

Inventors' Network

Volume 7

of the Capital Area [INCA]

Issue 2

Feb 16 Meeting to be on 3rd Tuesday at NIH, Bldg 31C 6C6 5:30 - 8:00.

Our March 15 meeting will be back to 3rd Mondays for the rest of the year.

(unless the Federal Government shuts down that day for weather or other unplanned reason.)

Confirm to the last moment by looking at <http://inca.interspeed.net>.)

Annual Dues of \$36 for members are paid by 34 of 132 listed membership. Status: 26% on Feb 2.

John Ruff will accept dues right at the door as you sign in. Currency of membership will be shown on name tag after March.

For Your Information (FYI), the newsletter is sent to regular (\$36) members, to associate (\$10 mailing only) members, to 26 correspondent organizations or businesses who communicate with other inventors; and up to 12 speakers who have shared their expertise as invited guest speakers.

Total printing and mailing out-of-pocket costs hovers around \$100 per month. Our superb web-site is likely to demand some growth in expense. Awards for inventors and special contributors must be afforded. We may have an opportunity to sponsor some seminars-for-inventors. These offer some financial opportunity and risk. Of course our social program, now pizza+, can become a family event. Maintaining our critical mass of membership requires advertising and directed mail.

In short, our inventor-business model requires a modest annual income and volunteer personal involvement.

Prior-year's membership lists show a turnover of about 25% per year. This is a rational rate as compared against rate of telephone or address changes from purchased mailing lists.

INCA membership turnover means that many of our members have been with us for less than a year. Their search for invention-related knowledge may have missed the prior sharing by speakers and by spontaneous interaction among attendees.

GUESTS may not know who is likely to have answers to their questions.

Jerry Porter is a royalty-receiving inventor who just moved to the Washington area in December. In our January meeting, Jerry volunteered to demonstrate a role needed within our Hospitality and our Membership Directorates: He introduced himself to a visitor and fruitfully asked, "what you want to know"; "what talents and arts do you want to share?"

He believes that members should learn to help guests get sufficiently acquainted so they "network" their way among the other members and guests to identify immediate needs for themselves and for INCA. Their orientation may appropriately require introductions and feedback during 3 of their first meetings.

A new person has told us what new persons want to know! Thanks Jerry.

RAOUL, our Webmaster did it again: Immediately after crippling news about loss of our web site, he salvaged all files and researched options to meet his criteria: Members had suggested INCA as a portion of web-page name. He creatively overcame a prior-use problem for "INCA", making it a prominent item within the site name.

Our new web site is <http://inca.interspeed.net>

Remember, do not include the www habit in writing this name.

Sam Hicks shared with us his invention-success story about *The Rescue Phone*.

Sam reinforced a message that has repeatedly been shared: "Find out what the customer wants, and deliver that in a high-quality package." He also provided some reality about timing: His Rescue Phone™ business did not "break even" until 10 years after he assembled the communication needs for police negotiating teams.

His partner gave up at about 6 years, but Sam kept paying the maintenance fees on his patent. He also acquired Trade-mark protection for the name that has become nearly a generic expression within his police-department customers. He described how his biggest problems occurred when orders were greater than production capability, and how a series of technology updates resolved the production problems.

He described his marketing plan as a consistent focus on a clearly defined community of customers. They talk with one another about their needs, and depend on his equipment to do their duty. Sam expressed his warmth in talking with the inventors of our society. We all thank Sam & Rachel for their sharing.

Commodore Bob's advise is being executed: Bob advised to use e-mail, to define work and have a socially good time.

(1) Our e-mail made it possible for **Raoul** to report our new WEB address on the day he completed its installation. Within a month 1200 curious inventor-log-ons had been recorded. Our **e-mail listing** has grown from 26 to 44 names. E-mail Raoul at **r-drapeau@usa.net**

For those who do not expect to own a computer, extending the capability of your TV set might be considered. A Sony or Magnavox Web-TV setup is expected to cost less than \$150. Then a monthly subscription [up to \$20/mo] is spent for an internet provider.

(2) On January 19, position guides were introduced for a dozen defined INCA roles. Nine guides are for Directorships; three are for the elected officers. Copies with first refinements will be distributed again at our February meeting. Ray's target is to have the Directorships filled and supportive individuals named before reorganization day [our March 15 (3rd Monday) officer election].

Of course, Ray's second organization objective is for more than half our active membership to indicate their 1st, 2nd &/or 3rd preference among directorates and supporters.

In the meantime, members with an interest in "helping INCA be valuable to inventors" may e-mail (raybik@aol.com) enhancement comments and selection of organization preferences. Members with Fax are encouraged to check-mark their preference roles on this month's cover page and fax to Ray at (703) 971 9216, or mail the page to our return address, also shown on the cover page.

PROGRAMS

Our February 16 Speaker is **Dr. Robert Benson**. Dr Benson is Patent Advisor within NIH Office of Technology Transfer. His experience also includes being a patent examiner with USPTO. Alex Fraser found Dr. Benson as one who is ready to field questions about an inventor's patent world.

Our March 15 Panel of Speakers include internal talent including **Chuck Poponoe, Maurice Daniels, Bill Kuntz and Terry Levinson**. Members and guests are invited to e-mail **RAY98INCA@aol.com** or bring written questions that the panel could weave into their initial comments. After the personal presentations, floor questions or short

comments can complete our mutual instruction.

On April 19 **Mac Woodward**, president of the Blue Ridge Inventor's Club, will share observation about invention climate at Charlottesville and farther South in Va. Mac also has been active in congressional issues of H400 & S507 which did not result in law changes. He visits Washington regularly to conduct business relating to copyrights, patents and trademarks. Mac has been developing some ideas about enhancing the role of independent inventors through stronger organization and market-penetration.

On May 17 we are to hear **Dennis Van Dusen**, [vandusen@cais.com] of the MIT Enterprise Forum. He "invented" the first popular computer spreadsheet "Visicalc" at a time that software inventions were not recognized as patentable.. Dennis is particularly knowledgeable of how computer-driven business is prominent in the Greater Washington area. He is now searching for small firms that need to express the prospects, resources and strategies of their Business Plan to expert panels for assessment and recommendations. Dennis is likely to share with us the way he perceived and thought-through some of the ventures he has entered, started, exited, profited from and learned from.

On June 21 **Frampton Ellis** [fellis@anatomicresearch.com] received INCA's first Inventor of the Year Award. He is ready to share experience in his processes for making a good patent and licensing it.

Pre-Speaker Networking

"Corner Coaches" host individuals or groups about their themes between 5:45 - 6:30.

For PATENTS [Frampton Ellis, fellis@anatomicresearch.com]

For **MARKETING** [Maurice Daniels mdaniel@wizard.net

For **PROTOTYPING** [Phill Shaw phillshaw@erols.com]

For **FUNDING** [Bill Kuntz bandbkuntz@prodigy.net]

Sho is conducting research to enhance an "Invalid Walker". He and his son, Benji found Phill Shaw's patented "leg extension" in their search. -Great minds seem to seek common channels-. Ray Gilbert has been visiting a retirement community, and finds plenty of mediocrity in the existing invalid-walker designs. Sho introduced the idea of "Inventing for the good of others" at our December meeting. He is receptive to ideas and comments from other INCA members. Sho's e-mail address is [sjmaruyama@erols.com].

Invention **Historians** with an interest in **Nikola Tesla**, inventor of most-common electric motor in USA, may want to read his autobiography from <http://www.amasci.com/tesla/biog.txt> .

January-Reported **Interests:** INCA member to show at Orlando IPO

\$ Recovery Federal Trade Commission has allotted \$250,000 to help inventors who have been fleeced by invention promotion firms. If you or your friends have an interest in recovery, contact www.ftc.gov/opa/1998/9811/AIA.htm

BUSINESS PLAN The Small Business Administration (SBA) offers an 31 page outline for a business plan. SBA recruits many seasoned executives to support the growth of viable USA businesses. This piece of work guides individuals or teams in converting the ideas that run through their minds into a plan that meets funding agent criteria. <http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/starting/businessplan.html>

PTO Course Roster: The PTO academy intends to conduct the following internal courses:

5-hours on (1) Types of applications, and the application content.

3-hours on:

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| 2. 35USC 112 Rejections,
not based on prior art | 6. Restriction | 10. Allowance/Issue |
| 3. 35 USC 102 Novelty | 7. 35 USC 101 Utility &
35 USC 112 para 1 | 11. Appeals |
| 4. 35 USC 103 Obviousness | 8. Response by applicant | 12. Interference |
| 5. Double Patenting | 9. Final Rejection / After Final | 13. Petitions |
| | | 14. Reexamination |

A review of MPEP chapters for each of these topics might help guide inventors and patent professionals in selecting information areas not sufficiently clear or current from their education. Individuals who want to sit in on these contract courses at a proportional cost of the PTO total course fee, are invited to call **Anne Kelly**, director of the PTO academy [703 308 9664].

RESEARCH: INCA is still invited to help Anne design a one-to-three day “Inventors course”, to include selections within the foregoing material. Our January report revealed a broad interest in casting initial claims, revising claims to meet office response and adjusting claim areas to be sufficiently broad.

One of our most-seasoned inventors, **Chuck Popenoe** brought focus on the merit of a “Claims” seminar. Since claims are the property, inventors have need for comfortable understanding of broad vs narrow expressions. Since the strength (and market value) of a patent might be interpreted from linkage between the sought claims and supportive specifications, drawings and distinction from prior art, consideration of claims and their language should not be left until a final phase.

Inventor inputs to a USPTO potential **Inventor’s course** may be relayed through Ray at ray98inca@AOL.com.

Joint PTO/INCA INVENTOR CONFERENCE?

Which INCA members or friends want to broaden their experience base in a process of organizing and managing a first USPTO/INCA inventor conference? Voluntary, yet educational work would include (1) focused inventor networking both inside and outside INCA membership, (2) publicity design, (3) pre-registration and on-site registration, (4) resource management including place and possible catering and (5) event-hosting for panels, sessions & speakers.

What would INCA get out of this other than “helping Inventors”? A mission objective would include:

- (1) assisting the USPTO in strengthening its image as “friendly” to invention-customers, and
- (2) acquiring additional INCA resources, surely intellectual; perhaps physical or financial.

Ray needs to hear about your interest. raybik@aol.com. Or 703 971 9216 Phone or fax.

INCA’S POTENTIAL DIRECTION - Through Directorships - {Current Draft}

Position Guide Content (tentative)

A Speaker-Host Director, [SHD] is responsible for for selecting, inviting, hosting, and thanking principal speakers or other central planned program for each meeting.

Central planned programs will include famous, successful, and timely personalities available to our Capital Area. Invited speakers and their news-level profiles are to be reported to the Editor-Director at least 3.5 months prior to the

scheduled meeting.

Volunteer standby speakers with prepared text and images will be ready, but held in reserve should featured speakers not show up; or should standby topic become so timely as to adjust planned program schedule..

An Education Director [EUD] researches educational interests of membership and opportunities within the business and educational communities of the Capital Area.

EUD output includes inviting knowledgeable persons to be Pre-Speaker “Corner Coaches” and post-speaker reporters on invention-related topics from books, magazines or other traceable source. Reporters for Education Directorate will offer notes to the editor-director for subsequent newsletters also.

EUD will assign Corner-Coach individuals and others to share portions of their area-of-expertness and prior research to help meet common questions about effective invention processes.

Corner-Coach

Likely sought topics

Patent

“Common elements to New Patent Holder’s plans”

Marketing

“My research to date regarding Marketing-by-inventors”

Prototype

“Manufacturing engineering rules to minimize prototype-testing costs”

Funding

“How Licensing Society (LES) and other professional invention-investor groups evaluate the intellectual properties on which they are willing to bet their own efforts or their clients money.

EUD will host ***Book or magazine synopsis reporters***. These reporters “stand-up” during post-speaker period to share 2-5 minutes of their “highlights” within a magazine article, book chapter or other resource that is available to inventors.

Web Communication Director, (WCD) **Raoul Drapeau** is webmaster as well as being an Electrical Engineer, an author of a patent-related book, and a college instructor who teaches from his own book (and other sources). WCD has established and maintains a website on behalf of the Inventors’ Network of the Capital Area [INCA]. <http://inca.interspeed.net>.

Raoul might accept apprenticeships in his oversight of WDC. This is spelled OPPORTUNITY.

Editor Director (EDD) This job has been an evolving task toward delivering a product to membership, communicants and prior speakers. **Phill Shaw** delegated the news-gathering and editor role to **Alex Fraser** before Alex accepted the rest of the President’s roles. These leaders have evolved a unique product.

EDD will oversee publication of the Newsletter, and share with a webmaster in defining and maintaining timely, useful content of our web page.

EDD will edit reporter-input from all directorships for newsletter and co-edit for the web page.

EDD may delegate production and mailing activities to a Production Manager and production volunteers.

Asset & Facilities Director (AFD), has custody over INCA-scheduled use of NIH facilities, has authority for direct contact with NIH resource manager, and for managing availability of other INCA-used facilities as directed by the INCA president.

Video library is an INCA asset. Members and guests are expected to be aware and willing that their expression within INCA events is being recorded.

AFD will assure that video coverage is planned and executed at scheduled meetings and where other video record is important to the mission of INCA.

AFD will delegate a volunteer video librarian to retain the video library, and provide an annual listing of speakers topics for the Editor and Web-Master. .

AFD will be authorization source for making video copies of individual or group performers, according to legal provisions overseen by Judge Advocate Director.

Present copying policy is that an individual's or group's image or vocal record may be reproduced without inclusion of other taped portions of a meeting or covered event. Personal release statements will be required for persons in reproduced material.

Judge Advocate Director, (JAD)

JAD is an attorney, preferably a patent attorney, whose volunteer (pro bono) activities include:

- (1) advice to the board regarding risk (and possible insurance) issues appropriate to INCA.
- (2) periodic comments to membership regarding video records of their personal disclosures.
- (3) periodic oral or synoptic reports to membership regarding inventor-related background of intellectual property laws and current events. Short topics about invention might include: timely patenting, inventorship, unintended partnership, common law "shop rights" of an employer, patent ownership privileges including licensing and "candor" rule demanded by USPTO of patent agents and patent attorneys.

Hospitality Director (HD), HD has responsibility for an effective greeting of members and guests, confirming name-tag criteria, issuing guest identifiers and recording attendance, phone number and e-mail addresses.

HD has authority to spend INCA moneys to purchase temporary supplies for early-evening nutrition; and for collecting voluntary contributions for such supplies.

HD is the agent to accept planned display and information about any offered trial-sample food/drink.

HD is also responsible for an annual Inventorship social event, overseeing requirements such as program of events, catering, dinner-dance-band, decorations, plaques, trophies, awards and cocktail party.

Social events, other than regular 3rd-week-of-the month meetings, are to be announced and planned 3months before execution, and expenses, as authorized by the Board, to be paid within 30 days following each event.

Membership Director, (MSD) MSD will acquire names of inventors of the Greater Washington DC area, and invite them to attend our meetings and regularly sign-on to our Web Page.

MSD and **membership hosting volunteer(s)** will be assigned to new members for a first-3 consecutive meetings. Assignment includes introducing the INCA networking practices and assisting new persons in meeting members whose invention interests are useful and of value.

MSD will maintain an up-to-date membership listing with names, address, phone, & e-mail data.

MSD volunteers are expected to screen our start-of-the-year mailing list in April 1999.

Distribution of the INCA newsletter will be to individuals who have brought or sent their dues.

At Large (Conference) Director (ATD)

ATD duties include managing INCA award process, conducting assessments and agreements for INCA-related conferences and supporting major events of the Social Director.

ATD volunteers will generate and refine a program for INCA awards, establish a budget acceptable to the elected officers, and provide other directorates with award-materials.

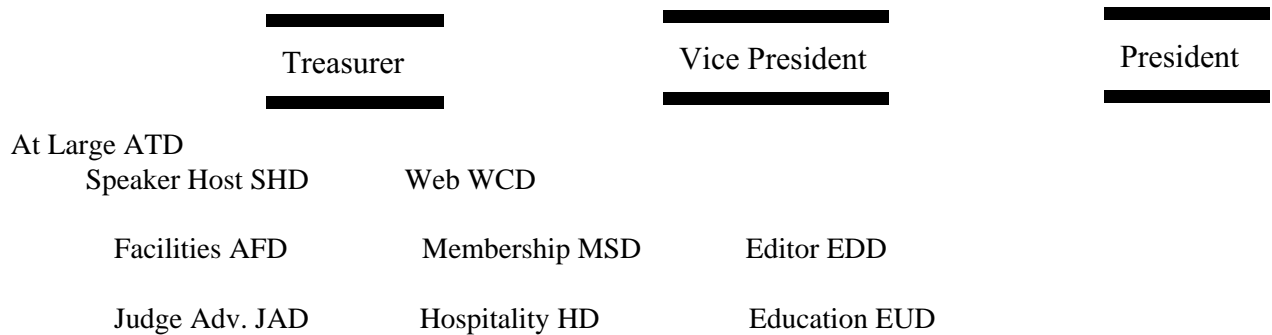
Treasurer (Elected) (TE) Phill Shaw, **Vice President (Elected) (VPE)** (presently unfilled)

& President (Elected) (PE) Ray Gilbert (Current)

TE, VPE and PE duties are described within by laws

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Probable organization structure:



These are my 3 preferred roles in INCA: #1 is highest priority

Elected Officer PE____ VPE ____ TE ____

DIRECTOR, One of these:

SHD (Speaker Program Host)_____
EUD (Education)_____
WCD (Web Staff) _____
EDD (Editor)_____
AFD (Assets +) _____
JAD (Judge Adv)_____
HP (Hospitality) _____
MSD (Membership) _____
ATD (At Large) _____

I want also to be a support Person, in [Any of the following]____; in those checked below:

SHD (Speaker Program Host)_____ EUD (Education)_____WCD (Web Staff) _____

EDD (Editor)_____ AFD (Assets +) _____ JAD (Judge Adv)_____ HP (Hospitality) _____

MSD (Membership) _____ ATD (At Large) _____

Please Fax this total page to Ray at (703) 971 9216 Find map on <http://INCA.INTER SPEED.NET>