

# Inventors' Network Volume 11

Of the Capital Area [INCA] Issue 1

Website: <http://dcinventors.org>

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Our **January 20** speaker is **Mr. Henry Frickel**. He is a model maker, proto-type maker, museum exhibition creator.

Mr Frickel has worked for the Smithsonian and other clients, making working models, interactive exhibits and related presentations. He will be offering tips on proto-typing. His tips include how to get sophisticated results for inexpensive budgets. **Our January 20 meeting is expected to commit some time to hearing about projects being pursued by members and guests. 410 547 1144**

MEETING: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday,

**20 Jan 03**

Potomac Community Center  
11315 Falls Rd. Potomac Md.

5:30 Network w Pizza

**7:00** Mr. Henry Frickel,  
Dimensional Productions

7:30 Member & Guest Issues

Our **February 16** program includes a business meeting for INCA and an opportunity for more group attention to the visions and calls-for-help from our inventor guests and members.

INCA Business is defined, in part, by our by-laws that are available from a link at the base of our website's first page. Members will be invited to discuss their image and questions about INCA with a slate of proposed 2003 officers. Members who have organized alternative officers will have opportunity to discuss the merit of their candidates prior to our March meeting election.

Other currently known issues may include **by-law adjustment** to accommodate not-for-profit status as 5013D instead of 5013C. Our current status as a 5013C corporation provides not-for-profit status, and therefore no tax reports, but precludes the corporation (and perhaps its officers) from financing or performing lobbying. Our location at the Nation's Capital; and the importance of potential patent law changes to our active hobbies and careers is an on-going drive toward enhancing the role of Independent inventors within the US.

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**NEW YEAR COMMERCIAL** — An envelope with the INCA address is enclosed with each of the Month's newsletters. The envelope for 2003 signals that Dues of \$36 to-end-of-year are now due. Our March newsletter (or postcard) will be addressed to those whose dues are in the hand of the treasurer prior to press time, Mar 6.

**Alternative Newsletter Channel:** Our new website, **DCINVENTORS.ORG** has a link to most past newsletters and Raoul reports his intention to keep the newsletters, including all new ones, available to webreaders.

Ray intends to send postcards with notes about current meetings and with references to web-newsletter topics.

Our **March 17** speaker will be **Dr. John H. Dodds**

Dr. Dodds is an exceptional teacher / administrator / patent attorney. We expect him to respond to a wide range of questions, [in response to conversations within our open forum February meeting]. One issue, already advanced to him is “how an inventor, seeking International coverage, might elect to obtain their US patent within international filing procedures”.

**Our March 03 meeting will also include a formalization of future INCA officers and appointees.**

For **April 21**, we have invited **Dr. Barbara Cross** to speak. Many of us have met her in the kitchen of Jerry and Barbara’s house in Kensington. Dr. Cross directs a NIH program of grants, and is particularly aware of the criteria expected from innovators whose contributions offer a Federal payback through future taxes that exceed more current grant costs.

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**Mr Matthew Flyer** introduced his firm, **NextStep Partners**, on Nov 18 ‘02. His working model is a matrix for comparing parallel aspects of Technical, Market and Business demands as a project moves from Concept through Development and Commercial phases

His firm works with start-up businesses and inventors to assess markets and distribution channels for products. Nextstep partners also teams with inventor’s technical talent to frame business plans suitable for drawing investment sources and critical talent. Economic analysis of the market niche sought and appropriate sizing of resource often demands consultant-level business skills. Some business planning in a firm’s concept phase has need for strategic consultation as well as hands-on initial implementation. Mr Flyer explained his role in finding partner-level talent under terms to include taking a risk-sharing ownership position while drawing immediate funds at a “keep the lights on” level of expense.

A directly offered strength is formulation and initial execution of marketing strategies. He cited changing one energy conservation product from a strategy of “expecting plumbing companies to sell the product” to “helping energy companies improve their customer relations by ‘helping customers save annual costs of energy’”. He proposed that if a development firm intends to license their product, they are best served with a market strategy that clearly defines “who their licensees will be” with a clear analysis of habits and expectations, as well as specific names of the licensee’s decision makers.

Nextstep Partner’s objective is to take an investment position in young companies as partial consideration of their talent commitment toward complementing the invention team’s management strengths. Their market contribution might include on-site collaboration with their host business at multiple periods during business development. Money examples included Cash-level support for a one-time project that was bid at \$9,000. Another client operated with a monthly rate of \$2500 per person. Ownership negotiated details were not discussed in this presentation.

Invention product companies may prefer to define an exit strategy soon after business startup. This offers a larger company a product tested in the marketplace; therefore worth more. However, recruiting a commercial marketing sub-team would present severe conflicts from a strategy of “exit after startup”. Utilization of a Nextstep Partner’s strategy of partnering seems to offer a powerful option to inventor-developers who are not enthusiastic about building a manufacturing and distribution company.

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

"INCA is inventors helping inventors. To provide special help to newcomers to INCA you are invited to meet with experienced [I say old guys but they didn't like it!]inventors at 6 pm each meeting night. This will provide you with one half hour of experienced counsel and an opportunity to get your pressing questions answered and locate the member who is most directly working in your field." Bill

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On Nov 18, **Mr Kevin Harwell** of Penn State University [KRH7@psu.edu](mailto:KRH7@psu.edu) discussed the inventor resource of **Patent & Trademark Depository Libraries (PTDL)** throughout the US. These 86 libraries provide full text and graphics in a mode that, for many researchers, is faster and more complete than currently available from the USPTO website. These host libraries provide free assistance to anyone who wants to use USPTO resources.

The co-location of PTDL resources within Full Service and Academic libraries provides enhanced searching in non-patent resources. For example, the University of Maryland PTDL is housed in the Engineering and Physical Sciences Library at College Park. Librarian Jim Miller 301 405-9157 can assist in an inventors need for scientific and technical information that is findable in journals, encyclopedias, handbooks and directories. Business librarians, like Kevin Harwell and Rick Stringer 814 865 6369 at the Schreyer Business Library at Penn State, can coach inventors about business and commercialization resources. In Washington DC, Leslie Brown 202 806 7252 of Howard University's Founders library can provide coaching on inventor resources available through her PTDL, other non-patent documents and referrals to district as well as Federal agencies that offer expertise.

Kevin advised inventors to call ahead for appointment times with PTDL librarians in the interest of arranging for their available time. Professional librarians are dedicated to a free service of helping clients, one at a time, to become proficient in performing their own research.

He commented on Business related websites: [www.hoovers.com](http://www.hoovers.com) for public companies and some private company information. A small fee subscription also offers the Hoovers analysis of some industries. The SEC's EDGAR source holds Annual reports of publicly held companies. [Www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml](http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml) Thomas register is a well known catalog of product catalogs by manufacturers of components and materials. [Www.thomasregister.com](http://www.thomasregister.com) .

His observations about search engines is that few engines find more than 15% of the total entries for a search-set of words. He recommends including [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) , [www.metacrawler.com](http://www.metacrawler.com) and [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com) in a non-patent search process.

Tradeshows are listed in [www.ehgitornet.com/index.asp](http://www.ehgitornet.com/index.asp) , [www.expoworld.net/](http://www.expoworld.net/) And [www.tradeshowweek.com/index.asp?page=directory](http://www.tradeshowweek.com/index.asp?page=directory)

Some of the more frequently needed advice to non-patent searchers include "look for alternative terms" including root words to help broaden a search. Utilize "Advanced Search" button to enhance structure of search words and phrases. By all means, information searchers need to be willing to use the HELP button .

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**Raoul Drapeau is our sustaining hero-type webmaster.** He has installed a link in the old [inca.hispeed.com](http://inca.hispeed.com) site to help us all get used to the change to [www.dcinventors.org](http://www.dcinventors.org). He also has notified search engines about our new address. It also answers to a more simple [dcinventors.org](http://dcinventors.org). He has upgraded his user services to include a "search box", an "index" and a "forum".

Here are his instructions:

1. The site has a new URL; <http://www.dcinventors.org>. It was time to have our own domain name, instead of a subdomain, as we have been using for years. Also, the old hosting company had raised their prices every year to a level that was no longer competitive. The new organization has much faster servers, much lower cost and greatly enhanced features, some of which are described below. So, please take it for a test drive and bookmark it in your browser before the old site closes down on January 6th.
2. The first new feature is the addition of a Search capability. Note the search window at the bottom of the entry page. The purpose for it is that if you, or any user, can't find a topic in the listings, you can key in a term and find it that way. Give it a try.
3. The second feature is an Index which has a link at the bottom of the entry page. Similar to the search function, the index helps you scan through all the public pages to find topics of interest.
4. The third interesting feature is a forum. This is a place where members and non-members can communicate. The new INCA forum is intended as a means for non-members to pose their questions to us (or for that matter, for INCA members to pose questions to whoever might respond). This could be a good way to further build interest in INCA and promote our educational mission.

Using it, a non-member would click on the forum link on the opening page of the INCA site (<http://dcinventors.org>), register, and then key in a new question. Then, INCA members or anyone else for that matter, could check the forum and answer whichever questions they wanted to or felt competent to answer. I have put in a few sample questions and responses so you can see how it looks.

There is a disclaimer that users must read in order to access the forum (which cannot be accessed directly without going through the username/password dialogue at least once). The disclaimer protects us against action by those who might have relied on faulty advice given in good faith.

Please visit the forum, register and then every so often, visit the site and participate in the discussions there. While the forum has an educational purpose, if it turns out that people use foul language or engage in other abusive practices, there are management methods available to exclude certain users. For the moment, the forum is an experiment in good citizenship that we will monitor closely.

I have asked Glen Kotapish to be the forum administrator.

Don't forget, if you want to add your bio or any patent to our website, just go to that page on the web site, see what's already there, and write up something similar for yourself (including photos) and send it to me by email. [rdrapeau@cox.net](mailto:rdrapeau@cox.net)

During the January meeting, I will answer your questions.

Regards...Raoul

P.S. I have submitted our new site's URL to all the important search engines. However, the more it is accessed, the higher up in the list of 'hits' it moves. So whenever you visit the site, please periodically hit your browser's 'Refresh' button - it sends out another load request, and a search engine spider may see the packets passing by.

December 5, 2002: UIA News Update Bulletin <http://www.uiausa.com/Bulletin.htm>  
UIA Newsletter is now available on-line at <http://www.uiausa.com/uianewsv814.htm>

Westfield MA: A group of attorneys have joined forces to bring an end to invention promotion fraud. These attorneys will be reviewing on a case-by-case basis all claims of invention promotion fraud. If you feel that you have been the victim of inventor fraud and would like your case considered for legal remedies go to [www.uiausa.org/LegalCause.htm](http://www.uiausa.org/LegalCause.htm) and complete the questionnaire. If accepted, a law firm will contact you with details.

Manchester NH: **Big Idea Group 2001** visit their website at <http://www.bigideagroup.net/>  
**BIG placed over 20 product lines in the last 20 months. We placed both kids' items and home and garden innovations.**

**Spring 2003 Roadshows Toys & Kids' Roadshow March 1-2, Tarrytown, NY March 15-16, Chicago Marriott O'Hare**

**Home & Garden Roadshow May 3-4, Boston May 17-18, Nashville  
Storage & Office Supply Roadshow May 21, Manchester, NH**

**February 8, 2003 9AM-5PM "Plug Into the World of Inventing" Supported by the USPTO, Patent Cafe, Inc.; United Inventors Assn, Inventors Digest Magazine; Intellectual Asset Management Associates, LLC; and the Rothschild Patent Model Museum & Invention Center... Don Kelly joins Abby Waters (Abby's Idea Factory) for a one-day seminar.**

**Topics include: why's and when's of patenting; value of trademarks; commercialization and marketing strategies; venture capital structuring, Internet advertising. Plus: opportunities for free one-on-one counseling. Gourmet lunch. Warm sun. Beaches nearby.**

**Crowne Plaza Hotel, Forum Room, 1601 Belvedere Road, 33406 West Palm Beach, Fla. Reserve on-line TODAY. See you there. [www.abbysideafactory.com](http://www.abbysideafactory.com)**

**February 27, 2003 28th Annual Western New York "Inventor of the Year Awards" Hyatt Hotel, Two Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, New York, 6:30 - 10:00 p.m. Registration and Cocktail Reception Begin at 5:30 p.m.**

**Featured Speaker: The Honorable James E. Rogan Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property & Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.**

**This event is hosted by the Technical Societies Council and the Niagara Frontier Intellectual Property Law Association.**

**For more information, please contact Michele Bjorkman at Wilson Greatbatch Technologies, Inc., 10,000 Wehrle Dr., Clarence, NY 14031, Fax.716.759.5639 Tel.716.759.5638, [mbjorkman@greatbatch.com](mailto:mbjorkman@greatbatch.com) .**

**March 15, 2003**

**\*\*\*TENNESSEE INVENTORS ASSOCIATION\*\*\***

**Oak Ridge, Tenn. All day seminar. (865) 981-2927. E-mail: [vwdavis@earthlink.net](mailto:vwdavis@earthlink.net) or <http://uscni.com/tia/>**

**Invention related trade shows and events** : <http://www.inventorsdigest.com/current/shows.html>  
United Inventors Association Sponsored by the Academy of Applied Science Nonprofit group serving the Inventor Community since 1990. Visit the all-new Inventors Awareness Center at <http://www.uiausa.org>

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Storage & Office Supply Roadshow May 21, Manchester, NH

January 15, 2003 \*\*\*3rd Annual North Dakota Inventors Congress (NDIC)\*\*\*  
Held at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Please see [www.ndinventors.com](http://www.ndinventors.com) for more information about the NDIC and hotel accommodations (special rates available).

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For more information, please contact Michele Bjorkman at Wilson Greatbatch Technologies, Inc., 10,000 Wehrle Dr., Clarence, NY 14031, Fax.716.759.5639 Tel.716.759.5638, [mbjorkman@greatbatch.com](mailto:mbjorkman@greatbatch.com) .

March 15, 2003

\*\*\*TENNESSEE INVENTORS ASSOCIATION\*\*\*

Oak Ridge, Tenn. All day seminar. (865) 981-2927. E-mail: [vwdavis@earthlink.net](mailto:vwdavis@earthlink.net) or <http://usni.com/tia/>

For an extended roster of invention related trade shows and events go to:  
<http://www.inventorsdigest.com/current/shows.html>

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guess@att.net writes: **The Wright brothers should have written their own patent application. ???**

[DgrantK@aol.com](mailto:DgrantK@aol.com) responds. I wish patent law had been as easy or fun for me as was baseball. Anyone who has practiced both will say it takes years to learn the finer points of either game.

I've finally gave up baseball (playing) when a batting practice liner tried to rip through my shinbone.... But, I've studied, managed, taught and practiced patent law for 38 years. Today, I could step out on the diamond and play by essentially the same old rules - and know just what to do. But let's not pretend it's the same for those who would draft patent claims or write a solidly reliable patent specification.

The law changes every day. Really. This year, I'll spend well over \$4000 attending conferences and seminars just to keep abreast.

Most inventors have day jobs that they must cling to, and can ill-afford time or energy to chase the flyballs of patent practice. I would agree with Mr. Guess that taking on the task of self-teaching the basics can really help our inventor friends in making timely, key business decisions...and in working effectively and efficiently with qualified (and up-to-date) patent agents or attorneys. But playing in the same league? Nope.

As for teaching the Wrights to self-patent: They survived an incredibly tough patent litigation only through the fortuitous acumen and practiced skills of their patent attorney in a landmark case against Glenn Curtiss, among others.

Don Kelly, Intellectual Asset Management Associates, LLC  
Patent Agent, Broker 515 King Street, Suite 420 Alexandria, VA 22314  
[DgrantK@aol.com](mailto:DgrantK@aol.com) bio [http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/iip/iiconf/speakers.html#d\\_kelly](http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/iip/iiconf/speakers.html#d_kelly)

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**John Melius** shares some of his observations about considering a patent as a special form of contract.

The Claims and the Specifications portions of the patent contract have a "hand and glove" relationship. The inventor weaves a "glove" with technical descriptions, hypotheses, and possibly facts into which the "hand", the claims, can fit. The better and bigger the glove (specifications), the larger, stronger and more powerful the hand (claims) that can fit into the glove. [Extending this figure-of-speech, each finger of the hand might be considered as an independent claim which is further clarified by dependent claims that become analogous to knuckles and other integral parts of that finger.]

As in real life, the hand (set of claims) provides the real power, and not the glove (specifications). If the patent writer has not defined a proper glove - specification, there may be no place for the fingers, thumb, or other part of the hand-claim, even if the subject for a powerful claim exists in reality.

A well-woven glove-specification does not guarantee that the inventor also understands how to insert the strongest possible hand-claims to employ his full set of muscles through it. This is not a matter for the faint of heart to undertake since even experts are challenged in its sustained mastery.

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Joanne of inventors' Digest [www.inventordigest.com](http://www.inventordigest.com) has sent a message of good cheer for 2003.

She reminds our members that they are eligible for the special reduced one-year subscription rate for Inventors' Digest of just \$18 a year! (It's regularly \$27/year.) If you want easy-to-use sign up sheets, just let me know and we'll get them out to you! Or members can sign up online and just note that they are a member of INCA.

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**Continued Commercial:** Our annual dues total \$36 per year. All memberships terminate at the 12<sup>th</sup> month of a year. Guests are welcome for two or three meetings to become acquainted with the way INCA works for them. Some persons who plan to visit infrequently may opt to pay \$5 at the door or into the food kitty instead of being a regular member.

Our mailing list will be including regular members and subscription only (\$10/yr) persons. Your editor expects to post a newsletter on the website each month; and to send hard copies for some months, with post cards on remaining months as a reminder of INCA meetings.

**Please Note communication items within this month's newsletter:**

- 1. Our website address has become [www.dcinventors.org](http://www.dcinventors.org)**
- 2. Past and present Newsletters are linked to the bottom of our website home page.**
- 3. An enclosed envelope is addressed for sending your \$36 dues check.**
- 4. The new year is an ideal time to volunteer for helping INCA help inventors. Talk to persons listed on our first page.**
- 5. Instruction and a better map to INCA meetings are displayed on the first button of our website.**