Joint German Chapter meets in Lausanne

THE JOINT IAS/PELS/IES (Industry Applications Society, Power Electronics Society, Industrial Electronics Society) German Chapter met at EPFL, Lausanne, Switzerland, on 2-3 June 2005.

The international chapter meeting took place in conjunction with a workshop and a seminar programme at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, on 2 June.

Christoph Weissbacher presented German FH Köln/RWTH Aachen team IEEE Future Energy Challenge 2005 contest. Olivier Toury then lectured on the virtual machinery of a cruise ship for dynamic performance studies of All Electric Ship power networks. Dr K.S. Rajashekar of Delphi Corporation followed with a talk on hybrid fuel cells for transportation and stationary power generation.

The next highlight was Deepak Divan of Georgia Tech, who spoke on the market needs for power electronics and power systems. The transmission and distribution infrastructure is aging and congested, and in urgent need of modernisation. Power electronics may offer a new approach for relieving fundamental bottlenecks that have distorted the electricity market and have degraded system reliability. A new category of solutions, Distributed FACTS or D-FATS, have been presented as a potentially cost-effective alternative for controlling power flow on the grid.

The General Chairman and host, Prof Alfred Rufer, described an example of multi-disciplinary research in the field of a hybrid energy storage system. His approach uses compressed air and super-capacitors. This system and further setups for research and education—such as a model railway or an electric scooter—were demonstrated.

New French board
ON JANUARY 28, 2005, the new board of the IEEE France Section has been elected (more details can be found on the site at www.ieeefrance.org. We welcome the new Section Chairman, Gérard-André Capolino and the new board members.

IEEE education
IEEE XELL (a.k.a. Expert Now IEEE) is a new, innovative product line being developed by IEEE Educational Activities in collaboration with Societies and Councils to produce interactive, on-line educational modules. Topics for these modules come from the tutorials offered at IEEE Conferences and they are being presented by the experts themselves. Please visit www.ieee.org/education/xell/society.html.

Virtual museum
THE IEEE Virtual Museum has now opened its eighth exhibit, ‘Songs in the Key of E’, about electronic music.

NoticieEero online
NOTICIEERO is the official news source of IEEE Region 8, Latin America and the Caribbean. The publication is delivered mainly in Spanish, both web-based—on a weblog platform at www.noticieero.org—and as a bimonthly PDF.

WIFI in Wales
BRIDGEND COUNTY Borough Council, South Wales, is to become the first council to offer public WiFi access over a multi-service provider network. The deal, signed with WiFi provider The Cloud, puts Bridgend at the forefront of the government’s plans for all councils to offer universal online access to public services.

R8 industrial relations report
TWERLE R8 Industrial Relations Officers met to establish a programme of actions. To help make these initiatives effective, members in industry can volunteer for the following: Job Site, Meetings with Industry to promote IEEE, Consultants Network, Cooperation with National Societies, Industry-of-the-Year Award, Corporate Agreements, and Publications. Go to www.ieee.org/r8 and click Industry Relations, or contact jean-gabriel.remy@ieee.org.

IEEE Iran Section reinstated
AT THE end of 2002, IEEE closed the Iran Section and imposed various restrictions on IEEE membership and activity in Iran and in some other countries. This was as a result of laws of the USA, to which IEEE is subject. These actions shocked many IEEE members, especially since IEEE is a strictly non-political organisation.

Since then, there have been extensive negotiations between IEEE and the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) which is responsible for the interpretation and implementation of such US laws. Steady but slow progress has been made, and some months ago there was a major success in that IEEE received confirmation that it could process and publish papers by Iranian citizens in the normal manner.

A further welcome development is that it has now been agreed that the IEEE Iranian Section may be reinstated. There are still a number of constraints, since the provision of ‘services’ is not allowed, and the transfer of funds is also generally forbidden. However, it is possible to reimburse some IEEE member expenses and the formal existence of the Section can be recognised and its activities reported.

We welcome the Iran Section back as an official part of Region 8.

A.C. Davies

DOGUS UNIVERSITY of Istanbul has awarded honorary doctorate degrees upon Leopold B. Felsen and Leon Chua.

Felsen, affiliated with the IEEE Antennas and Propagation Society (APS), was honoured for his extraordinary achievements in electromagnetics. Chua, affiliated with the IEEE Circuits and Systems (CAS) Society, was honoured for his extraordinary achievements in nonlinear systems.

On 13-14 June 2005, following the honorary degree bestowal opening ceremony, the International Symposium CCN2005 on Complex Computing-Networks: A Link Between Brain-like and Wave-oriented Electrodynamics Algorithms took place.

Dogus University is a new but rapidly growing private university, currently with an enrolment of about 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students in its various programmes in four faculties. The Engineering Faculty presently comprises 35 faculty members and about 1,000 students.

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Istanbul University bestows two honorary doctorates