

Rummaging in the SAC Bag

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In a speech in Cape Town, South Africa, on June 7, 1966, Robert F. Kennedy said, "There is a Chinese curse which says, "May he live in interesting times." Like it or not, we live in interesting times..." Journalists picked up the phrase and it has become a commonplace.

However, the popularity of this "Chinese curse" puzzles Chinese scholars, who have only heard it from Americans. If it is of Chinese origin, it has somehow escaped the literature, although it may be a paraphrase of a liberal translation from a Chinese source, and therefore unrecognizable when translated back to Chinese. It might be related to the Chinese proverb, "It's better to be a dog in a peaceful time than to be a man in a chaotic period."

Stephen DeLong, who has been researching this quotation for several years and details his quest on his own website, has traced the quotation back to a 1950 science fiction story: "U-Turn" by Duncan H. Munro, a pseudonym for Eric Frank Russell.

The three paragraphs given above were copied from the web site

<http://www.noblenet.org/reference/inter.htm>

and the phrase describes the times we are living in and experiencing. Since September 11, 2001, life in the USA and the world at large has dramatically been changed. And, as a transnational organization, *IEEE* has experienced upheaval and change, some of which is now directly affecting students.

IEEE

Dues

By now you have received your new membership application packages and are aware that the student dues have increased from \$19.00 to \$30.00. Although this seems like a very large increase (for one year—it is), the dues have not been raised in several years. In fact, dues were **decreased** several years ago. *IEEE* has been hemorrhaging money for the last two years and ALL entities in the organization are contributing in some fashion to keep *IEEE* a financially healthy organization.

The bad news is, as *IEEE* Student Branch Counselors and Student Branch Officers, we are on the front lines in trying to maintain the interest, growth, and spark of *IEEE* student membership alive, well, and growing in Region 5. And it might not be easy—having an increase of this magnitude may keep some students from joining *IEEE*. The good news is that we have a great product to offer to our students! *IEEE* membership is still a bargain—the benefits of *IEEE* membership will last our students a lifetime. It will be up to us, as the SB Councilors and the SB Officers, to deliver this message.

Membership

The student membership in Region 5 has continued to increase. It is only through your hard work and efforts that we have been able to achieve our growth. Our growth in 2002 is given in the table below.

| | 2002 | 2001 | Increase |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| April | 4314 | 3898 | 10.7 % |
| June | 4688 | 4267 | 9.9 % |
| July | 3792 | 3443 | 10.1 % |
| September | | 3566 | |
| October | | 3869 | |

No new reports have been written since July. When I get the next one, I will send out the new information.

Web Registration

If your student branch has not set up Web registration, I would strongly encourage you to look into this method of processing student applications. It is very easy for students, it is even easier for the Counselor, and it gets the student name into the database immediately. The student will get on the publication mailing list once the counselor returns the application. If you have any questions, just ask Laura Durrett, at

<mailto:L.Durrett@Ieee.Org>

In fact, if you have any questions or concerns about **IEEE**, don't hesitate to contact Laura. She knows **EVERYTHING!!**

Reporting

If your student branch has not yet sent in your 2001-2002 Annual Report, you still can submit your report and get your Student Branch Rebate—\$1.10 per student member as of 12/31/2001. If you do not need the money, send it to me and I promise to put it to good use. Seriously, by filing the annual report, you are maintaining contact with **IEEE**. I would also encourage you to file the New Officer Reporting form, as well as the Student Branch Counselor form. We need to have an accurate list of branches, officers, and addresses in our Region.

The next reporting deadline, which has not yet passed, is the Annual Plan. The Branch Annual Plan is due by November 1. A copy should be sent to your Section SAC, to me (the Region SAC at R.Leavene@IEEE.Org) and to Lance (the Region RSR at LCP676@IEEE.Org). The Branch Counselor can find the name and address of the Section SAC. You can send the reports to Lance and me electronically, or by snail mail at:

349 EB-W
University of Missouri-Columbia
Columbia, MO 65211

The formation of the Branch Annual Plan is an excellent time to plan out Branch Activities for the year. Besides, IEEE will send you \$25.00 or \$50.00 (depending on the size of the branch) just for sending the plan in to Headquarters. Again, if your branch doesn't need the money, file your plan and then send the check to me—I'll spend it **wisely**.

Upcoming Events and Contests

AT&T Labs Student Enterprise Award Contest

The AT&T Labs Student Enterprise Award Deadline is coming **NOVEMBER 15**. Have an idea for a project but need financial help implementing it? *IEEE* Student members are eligible for the AT&T Labs Student Enterprise Award. The AT&T Foundation annually funds a \$1000 award to provide the opportunity for *IEEE* Student members to work with others on engineering projects, while simultaneously strengthening Student Branch programs.

To apply, *IEEE* Student Branch members submit a proposal to the *IEEE* Student Activities Committee. Topics may be of a technical or non-technical nature ranging from research on state-of-the-art technology to community service programs. For more information, visit:

http://www.ieee.org/membership/students/awards/sc_att.xml

Outstanding Student Branch Counselor Award

Counselors need to go get a drink (your choice of beverage) while your Student Branch Officers and I discuss your Outstanding Student Branch Counselor nomination. This is an excellent opportunity for the student branch to recognize the outstanding work done for the student branch and its members. Each year, *IEEE* recognizes 10 counselors throughout the world. The counselor receives \$500, while the student branch receives \$200. The deadline is February 28, 2003, but now is the time to start working on the nomination. For more information, visit the *IEEE Student Concourse*.

2003 Region 5 Meeting

The 2003 *IEEE* Region 5 Conference will be held in New Orleans, LA, from April 11-13, 2003. The Conference Hotel will be the Hyatt Regency New Orleans. As you might imagine, the intersection of New Orleans and Hyatt Regency is **Expensive** (really fun but expensive). The Conference Committee has done an excellent job of arranging for student activities at the conference. And, they have arranged for up to four students per room. The room rate will be at least double the rate in Houston. The Region will be attempting to obtain student supplemental funding, but you should not have that "extra" money in your conference budget to attend the meeting.

The main conference website is at

<http://www.ieee-neworleans.org/r5conf/index.htm>

The site is not yet active will be very soon. This will be a *Great, Grand Event!!* Please start now to plan for your trip to the FRENCH QUARTER. The Conference Committee has promised us Cajun food that will fry your eyeballs (well, maybe they will take pity on us poor, taste-deprived folks).

And Finally

Although I have said it before, and I will say it again, it is a very great pleasure to work with you all to promote *IEEE* Student Activities to a great bunch of folks—our students! It is only through the hard work of you, the Student Branch Counselors and Student Branch Officers, that we are able to deliver our message of professional development and involvement! Ya'll do good work!!

And now, some new terms that have been added to the dictionary:

BULL MARKET -- A random market movement causing an investor to mistake himself for a financial genius.

MOMENTUM INVESTING -- The art of buying high and selling low.

VALUE INVESTING -- The art of buying low and selling lower.

P/E RATIO -- The percentage of investors wetting their pants as the market keeps crashing.

BROKER -- What my broker has made me.

STANDARD & POOR -- Your life in a nutshell.

STOCK ANALYST -- Idiot who just downgraded your stock.

FINANCIAL PLANNER -- A guy who actually remembers his wallet when he runs to the 7-11 for toilet paper and cigarettes.

MARKET CORRECTION -- The day after you buy stocks.

CASH FLOW -- The movement your money makes as it disappears down the toilet.

INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR -- Past year investor who's now locked up in a nuthouse.

PROFIT -- Religious guy who talks to God.