



Institution of Engineering and Technology

# IET Ottawa

## MAY 2008 Newsletter

Web Site: [www.iee-ottawa.org](http://www.iee-ottawa.org)

Branch email address: [ottawa@iee.org](mailto:ottawa@iee.org)

Secretary: Hudson Egbert,

### Annual General Meeting:

#### **Ottawa Centre Annual General Meeting & Barbecue**

#### **The Britannia Yacht Club, Ottawa - 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm, Wednesday, May 28th, 2008**

This year, in conjunction with our AGM, we are inviting members, their spouses and families to join us for a Barbecue at the Britannia Yacht Club. There will be a reasonably priced meal available.

6.00 - 7.00 Barbeque

7.00 - 8.30 Business Meeting

Reports on Activities from 2007/2008,

Reports and discussion on the activities of the IET Council, Young Members Committee and Regional Representatives Committee in London from Colin Billowes, John Vines and Hudson Egbert

Election of Committee for 2008/2009

Nominations for the committee welcomed. Please contact Colin Billowes at: 613 592 9026, email: [billowes@magma.ca](mailto:billowes@magma.ca).

How to get there:

From the East: Proceed along Carling Avenue or Richmond Road to the point at which they meet. Take the first right on Carling Ave after the junction onto Britannia Road. Proceed north to Cassels Street. Turn left and carry on until you reach the Britannia Yacht Club entrance.

From the West: Take Pinecrest Road, Richmond Road or Carling Avenue to the junction of Richmond Road and Carling Avenue. Proceed on to Richmond Road and turn left on to Poulin, just before Britannia Plaza and continue north to Howe and then turn right on to Britannia Road.

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### Report on the April 17th 2008 Technical Meeting "Next Generation 911"

#### Prepared by Bhagvat Joshi, Ottawa Branch

We all take 'call 911' for granted, we teach our children to call '911' in case of emergency with the expectation that someone will answer our call in a timely manner and send us the help we need. We rarely concern ourselves with goes on behind the scenes when a '911' call is placed – we expect it to work.

Allan Zander of SolaCom gave us an insight into the current and evolving technologies used to support 911 /E-911 and how technological advances such as cell phones and voice-over-IP (VoIP) technologies are impacting the way emergency call are handled. At the same time, IP technology, VoIP, GIS systems and databases are helping improve the way the E-9-1-1 calls are handled.

Allan explained how today 911 calls are routed to emergency operators at a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) – there are 3 in the Ottawa area. The PSAP operator uses the location information based on the calling number to locate the caller by looking this up in a Master Street Address Guide (MSAG), they then may use multiple computer systems/radio systems to alert the appropriate first responder – all while speaking to someone who is distressed/disorientated . Quite often the address may be out of date or not yet entered in case of a new development. Also sometimes a call may get routed to a PSAP that is actually unable to help and the call is transferred to the correct PSAP – losing valuable time in a

distress situation.

Cell phones bring with them not only location issues, but also during some emergencies such as an auto accident, many cell phone users may call 911 to report the same accident and unwittingly tie up the PSAP from responding to other calls. Similarly VoIP allows users to have "fixed" phone numbers which may well be geographically assigned to another location – for example user in Ottawa with a Vancouver phone number.

Allan then went on to describe new technologies which use GIS databases and other technologies to make the E-911 system much more reliable and accurate. For example, with GIS it is possible to visualize a "cluster" such as an intersection where an automobile accident has occurred and play a message to the caller that if they are calling about the auto accident, the first responders already know about it- if they still wish to report it, stay on the line.

Also, the new technology allows the databases to be shared across multiple PSAPs such that in case of a major event causing an overload at a PSAP, the 911 calls can be transferred to another PSAP that can dispatch the first responders.

There were about fifteen attendees at a very interactive and informative session.

## Do you know what you are missing?

I'm Colin Billowes and I was a founder member of the Ottawa network of the IET which first saw life in 1967 and I've been on the Exec Committee ever since. During that time, our membership has fluctuated over the years around the 300 mark and we are currently 262, so we are pretty stable.

Turnout at meetings probable averages about 12 – I do not count them – which means about 5% of you come out – trouble is that it is almost the same 5% every time. These numbers have never been analyzed but I bet an all-too-high percentage of you have never attended a meeting.

You don't know what you are missing. Take the last meeting where we heard a really interesting paper by Ken Tapping, head of NRC's Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory, near Penticton, BC. He told us all about the way the sun behaves in the area of radio frequency emissions and discussed the sun spot cycle (known as the Maunder Cycle ) and how it seems to correlate with earth weather. He told us that we are entering a period of very low sun spot activity and that this might lead to global cooling – now that's food for thought – maybe we will need all that CO2 after all!

The newly named IET is rapidly changing. The new CEO is a dynamo and is going to drive us to new heights but this

cannot be done without active local networks which are clearly the front line of this program. There are some 101 LNs at the last count with about 57 outside of the UK and a total of about 150,000 members and it is these members and networks which have to advance the cause of professional engineering and help the profession get it the recognition it deserves, but does not yet receive.

Ottawa has already responded to the call to arms with the formation of our first Young Members' section for the under 35s. There are not many of them yet but we hope to be able to attract new and undergraduates to the IET. You will also have seen some of the changes at the top with the new format of the magazines which are creating some excitement – I actually don't like them but that's another matter

So the best way that the ordinary member can play a part in this drive is to support your Local Network. Best way to do this is to make a resolution that you will attend at least one meeting a year. I think you may be surprised at how interesting it is. A fair bit of hard work goes into the organizing of the Ottawa LN and although your Committee is all dedicated to continuing this, it would be really nice to see the majority of you who never come out.

Colin Billowes, Member of Council  
Ottawa LN Committee Member.

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## Chairman's Column

### **2007-2008 Session**

This year the IET Ottawa Network has run a program of extremely interesting monthly talks that have been well received by everyone who attended. Last night this program culminated with a highly enjoyable presentation on Canada's use of Radio Astronomy to monitor solar emissions. Today our newly formed Younger Members Section ran a Science and Engineering Fair at a local elementary school. This then marks the conclusion of the 2007-2008 session and the current committee will stand down at the end of the month, when we hold the Annual General Meeting at Britannia Yacht Club.

### **2008 AGM**

The committee would like to invite all members and their guests to attend the IET Ottawa Network Annual General Meeting on 28th May. The program of events will look something like this. :

#### BBO and Bar

#### Annual General Meeting:

- The year in review – Chair – Martyn Delbridge

- Report from RRC – John Vines
- Report from Council – Colin Billowes
- Report from Volunteer Members Conference – Hugh Reekie
- Report from Younger Members Board/Section – Hudson Egbert
- Report from Nominating Committee – Colin Billowes
- Presentation of candidates for election – Colin Billowes
- Election of Committee for 2008-2009.

DVD: – Behind the Scenes at Faraday House.

Close

I do hope you can attend.

- - - Martyn Delbridge Chair

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## **YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS**

For some time we have been sending notices to members by Email. This is to save the cost of paper and postage, but also provide updates and reminders that you would not receive in time from Canada Post. You are receiving this paper copy of the newsletter because we do not have your Email address. If you wish to receive notices and newsletters by Email, please send your Email address to [jvines@iee.org](mailto:jvines@iee.org)

**Note:** If you change your home address, telephone number or Email address, please inform the IET in London. The change may be made by letter or sending an Email to [membership@theiet.org](mailto:membership@theiet.org), or by entering the change directly via the IET WEB page. Notification to [jvines@iee.org](mailto:jvines@iee.org) will also help locally.

The 2007/2008 Ottawa Network Committee consists of:

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<b>.... (winter)</b>		239 432 0117		
<b>David Boteler</b>		613 824 6474	613 837 2035	<a href="mailto:boteler@iee.org">boteler@iee.org</a> <a href="mailto:martyn.delbridge@gdcanada.com">martyn.delbridge@gdcanada.com</a>
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