

Inventors' Network Volume 11

Of the Capital Area [INCA] Issue 2

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Our **Feb 17** speakers are **Kristin Marconi and Matthew Huxley** of the WTCI (World Trade Center Institute, Baltimore), are scheduled to speak. Their website is www.wtci.org

Members and guests are invited to introduce themselves and tell some of the good news as well as puzzles in their quest for profit-making intellectual property. Individuals who are new to invention should plan to find a place at Jerry Porter's 6:00 pre-program seminar.

March is scheduled as the time for one of our regularly scheduled business events. We try to get all business details thrashed out in outside meetings, so the formal one is quick and effective, leaving real time for our speaker and his exchange with our members and guests.

Our February meeting will have a brief time to hear proposals or suggestions about the good of the INCA org.

MEETING: 3rd Monday,
17 Feb 03
Potomac Community Center
11315 Falls Rd. Potomac Md.

5:30 Network w Pizza

6:00 Topic Table, Hosted
by Jerry Porter, Inventor

**6:30 Kristin Marconi and
Matthew Huxley**

7:30 Member Issues

Money issues: A second envelope for 2003 dues is stapled with those newsletter addresses for which the treasurer has not received a first envelope with check. Annual dues are still \$36. Save the cost of a stamp by paying cash or check to our Treasurer, Phill Shaw at the door.

Money rules: Two free meetings are offered for guests to determine if they want to become members. Thereafter, non-members are expected to insert \$5 per meeting into the cash jar (along with the \$1 per slice of pizza that all eaters are expected to pay.)

Read the Newsletters; current and past at DCINVENTORS.ORG. Click on "newsletter" link at bottom right of Raoul's award-winning website.

Our **March 17** speaker is scheduled to be **Dr. John H. Dodds**.

Dr Dodds has combined prior careers in Science and Academia with Law and Intellectual Property. His current activities include International work. At his prior talk to INCA, he expanded most members' perception of Intellectual Property greatly beyond mere patents. John Melius has already asked him to describe how a US inventor might want to use Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) rules within the USPTO to prosecute a US and international patent. His next talk will be a good time for questions — and his answers.

Our **April 21** speaker is scheduled to be **Dr. Barbara Cross**. Many INCA members know Barbara for the robust chili and fresh cookies that come from their kitchen, when Jerry and Barbara host INCA meetings in their beautiful house in Kensington. Dr Cross has a depth of experience in working with innovators and developers whose focus is the National Institute of Health (NIH). Barbara and her associates establish and administer Federal expectations from Federally funded NIH grants. She will share some of the expectations that are expected to be met by inventors and developers.

December 16 02 ANECDOTAL EXPERIENCES about SEARCHING

George Harvill, Rocia Mendoza and Tom Moseley

Our three spokespersons answered questions about searching. Each expressed common challenges of the searcher. Each also answered questions about their individual styles for overcoming challenges for finding competing art within a giant reservoir of prior art for a reasonable preliminary search fee.

George Harvill was introduced to INCA when Toy Inventor, Richard Levy spoke to us last year.

Approximately 1/3 of Mr Harvill's practice deals directly with inventors. He made the case that a good search for prior use of an idea before engaging a patent attorney is good conservation of the inventor's resources. When asked what to do if a patent professional would not accept such search results, George suggested finding another patent attorney. Design patents: Many people in the toy industry don't bother with a search (before applying for a design patent).

He spoke of how an **interview with an examiner enhances search effectiveness**. Some examiners have rich experience in classes for which they have built special knowledge. These examiners can be particularly helpful in guiding a searcher (or inventor) to areas of the classification manual that are likely to be pertinent to the inventor's search.. Most patent attorneys who task George for searches also ask for the name of the examiners with whom he discussed the search.

Electronic and internet searching relies upon key words. Results of search with initial key words may provide art wherein more effective key words become evident from the specification as well as claims. Iterative searches with an evolving list of key words can be a foundation for special attention to classification-driven searches of prior art hard copy. Complete reliance on key word searches is limited. Only art issued by USPTO since 1975 is in a form suitable for key word search.

Electronic search with the USPTO search computer and the www.uspto.gov website offers capability to print out citations for properties that are similar to the idea being searched. A "forward and backward citation search" technique is conducted by searchers who focus their energies on content of classification manual, file shoes and the USPTO search computer. Searchers who are skilled in this technique come to appreciate that "once they come back onto their ideas", they know their search is nearing completion. **A search "closes in on itself" patents reference other patents that reference themselves in a circular way.**

Review of paper files of patents arranged by subject matter according to class/subclass definitions was the traditional way to search. Computer searching allows the same capability and adds searching by keywords. Computers also make the formerly laborious review of the art of record (backward search) very convenient and makes the forward citation search possible.

FILE WRAPPERS

Jerry Porter asked about information search within the file wrappers of potentially competing properties. He reported that his team's prosecution of one patent looked particularly bleak until they examined the file wrappers of apparently conflicting art. The data within the file wrapper record of prosecution removed all constraints and they got the claims they wanted.

George observed that file wrapper information can be very revealing, even for \$1 per page. He noted, however, that file wrappers can be thick, for example one group of 4 patents included 12,000 pages. Firms which specialized in printing file wrapper content seemed to be particularly busy. Someone reported that the USPTO is preparing to make file wrapper content available through their web site www.uspto.gov.

Ms. Rocio Mendoza is an International Legal Consultant at the offices of Dodds and Associates. She obtained her law degree in University of Lima in Peru and a Masters of Law (LLM) in Intellectual Property (IP) Law in George Washington University in Washington, DC. She has experience with Latin American IP, as well with US IP law. She currently works together with Dr. John Dodds in searching for inventions at US and international patents' databases. In addition, she supports in the prosecution of US patents under US law and international patents under Patent Cooperation Treaty rules before the US Patent and Trademark Office.

Ms. Mendoza responded to questions regarding sequence of USPTO actions, and clarified backgrounds and logics relating to US and international applications. **Her clear message was: Be very sure what the final invention is and fully describe it to your patent searcher**, for this will allow the searcher to make a complete and thorough search. Communication between the searcher and/or patent drafter and the inventor is essential in the patent searching and drafting processes. It is of great help to the searcher that the **inventor provide drawings and a short summary of the invention**. In addition, the searcher and the inventor may want to discuss **what the inventor considers to be the new features of his invention and its advantages over the prior art**.

Tom Moseley has been a professional searcher for about 30 years. Most of his clients are patent attorneys. He has an aeronautical engineering degree, and is active as an independent inventor.

He shared a belief that INCA members and guests would benefit from search-related anecdotes from a panel of searchers. As usual, our INCA meeting generated lively observations and questions about searching. Again, we relied upon President Bill Kuntz to moderate source of questions and to bring the spontaneity to a timely conclusion.

One common problem for searchers is integrity of records. Shoe files of the public search room are open for use by anyone, and are handled by many people. They are subject to risk of becoming mixed within classification files and of becoming permanently lost. Typically a few percent of individual patents (randomly scattered) are missing.

One common problem for searchers is integrity of records. Shoe files of the reading room are open for use by anyone, and are handled by many people. They are subject to risk of becoming mixed with other files and of becoming permanently lost. However, most patents are filed in multiple sub-classes, so that a physical search often discloses the same art in many shoes. Tom told of computer-assisted searches that on one day revealed a different list of art than an identical search on another day. Both Tom and George related personal experiences in seeing long-sought art in very unexpected places and under unexpected titles.

Cross-referencing systems such as "assignment" files provide links between prior art according to its owners. Examiner's file shoes sometimes offer art references from unpatented items of common use.

Patent owners who have a significant investment in product development may contract with 3 or 4 different search organizations and involve 3 or 4 different patent attorneys in their prudence of confirming the novelty of their anticipated product line.

How should a person describe his or her invention so that a good search can be done? Tom's principle also was **“Communicate what is important.”**

---- Sometimes a hand drawn sketch may be more meaningful than a fully developed computer-drawn design. The heaviness of line in part of the sketch may be communicating the important aspect.

Tom invites inventors to take their disclosure package to an objective, well qualified, friend and ask the friend to read the package, and without further exchange, to describe the system. The inventor is expected to make notes on "what was missing" from his friend's oral report; and then correct his own disclosure to insure intended meaning. -- “Two birds with one stone”: Have the friend witness the corrected disclosure.

Where inventor and searcher have a sound rapport, a verbal communication by phone may be sufficient.

The searcher must understand (1) what is in the idea, and (2) what is not in the idea.

Bill observed that an independent inventor who has committed time for developing his intellectual property was well served to visit the USPTO search room and to use the classification book and content of those organized files to find a history of the art-of-his-interest. As amateurs, most of us have a connection to www.uspto.gov with its responsive web-pages for search. The work we can do for ourselves is expected to enhance our communication effectiveness with the professionals.

Reporters: Ray Gilbert and Glen Kotapish

LeTourneau University - Invention 2003 Contest criteria for students.

This article was condensed to help inventors of all ages appreciate a comparative value assignment within a strategy for commercializing an original idea.

Contestants will need to construct a working model (a “prototype”). Preferred materials are available, cheap, easy to work with, safe to use and durable. The prototype and its marketing display must be fit on a table space measuring 1.5 ft. deep by 4 ft. long.

Contestants will need also to design an attractive display for your invention. Its presentation needs to be “eye-catching”, that will show off the invention to its best advantage.

The display will be a first impression on judges and potential customers. It includes:

- A name of the invention
- An explanation or illustration of how the invention works
- The prototype

Entries to the student invention contest will be evaluated in five categories:

- 0-40 points most innovative
- 0-20 points most beneficial to society
- 0-15 points most effectively displayed
- 0-15 points prototype performance
- 0-10 points most aesthetically pleasing

Group efforts. An invention can be entered by a group. Any prize money will be divided equally.

Demonstrations. Photographs of demonstrations may be used in the display.

Rights in Data. Contestants give LeTourneau University the right to use your name and photo as well as a photo of your invention and its name or description in any publicity related to the contest.

For more information, call the Office of University Relations at (903) 233-3802 during business hours.

GUEST EDITORIAL Considerations of Trust in Business Actions

A few thoughts on negotiations and choosing partners came to me while reading Shell's book, Bargaining for Advantage. This excellent book deals with the strategy of negotiations. There are several levels of negotiations from casual encounters with strangers to long term deep relationships. We should understand that we negotiate every time we deal with another person or even when dealing with our own selves.

As individual inventors, we should be seeking long term healthy relationships with the manufacturers who want to commercialize our intellectual property. This type of relationship should have two key ingredients, a desire to share ideas/experiences/resources and a deep trust between the parties. If either of these qualities are missing or do not function at a high enough level, negotiations and continued relationships will be difficult if not impossible to manage.

When seeking a business partner (or any long term relationship), one should keep these two issues in mind.

How well can I share beliefs, experiences and resources with the other party and how prepared are they to share with me?

How much do I trust this party and how well do they trust me?

When positive clear answers exist, negotiations should follow with relatively few hitches, and more importantly they should be long lasting and successful.

National Manufacturing Week March 3-6, 2003 - McCormick Place, Chicago <http://www.asme.org/nmw>

ASME TECHNICAL CONFERENCE AT **NATIONAL MANUFACTURING WEEK**

Advances in engineering design and manufacturing. More than 100 sessions in six tracks:

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National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) offers ZOOM for kids.

National Engineers Week is February 16-22. ZOOM Into Engineering Family Festival will take place on February 15 at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cast members from the PBS show ZOOM will be there, interacting with participants.

This year NSPE will sponsor a hands-on activity at the event. The "Puff Mobile" involves having the children design and build an air-powered car using paper, straws, and life savers, and then racing the cars on a track. NSPE and SWE (Society of Women Engineers) are partnering together to organize this activity.

They are still looking for pit crews.

Katrina Robinson, Marketing Manager, NSPE 703-684-2860 krobison@nspe.org

New Product Development -- Discussion Sessions

Here's a chance to discuss New Product Development and general product development with the professionals at an unusually low price. Ten dollars per session, and four sessions to meet with and be taught by industry professionals. All session ticket is \$30 and complete series attendees are better prepared for a test that demonstrates ability to develop new products.

This kind of information wasn't available 40 years ago anywhere, even for the largest corporations. Now, here it is for us. For those who are developing products, this offers powerful information.

Beginning **February 19th**, the D.C. Chapter of the Product Development & Management Association (PDMA) has scheduled a series of discussion sessions about new product development. Topics range from portfolio management to the kind of people issues encountered by product development professionals. Participants will share experiences and learn more about new product development.

The topic for the first session is the New Product Development (NPD) process, so come prepared to discuss product development processes (or lack of processes) that have influenced your experiences. For more information and to register, please go to: <http://www.productinnovators.com/dc/education>

Success story sought by InventorsD

Joanne will be featuring inventors who are successfully marketing tools and hardware products in the May/June issue of Inventors' Digest. If you want us to tell your story, please contact Linda Dangelo at linda@inventorsdigest.com She'll need great photos of you and your product so be prepared! Remember: Your product must be on the market.

The PBS show, "Right on the Money," features inventors. The show answers all kinds of money questions. The featured experts are Alabama's Mark Davis (inventor of the Eggsersizer) and yours truly. A schedule for this show in your area: http://www.rightonthemoney.org/about/stations_list.html

DARPA Big Time Contest

Reported by InventorsD

Richard Parson, at <http://www.inventors.ca/> shares the following: "The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) robot competition: **A \$1 million cash prize is available. Independent inventors are eligible to compete.**" web pages for those interested: <http://www.darpa.mil/grandchallenge/rules.htm>
<http://www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/ptech/01/13/robot.race.reut/index.html>

Toothbrush trounces car as top invention By Jeordan Legon CNN Jan 22, 2003

In a nation obsessed with sparkling teeth and minty-fresh breath, the lowly toothbrush is the king

of inventions. Look up full story <http://www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/ptech/01/22/toothbrush.king/>

HELP is AVAILABLE Thanks to geopierce@earthlink.net Hello George,

"I just read your posting about people who have an idea and are looking for someplace to go for help. Please feel free to send them to the Minnesota Inventors Congress (MIC).

We are a 501(c)3 non profit, volunteer organization that is dedicated to educating inventors on the invention development process. Our office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (cst) Monday - Thursday and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Friday. Call 1-800-invent1 (468-3681) for information.

If you are a manufacturer that is interested in developing new products, please give us a call.

You can also check out our website at www.invent1.org to get information on the 46th Annual Minnesota Inventors Congress Expo 2003 to be held on June 13, 14 & 15.

Jennifer Moritz Coordinator 1-800-invent1"

Inventors Council

CSU incubator launches Business Plan competition

The National Environmental Technology Incubator at Central State University is hosting a business plan competition, with a \$10,000 prize for the entrepreneur with the top business plan.

Entrants may have an existing technology-oriented business, or a company in the formation stage.

FULL STORY LINKS:

CSU incubator launches business contest - 2003-02-03 - Dayton Business Journal Access:

<http://www.emailthis.clickability.com/et/emailThis?clickMap=viewThis&etMailToID=1022043920&pt=Y>

Inventors Council Man donates \$10,000 to academy — to Young Inventors Program

By MARIAN MORTON Monitor staff Concord, NH Local inventor and entrepreneur Alex Slocum has bestowed \$10,000 on the Academy of Applied Science's Young Inventors Program.

Explaining the motivation behind his donation, Slocum recalled his own childhood experience of trying to find an outlet for his ideas.

"Invention can work for the school system as a catalyst," Slocum said. "Invention teaches you that whenever you're told you can't do something, you probably can - and make some money doing it, too."

About 5,000 students from 40 schools around the state participate in the Young Inventor's Program. In some schools, teachers incorporate the program into math and science classes; in others, it's offered as an after-school extracurricular activity. Executive Director Pamela Hampton said Slocum's donation will help the program expand into more schools, providing teacher training workshops and student handbooks to guide aspiring inventors.

FULL STORY LINK Copy and paste the following into your Web browser to SAVE THIS link:

<http://www.savethis.clickability.com/st/saveThisPopupApp?clickMap=saveFromET&partnerID=15&etMailToID=86221822&pt=Y>

Thanks to George D. Pierce, Jr. President Inventors Council (a nonprofit organization) Wright Brothers Station PO Box 611 Dayton, OH 45409-0611 937-321-6580 (voice) 413-208-9155 (fax)