



# IEEE *The Open Channel*

Newsletter for the Hampton Roads Section

[http://www.ewh.ieee.org/r3/hampton\\_roads/](http://www.ewh.ieee.org/r3/hampton_roads/)

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

May 2003

## *Hampton Roads IEEE Meeting*

May 15, 2003

6:00 PM Exec Committee

6:30 PM Social

7:00 PM Tour

### **The Williamsburg Winery Ltd.**

5600 Wessex Hundred Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
757.229.0999

Meal Costs:

Members & Guests: \$20.00

Students: \$10.00

## Wine Tasting and Spouse Night

May 2003

This month the section will hold it's meeting at The Williamsburg Winery Ltd where the topic will be wine tasting. Bring your spouse, or significant other, and join us. The cost is \$20 for members and guests, a savings of \$25 per person from normal costs. We are limited to 60 people therefore we encourage (require) reservations. Contact Tim Gavin (757) 827-1786 x313 or email for information. Information on the Williamsburg winery can be found at: (<http://www.williamsburgwinery.com/>).

### *Directions*

#### **From Interstate 64 North from Newport News, Va:**

- Merge onto VA Route 199 West by taking exit number 242A toward WILLIAMSBURG/BUSCH GARDENS/JAMESTOWN - go 5.08 miles
- Turn LEFT (turning lane) onto BROOKWOOD DRIVE - (it's the 3rd red light after exiting Interstate 64) - go a very quick 0.09 miles to a 4 Way Stop
- Turn LEFT onto VA Route 617 - LAKE POWELL ROAD - go 0.91 miles
- Turn LEFT onto WESSEX HUNDRED ROAD - go 0.46 miles

#### **From Interstate 64 South from Richmond, Va:**

- Take the VA Route 646 exit number 234 - toward VA Route 199 - LIGHTFOOT - go 0.21 miles
- Turn RIGHT onto VA Route 199 - go South for 8.33 miles
- Turn RIGHT (turning lane) onto BROOKWOOD DRIVE - (it is also the 3rd red light after exiting Interstate 64) - go 0.91 miles go a very quick 0.09 miles to a 4 Way Stop
- Turn LEFT onto VA Route 617 - LAKE POWELL ROAD - go 0.91 miles
- Turn LEFT onto WESSEX HUNDRED ROAD - go 0.46 miles

#### **From Colonial Williamsburg:**

Travel on Route 132 South (aka North Henry Street) through the Historic Area until the junction with Route 199. Take a right onto Route 199 West and follow directions above. (next red light to make a left onto Lake Powell Road)

#### **From the College of William & Mary:**

Drive on Route 31 West towards Jamestown. Take a left at the red light where Route 31 intersects with Route 199 (Drugstore on your immediate right). Take a right at the next red light (Lake Powell Road). Follow instructions above.

## *Hampton Roads 2003 Officers*

Chair: Dr. William Edmonson  
[wedmonson@ieee.org](mailto:wedmonson@ieee.org)

Vice Chair: Tim Gavin, P.E.  
[tim\\_r\\_gavin@ieee.org](mailto:tim_r_gavin@ieee.org)

Secretary: Dr. Robert Dawes  
[dawes@wedomath.com](mailto:dawes@wedomath.com)

Treasurer: William Clayton  
[w.clayton@ieee.org](mailto:w.clayton@ieee.org)

Newsletter & Membership:  
William LaBelle  
[w.labelle@ieee.org](mailto:w.labelle@ieee.org)

### **Committees**

Professional Development  
Student Activities  
Educational Activities  
Awards

## Become a Senior Member

### **- Senior Member drive**

In addition to Wine Tasting there will a drive to elevate members from a grade of 'Member' to a grade of 'Senior Member'. Of the 500 of the sections active membership hold a grade of 'Member' almost 400 may be eligible for upgrade. Information on requirements for elevation from 'Member' to 'Senior Member' can be found at <http://www.ieee.org/organizations/rab/md/smprogram.html>.

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# Section Chair's Speak Out

William Edmonson

This is my last speak out before our summer break. The last meeting in May is more of a social event where wives, husbands, partners and friends can come out to Williamsburg Winery for some conviviality. We are trying something new while showing your family and friends what you do on the third Thursday of every month. It is also our hope that this event would also increase the participation of members to our events. So come and bring someone. If you are new to the area and/or new to IEEE this would give you a chance to meet other members in a relaxed and beautiful setting with a glass of wine in hand. Also, those that want to move up to senior member, come and meet present senior members so they can possible nominate you or act as a reference.

This is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ford Motor Company and powered flight. It is amazing that technology has grown so fast over the century. (Though, why are we still starting our cars with a key?) They are major celebration plans being held in this area for these events. Go check them out. In fact, we are planning a tour of the Ford plant in Norfolk. The date and time is posted in this newsletter. I remember going to the Ford plant in Dearborn where I was able to see how they started with iron ore and ended with a Mustang. This was before the age of robotics. Today see how robotics play a major role in the production of the Ford truck.

I just got back from Southeastcon03 that was held in Ocho Rios Jamaica, a very nice setting to have a conference; overlooking sand and sea with good music in the background. We had two student teams participating in the hardware design contest, i.e. Hampton University and Old Dominion University. The Hampton Roads section sponsored the Hampton University team and though things did not turn out as expected it was a valuable experience for the students. The most important lesson would be a need for serious project management. Next year we might sponsor a super team made up of HU and ODU students for Southeastcon04, which will be held in Greensboro, NC. Next year we will bring the trophy home.

Have a good summer and remember that the meetings start back in September. So, think about volunteering, we do need the help to insure we stay healthy as an organization.

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## Ford Plant Tour – June

The Hampton Roads Section is sponsoring a tour of the Ford plant in Norfolk on Saturday June 2. Contact Tim Gavin (757) 827-1786 x313 or email for information.

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## SouthEastCon 2003

William LaBelle

Jamaica – the third largest of the Greater Antilles and some 550 miles south of Florida is the land of coffee, sugar, resorts, reggae music and ‘No Problem Mon’ was host to the annual Region 3 SouthEastCon. This year’s conference was held at the Renaissance Jamaica Grande Resort in Ochos Rios.

The main attraction at SouthEastCon, as with previous years, was the student competitions: hardware, software, technical paper presentations, t-shirts, and web-site. For the non-student, there was a technical paper presentations and Region 3 annual EXCOM meeting.

### - Region 3 Activites

The most significant item to come out of the Region 3 Committee is the possibility of assessing \$2 per person. The assessment is being considered to fund region 3 activities noting:

1. Flat funding from other IEEE sources (RAB allotment to Region) for many years (> 10).

Note that the RAB allotment to sections has increased several times including this year (or next depending on the boundary).

2. Increasing costs
3. Two years of deficit spending with predicted continuation in the future (without further cutting of expenses - which really is down to travel and meeting costs).
4. Many reductions in expenses over the year notably reducing face-to-face ExCom meetings from 4 per year to 3 per year, to the present two per year (one in conjunction with the Region Committee).
5. Reduction in revenue from traditional source (Southcon).
6. Many in Region 3 (students, life members principally) would not pay the assessment.

The proposal that passed was to have two more planned deficit years (2003, 2004) with the assessment to begin in 2005 membership year.

All regions except Region 2 and 6 have had or are in the process of submitting assessment increases. Region 2 is probably considering something. Region 6's traditional WesCon is also having troubles as a revenue stream.

Before the assessment becomes fact it must pass through two more reviews. First, the Regional Activities Board (RAB) will be presented the proposal and Region 3's voting results. If RAB approves the measure then the assessment request is presented IEEE Finance Committee for final approval.

### - Student Competitons

About 30 universities, colleges, and even a community college from Region 3 attended SouthEastCon to present technical papers and vie for bragging rights in hardware, software, t-shirts, and web page competitions. More than 300 certificates of participation were distributed at the awards ceremonies at the end of conference. Awards presented for each competition category were:

#### Hardware Design:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mississippi State University
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Commonwealth University
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee Technical University

#### Software Design:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Tennessee Technical University
- 2<sup>nd</sup> University of Kentucky
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Mississippi State University

#### Web Page Design

- 1<sup>st</sup> University of Mississippi
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Tennessee Technical University
- 3<sup>rd</sup> North Carolina State University

#### Student Paper

- 1<sup>st</sup> Christian Brothers University
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Clemson University

#### T-Shirt Design

- 1<sup>st</sup> Georgia Southern University
- 2<sup>nd</sup> University of Technology, Jamaica
- 3<sup>rd</sup> University of Central Florida

Old Dominion University placed 13th in the Hardware Design competition. Additionally, ODU received an award from Student Activities Chair Bruce Walcott for Outstanding Region 3 Student Branch for excellence in operation of a student branch.

Note, SouthEastCon 2004 will be held in Greensboro, North Carolina from March 26 to March 28 at the Greensboro Downtown Marriott.

Visit the conference web page for more information,  
<http://ewh.ieee.org/cmte/secon04/>.

Well that is enough of my rambling. I asked the students from Hampton University and Old Dominion University some questions about their experiences. The paragraphs that follow are from student's perspective.

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## SouthEastCon 2003 - Student Perspective

### Hampton University

#### *Rashan Patterson*

Who did you compete against? Several schools from across the nation was at the competition. Schools like Mississippi State, ODU, and North Carolina A&T were amongst the many schools involved in the competition.

What did you get out of the competitions? I got a good feel for what an actual engineer competition was like. I was also able to compare and contrast the education, resources, and curriculum that my school provides with several other schools across the nation.

Did you meet and talk to the organizers? Yes we were able to network with a few of the organizers. They were very helpful.

How about the non-student attendees? The non-student attendees were also helpful in giving some advice for the competition.

Did you attend any student/professional presentations or committee meetings? No I did not attend any student/professional meetings or presentations.

Did you go out to see Jamaica? Yes we were able to salvage some time to see a little of Jamaica and explore some of it wonders.

#### *Winfield W. Clark Jr.*

Who did you compete against? We competed against schools such as VCU, Mississippi State, North Carolina A&T..etc

What did you get out of the competitions? I had a valuable learning experience. This project marked the culmination of most of the skills I have learned in the Hampton University electrical engineering program. It gave me a great sense of purpose. It was an even more rewarding experience having the opportunity to be group leader. We have a great team full of talented students. I also had first hand experience of the ins and outs of technical competitions. After realizing the level of other teams at the competition, our confidence in our own ability greatly increased.

Did you meet and talk to the organizers? Yes. The organizers were very helpful. They were easy to relate to because they were students themselves. Meeting and talking with them helped me to feel more comfortable about the whole event.

How about the non-student attendees? The non-students present gave helpful tips and enthusiasm

Did you attend any student/professional presentations or committee meetings? No

Did you go out to see Jamaica? Yes. Fortunately, we were able to take some time out from our endeavors to catch a glimpse of the beauty of Jamaica. From what I did see, I can definitely say that I would like to return and further explore Jamaica.

#### *Halisi Johnson*

Being a member of Hampton University's robotics team was truly an educationally rewarding experience. Having the opportunity to travel to Ochos Rios, Jamaica for the hardware competition provided the atmosphere for not only competition, but more importantly growth. Our team conversed with several of the other sixteen competing schools, finding that if afforded the proper resources, the design possibilities were endless. Moreover, we learned of the imperativeness in being meticulous with regard to

time management, such that any probable design issues are addressed before hand. Overall the program was a success, and being as it was in such a beautiful area we students were privy to more than just an engineering education, but a cultural one as well.

#### *Shayla Sawyer*

"The thrill of competition and the opportunity to showcase our finished product in Ocho Rios, Jamaica was the driving force behind our planning and hard work. Although, the operation of our robot did not go as planned, the experience of being in that exciting environment and asking questions of other schools about their progress throughout the year, gave us insight that will be beneficial to future competitors from Hampton University. Jamaica was a beautiful place and the Renaissance Grande Hotel Resort was an excellent venue for this competition. Our team was also able to go out and do some river tubing which was definitely an experience I'll never forget."

### Old Dominion University

Unfortunately Old Dominion University responses were received in time for this month's newsletter.

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## IEEE-USA TODAY'S ENGINEER topics:

### - Networking: Getting to Know You ...

Partly because of today's prevalent use of email and our increased mobility, many of today's professionals lack the skills necessary to handle the challenges associated with traditional, face-to-face networking. Part finesse, part discretion, part basic manners, networking is a learned critical skill for all engineers ... Amina Sonnie reports.

### Engineering Careers Come in Four Varieties

During the past half-century, engineering career types have evolved from lifelong corporate engineers to today's global engineers. Many engineers today probably identify with the characteristics of more than one type. Which combination fits you? By Vern Johnson.

Also in TE

Backscatter: Meetings Madness

Reader Poll: All in a Day's Work?

Aviation Coalition Faces Industry Challenges

Fuel Cell Research Moving 'At Light Speed'

Washington Scene: IEEE-USA Government Fellows Fill Key Roles in Congress

Engineering Trends: Be a Star Program Manager

Your Engineering Heritage: It Didn't Begin with the Dot.coms

World Bytes: The Habit of Pause

Capitol Shavings: More on Privatizing Federal Jobs

Staff Spotlight: IEEE-USA's Pender McCarter

Read the complete articles and other at the Today's Engineer web site (<http://www.todaysengineer.org/>).

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## Local Engineering events

### ASCE - Richmond

The Richmond Branch of ASCE is holding a golf tournament and cookout on June 12, 2003 at River's Bend Golf Course. Proceeds will go towards establishing a scholarship fund for the civil engineering department at the University of Virginia. We need sponsors and players, so please consider joining us for this fun event! Details can be found on the branch website at: <http://branches.asce.org/richmond/June.htm>.

### Virginia Engineering Conference

The VEC Committee has been working hard and is finalizing speakers for the conference. There will be three tracks from which to choose - Business, Professional and Technical. Seminars will be held

all day on Thursday, Oct. 9 and in the morning on Friday, Oct. 10. You will be able to earn **9 Professional Development Hours (PDH)** and network with business owners, peers and exhibitors. If you are interested in being a sponsor of this year's conference, please contact Ken Stepka, P.E. at [KStepka@clarknexsen.com](mailto:KStepka@clarknexsen.com). A golf tournament at the popular **Kingsmill Resort** will precede the seminars on Wednesday. If you are interested in being a sponsor for the golf tournament, please contact H. D. Campbell, P.E. at [hdcampbell@campbell-paris.com](mailto:hdcampbell@campbell-paris.com). If your company would like to exhibit at the conference, please contact Martin Jansons, P.E. at [Martin@peed-bortz.com](mailto:Martin@peed-bortz.com).

A web site is being created entirely for the conference and we will let you know when it is officially launched. New this year will be your ability to register on-line AND provide payment via a VISA or MasterCard credit card on a secured network.

The **VA Society of Professional Engineers** and the **American Council of Engineering Companies of Virginia** are excited about sponsoring this conference in Williamsburg at the Radisson Fort Magruder Hotel and Conference Center. **Reserve October 8-10, 2003, on your calendar now and plan to attend!**

**Questions? Contact Leigh Dicks, VSPE Executive Director, at [vspe@aol.com](mailto:vspe@aol.com) or 804-730-6883.**

### Local Engineering Events inputs

Are you organizing or sponsoring a local event of interest to the engineering community? Do you know of one? Let us know! Send your event announcement to me, William LaBelle ([w.labelle@ieee.org](mailto:w.labelle@ieee.org)), for publishing in the next edition(s) of *The*

*Open Channel*. Additionally, your event can be announced, or a link established, on the section web site. The section newsletter reaches about 1000 local IEEE members each month. It is a free resource that you can't ignore.

### Hampton Roads Engineering Society Calendar

The HRESC is a free website and e-mail calendar of engineering society events for the Hampton Roads area. It is open to the public and all societies are invited to advertise their events. List members receive a weekly text-only e-mail calendar of events.

Calendar users can:

View current and past calendars and links to societies at the HRESC website <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sname>;

Join the list by sending a blank e-mail to [sname-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:sname-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

The manager of the HRESC is SNAME. SNAME, or The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, an internationally recognized nonprofit, technical, professional society of individual members serving the maritime and offshore industries and their suppliers.

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### Region 3 Websites

R3 Web Site: <http://www.ewh.ieee.org/reg/3/>

ETI Web Site: <http://ie3eti.eng.uab.edu/>

ETI Authorization: [eti-info@eng.uab.edu](mailto:eti-info@eng.uab.edu)

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