worked on IPCC 1991 and IPCC 1994. He is the author of Technically-Write! and Writing Reports to Get Results, and he teaches courses and presents workshops or written and oral communication. E-mail: rgi_ron@compuserve.com.

Set up a quality marketing effort at the preceding year's conference.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IPCC 98	QUEBEC CITY, CANADA ♦ SEPTEMBER 23-25, 1998
IPCC 99	NEW ORLEANS, LA ♦ SEPTEMBER 8-10, 1999
IPCC 2000	CAMBRIDGE, MA ♦ SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2000

PCS PASTICHE

BY RUDY JOENK

“**T**rivia” seems too cruel a label; “pot-pourri” maybe, or even “hodge-podge,” could describe this collection of facts about the Professional Communication Society (PCS). I gleaned these items mostly from the 40 years of minutes of PCS Administrative Committee (AdCom) meetings but also from the *Transactions* and the *Newsletter*. And I list them here as an amusing yet informational finale to our observance in print of our 40th anniversary.

Name

Feelers about changing our name have been floated almost annually in the AdCom meetings, from the very beginning. Nevertheless, our present name has persisted for 26 of our 40 years, almost twice as long as our original name. Some of the new names suggested in 1964 (when we were still the Group on Engineering Writing and Speech) were:

Communicative Arts Group
Communicology Group
Engineering Intelligence Group
Literary Sciences Group
Technical Expression Group

See “How Our Name Has Changed” in the March/April 1997 *Newsletter* (vol. 41, no. 2) for other information about the Society’s name.

Newsletter

The average tenure of a *Newsletter* editor has been about two years, producing an average of nine issues, but the average was far exceeded by Debby Kizer with 30 issues and Emily Schlesinger with 24.

Through 1960 the *Newsletter* was printed on yellow stock, and for a short while, 1961 and 1962, its size was 5.5 in. × 8.5 in.

Color was added to the *Newsletter*, along with a new design, beginning with the July/August 1995 issue (vol. 39, no. 4).

The *Newsletter* didn’t seem to have any regular columnists until relatively recently. Cheryl Reimold’s “Tools of the Trade”

column first appeared in the *Newsletter* in January 1987 (vol. 29, no. 1) and continues still.

Joan Nagle’s first “Curmudgeon” column appeared in the *Newsletter* in March 1990 (vol. 34, no. 2). However, she had introduced herself, giving a hint of what was to come, in the preceding issue, January 1990. Joan’s final column appeared in the September/October 1997 issue (vol. 41, no. 5).

See “The Newsletter Editors of PCS” in the September/October 1997 issue (vol. 41, no. 5) for other facts about the PCS *Newsletter*.

Transactions

The original colors of the *Transactions* covers were black on gold. The present colors, maroon on white, were implemented in 1972, along with our present name.

Catalog cards were printed in the *Transactions* in 1965 and 1966 as part of an IEEE experiment in information retrieval.

The text of vol. EWS-12, no. 2, August 1969, was produced on an IBM Selectric Composer™ from magnetic tape (first time), and page make-up was handled by conventional mechanical means.

The text of vol. EWS-14, no. 3, December 1971, was both typeset and formatted by computer-controlled machinery. This project of the IEEE, using our *Transactions* as a ready-and-waiting guinea pig, was five years in the planning.

Graphics were used on the covers of the *Transactions* from vol. EWS-2, no. 2, June 1959, through vol. EWS-4, no. 3, December 1961, and again from vol. PC-21, no. 2, June 1978, through vol. PC-28, no. 1, March 1985.

During the second era of using cover graphics in place of the standard IEEE table of contents, the internal TC was reformatted and modernized. This lasted from vol. PC-22, no. 1, March 1979, through 1984.

CELEBRATING

40
YEARS

1957-1997

The covers of the *Transactions* from vol. EWS-8, no. 1, June 1965, through vol. EWS-14, no. 3, December 1971, accurately stated "Published Aperiodically." Volume EWS-15, nos. 1 and 2, March and June 1972, stated "Published Quarterly" and began a mostly successful attempt at regular publication.

An improved readability format, with some characteristics of the current experimental design, namely ragged-right justification and inter-paragraph leading, were used from vol. 26, no. 1, March 1983, through 1989.

"Developing the Ability to Communicate" was the topic of a special issue, vol. PC-27, no. 3, September 1984, published jointly with the IEEE Education Society (i.e., the same text was used in both *Transactions*).

See Scott Sanders' editorial "Forty" in the March 1997 issue of *IEEE Trans. Prof. Commun.* (vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 1-3) for more information about the *Transactions* and its editors.

Miscellaneous

The first membership dues were enacted by the AdCom on 27 June 1957: \$2 per year.

The first Chapters were established in Los Angeles, California, and Washington, DC. Both local committees applied for approval on the same day in late 1957.

The Group awarded a trophy to a high school student "for outstanding performance in engineering writing and speech" at the WESCON Future Engineers Show in 1962. Reuben Epstein's paper was on ion propulsion.

Chester W. Sall was a PCS secretary with a sense of humor: He recorded in the 21 September 1965 minutes that the 24 June meeting minutes were "approved for posterity and probable oblivion." Little did he know...

At least as early as 1967 the IEEE had an Affiliate Membership plan. In addition

to the major engineering and scientific societies, the following organizations of interest to PCS were included: American Business Writing Association, American Documentation Institute, American Library Association, American Society of Engineering Education, Society of Technical Writers and Publishers (precursor to Society for Technical Communication), and Special Libraries Association.

Our first communication from the then-Soviet A. S. Popov Society in Moscow requested in late 1968 that a book be reviewed. The request was agreed to but the name of the book was not recorded.

In 1971 Edward E. Grazda, PCS President from 1 July 1966 to 31 December 1967, was appointed first editor-in-chief of the newly established IEEE Press.

A PCS archive was established by resolution of the AdCom on 14 July 1989 at the library of Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, New Jersey, through the courtesy of Prof. Michael B. Goodman. Copies of many of our *Transactions*, *Newsletters*, and conference proceedings are stored there (in addition to those at the IEEE Service Center in Piscataway, New Jersey). Contributions of back issues are always welcome.

See "The Officers of PCS" in the July/August 1997 *Newsletter* (vol. 41, no. 4) for additional facts about the AdCom.

See "The Beginning of PCS" in the January/February 1997 issue and "How PGEWS Started" in the March/April 1997 issue for more history of the Society. In fact, all six 1997 *Newsletter* issues include 40th anniversary articles and reminiscences of Society members.

Dr. Joenk (IEEE Member '77, Senior '77) is past President of the Society (1990-1991), former editor of the Transactions (1977-1984) and the Newsletter (1983-1984), and an AdCom member since 1985. He is currently chair of the Editorial Advisory Committee. E-mail: r.joenk@ieee.org.

*You can donate
back issues to the
PCS archive.*

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JULY 1997 AdCom MEETING

BY GEORGE HAYHOE

The PCS Administrative Committee (AdCom) met on July 18, 1997, at IEEE-USA headquarters in Washington, DC. The most significant issues discussed at the meeting were the size of the AdCom, a change to the Society's field of interest statement, PCS participation in the Eastern European Libraries Project, plans for upcoming conferences, and revised Society bylaws.

AdCom Size

For the past several years, the AdCom has repeatedly debated suggestions to reduce its size in the interest of reducing costs and making the committee more manageable. There is no question that a smaller AdCom would reduce PCS expenses. The controversy has centered on whether the smaller group would be more or less effective than the current AdCom and whether it would be equally representative of the range of viewpoints of the PCS membership.

The debate at this meeting began with a motion to revise the existing Society bylaws to reduce the AdCom's size from the current 21 members-at-large to 15. While most of those present favored the idea of a smaller AdCom, so big a change seemed too drastic. This motion failed to gain the two-thirds approval required for a bylaws revision.

Following the failure of the first motion, another was made to reduce the size to 18. This motion passed by the required two-thirds vote.

Once this bylaw change was approved, the discussion turned to whether to implement the smaller size gradually by electing six AdCom members per year over the next three years, or immediately by electing only five new members in October. The group reached consensus that the new AdCom size should be implemented as soon as possible and agreed to elect only five members in October.

Field of Interest

Before the IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB) can approve the new constitution adopted by the AdCom at its meeting in September 1996, PCS must revise the field of interest statement contained in the new constitution.

After some discussion, the AdCom adopted a motion to change the field of interest in the new PCS constitution to read:

"The specific areas encompassed by the Society's field of interest include all forms of communication related to engineering practice, including:

- a. Electronic information (e.g., Web sites, CD-ROMs, interactive TV, online help)
- b. Technical proposals, reports, and documentation
- c. Printed publications and oral presentations
- d. Electronic publishing
- e. User interfaces
- f. Usability evaluations."

Eastern European Libraries Project

Since its March meeting, the AdCom has discussed electronically a proposal from Chapter/Section Relations Committee chair Beth Moeller that PCS participate in the Eastern European Libraries Project. During the past several years, 27 IEEE Societies and Councils have cooperated to microfilm the past 13 years of their journals for 15 libraries in Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, Russia, the Slovak Republic, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus. The hope is that after this year, the libraries will be able to subscribe to those IEEE journals.

After further discussion, the AdCom approved a motion to spend up to \$1,000 to join the Eastern European Libraries Project.

*Experimenting
with IEEE services
for IPCC 99*

Conferences

Final preparations for IPCC 97 (October 22-24 at Snowbird Resort and Conference Center outside Salt Lake City) are now under way. Nearly all papers for the proceedings have been received, and the preliminary program will be mailed soon.

The IPCC 98 (Quebec City) committee shared a booth with IPCC 97 and SIGDOC at the STC conference in Toronto in May. Plans call for IPCC 98 to run Wednesday through Friday (September 23-25, 1998), with SIGDOC running Thursday through Friday (with workshops on Saturday).

There will be common-interest sessions arranged by the two program committees, with each conference offering some sessions that will attract delegates from the other conference. The two committees will work out a moderate "join us too" additional fee to encourage attendance at both conferences.

Although the AdCom had tentatively planned IPCC 99 for Chicago with a Chicago-area conference chair, no local chair could be identified. Michael Goodman agreed to take on the task and identify an alternative location.

Goodman met with IEEE Travel and Conference Management Services to determine administrative help they can provide; he also traveled to New Orleans, made site visits to two potential conference hotels, and met with the New Orleans Convention Bureau. He has approached SIGDOC to explore the possibility for a joint effort. The AdCom approved a motion to change

the site of IPCC 99 to New Orleans, with Michael Goodman as conference chair.

Representatives of IEEE Travel and Conference Management Services (TCMS) presented a proposal to assist with site selection, contract negotiations, registration, and facility and exhibit management. They also offered budget and financial management, database administration, technical program management, conference publicity, travel arrangements, and pre- and post-conference tour planning services.

TCMS presented both realistic and optimistic budgets for IPCC 99 under their management that would return surpluses of \$11,100 (realistic) and \$24,400 (optimistic) for a fee of \$5,000. The AdCom approved using this service on an experimental basis for IPCC 99.

Bylaws

The draft bylaws presented at the March meeting have been revised to incorporate all suggestions received. The amended draft, further revised during discussion at this meeting, was presented for AdCom approval.

Debate arose over possible inconsistencies within the draft and between the draft and the proposed new constitution. It was felt that if there are such inconsistencies, they would be identified by TAB staff and resolved by PCS prior to presentation of the proposed constitution and bylaws for approval by TAB. The proposed new bylaws were approved, subject to final review for conflicts or inconsistencies with the constitution within two weeks.

*Most favored a
smaller AdCom*

One of the difficulties in the language is that all our words, from loose using, have lost their edge.

—Ernest Hemingway

If at first you do succeed, hide your astonishment.

—Lucille S. Harper

A TASTE OF QUEBEC

BY CHERYL REIMOLD

Quebec City is unique! An ancient walled French city just 300 miles north of Boston, it has the charm and beauty of a Gallic heritage, the majesty of Canadian cliffs and rivers, the magical splendors of Inuit art—and some of the best French food in the world (including Paris). To experience all the wonders of Quebec, you must go there, as we hope you will for the International Professional Communication Conference, September 23-25, 1998. But meanwhile...we offer you a real taste of Quebec.

In this and following issues, PCS presents recipes for an entire French gourmet menu, generously contributed by **Monsieur Jean Soulard**, one of Quebec's master chefs. We begin with the appetizer; watch upcoming issues for entree and dessert.

Remember, you can taste the original prepared by Chef Jean Soulard himself when you come to IPCC 98 in Quebec City, September 23-25, 1998. Mark your calendar now!

OYSTERS WITH SALMON CAVIAR AND SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH SMOKED SALMON FOR FOUR

The oysters

- 8 oysters
- 1 oz minced shallots
- ½ cup cream
- pepper to taste

The scrambled eggs

- 3 oz smoked salmon
- 4 eggs
- ½ oz butter
- ¼ cup cream
- salt and pepper to taste

The decoration

- 5 oz coarse salt tinted with blue color
- ½ oz salmon caviar
- 8 blades of chives

Open the oysters and put the juice in a casserole. Save the oysters, including the shells. Put the shallots in the casserole and boil 30 seconds. Add the cream and reduce by half. Add pepper. At the last minute, add the oysters and poach 30 seconds in this sauce.

Cut the smoked salmon into thin strips.

Break the eggs into a bowl, removing only the very top of the shell so as to keep the rest for serving later. Beat the eggs. In a casserole on a low flame, add a small amount of butter and then the eggs. Using a whisk, cook stirring constantly. When the eggs are almost cooked, add the cream and cook a few more seconds. Add a touch of salt and pepper. Add the strips of smoked salmon.

On each plate, spread out the blue-colored salt, which will keep the oyster shells horizontal. Next, put the scrambled eggs in the oyster shells with the salmon caviar as a decoration. Then put the egg shells in egg cups, and fill them with the oysters and the sauce, with the chives as decoration.

Enjoy this fabulous concoction—and we'll see you in Quebec, September 23-25, 1998!
A bientot....

*Scenery, Inuit art,
and French food*

Divagate: To wander or stray in one's speech.

While science has made giant strides in communications in recent years, there's still a lot to be said for paying attention.

—Franklin P. Jones

CALL FOR PAPERS

IPCC 98

A CONTEMPORARY RENAISSANCE: CHANGING THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE

QUEBEC CITY, CANADA • SEPTEMBER 23-25, 1998

————— *Come and Participate!* —————

The IEEE Professional Communication Society (PCS) invites you to the 1998 International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) to be held during International Communication Week at Quebec City, the "City of Romance" on the shores of the St. Lawrence River in Canada.

Our theme, "A Contemporary Renaissance," covers all aspects of the changes in communication that we are all experiencing, from new tools, products, and methods of communicating to new concepts for reaching, teaching, and learning from each other in a new world of shrinking boundaries between countries and disciplines.

We expect this conference to burst with new ideas, and we hope you will come to Quebec and contribute! Proposals from all disciplines (technical and practical) are welcome. You can present a 15-20 minute paper, run a workshop or a panel, or participate in an "Idea Market"—a small group session in which the presenter uses a flip chart and a few bulleted points to trigger discussion. This is the Fourm 95 session format. (We will group approximately 10 Idea Market presenters together at a time.)

Just send us a 300-500-word proposal for whichever format appeals to you, along with a short bio of the presenter(s). Indicate whether you will present in English or French.

Choose your own new idea or select one of the following aspects of A Contemporary Renaissance:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>1. An Explosion of Artistic and Intellectual Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding the way we communicate, both artistically and intellectually • Using the World Wide Web to communicate ideas • Translating documentation and writing for an international audience | <p>2. A Revival or Rebirth of Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing the way we perform tasks we've done in the past (teaching, writing, training, managing people, managing projects) • Defining today's Technical Communicator | <p>3. A New Way of Working: Changes in Our Workplace and Communication Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing information • Dealing with information overload • Distributing information to a wider audience • Communicating with a multi-cultural audience • Developing distance-learning techniques • Telecommuting and working from home |
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PROPOSALS ARE DUE JANUARY 31, 1998

Please send proposals to: Lisa Moretto • 6001 South Kings Hwy, Unit 767 • Myrtle Beach, SC 29575
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Editor's Note: This humorous observation, submitted by Michael Brady, has been floating around on the Internet and we have been unable to locate its author. Can anyone help us identify the author so that we can send congratulations for a point well said?



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