

Technologist

Includes information for the Syracuse Section of the IEEE.

SYRACUSE AREA TECHNICAL SOCIETIES COUNCIL

ACM - Association of Computing Machinery	Gerry T. Volger	Chair	433-1904
ACS - American Chemical Society	Steven Keller	Chair	
AFE - Association of Facilities Engineers	Nick Kochan	Pres.	455-7061
AFS - American Foundryman's Society	Kevin Walker	Chair	477-5151
AIA - American Institute of Architects	Jamie Williams	Pres.	476-8371
AIAA - American Institute of Aeronautics & Astronautics	John E. LaGraff	Chair	
AIChE - American Institute of Chemical Engineers	Suresh Santanam	Chair	655-8161 x 340
AIHA - American Industrial Hygiene Association	Tom McGiff	Pres.	607-255-5835
ASCE - American Society of Civil Engineers	Matt Millias P.E.	Pres.	451-9560
ASHRAE - American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers	Tom Buswell	Pres.	432-6510
ASM - American Society for Metals	Jeff Zerilli	Chair	607-533-7000
ASME - American Society of Mechanical Engineers	Tom Michlovitch	Chair	433-1917, x125
ASPE - American Society of Plumbing Engineers	Daniel C. Gehl	Pres.	607-277-7100
ASQ - American Society for Quality	Andy Thyne	Chair	456-3267
ASSE - American Society of Safety Engineers	Jerry Clark	Chair	445-4536
CNYAIHA - CNY American Industrial Hygiene Association	Steve Valentine	Chair	455-0224
CNYSLS - CNY Society of Land Surveyors	Robert Green	Contact	428-4358
CNYTEA - CNY Technology Education Association	Michael D. Thurlow	Pres.	598-6030
FLSA - Finger Lakes Sanitarians Association	Lary Duchaney	Chair	445-1597
IEEE - Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers	Mike Hayes	Chair	455-2000
IES - Illuminating Engineering Society	Paul Mahaney	Pres.	443-5328
ISMC - International Society for Measurement & Control	Steve Burrell	Pres.	445-5555
LCSEAA - LC Smith Engineering Alumni Association	Kelly Thompson	Contact	678-2171
NSPE - National Society of Professional Engineers	Michael R. Hayes, P.E.	Pres	455 2000
NYSAPLS - NYS Assoc. of Professional Land Surveyors	Robert S. Green	Chair	428-4358
NYSATE - NYS Association of Transportation Engineers	Mary Clements	Pres.	428-4627
SAE - Society of Automotive Engineers	Angie Errico	Chair	432-4363
SAS - Syracuse Astronomical Society	Stu Foster	Pres.	492-9118
SBE - Society of Broadcast Engineers	Vincent Lopez	Pres.	472-6800
SFPE - Society of Fire Protection Engineers	Dennis McCarty	Pres.	716-599-4238
SME - Society of Manufacturing Engineers	Sam Waite	Chair	432-0700
SWE - Society of Women Engineers	Susan Weaver	Pres.	432-0506

The Technology Alliance of CNY has been reporting on technical excellence since 1903.

Vol. 9 No 10

June 2007

The Syracuse Section of the
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
www.ewh.ieee.org/r1/syracuse



- Online News and Contact Info,
- IEEE Family Night,
- Life Member Meeting,
Plant Tour: Welch Allyn
- Current Calendar of Events,
- Call for Papers,

Page 2

Page 3

Page 4

Page 5

Page 6



The Technology Alliance of Central New York
www.TACNY.org

- 2005-2006 Officers List,
- Technology Winners,
- Story Musgrave,
- Teachers Honored,
- Junior Cafe,
- Technical Societies Council,
- Best Kept Secret,
- Joe Nickell,

Page 7

Page 7

Page 8

Page 9

Page 9

Page 10

Page 11

Pages 12 & 13

The Institute Online

1) MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT RECORD SET IN FIRST QUARTER 2007

During the first quarter of 2007, IEEE recruited a total of 25,807 new members with same-quarter recruitment increasing two percent over 2006 (the previous record). Higher-grade member recruitment posted a 14 percent increase over the first quarter of last year.

The Membership Development Reports are electronic newsletters published monthly on behalf of the IEEE Membership Development Committee and distributed to membership development officers in Regions, Sections and Societies as well as to other interested IEEE volunteers and staff. The reports provide monthly snapshots of IEEE membership, with statistical information and comparative analyses of the data. They also include articles on timely MD activities, updates on MD programs, and upcoming IEEE events. Access to these reports is restricted to active IEEE members and staff. An IEEE web account is required for access. Visit the following URL: http://www.ieee.org/web/volunteers/membership_dev/md_reports.html

2) RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING IEEE VOLUNTEERS

You can help recognize the efforts of outstanding volunteers by nominating someone for one of the prestigious Regional Activities Board (RAB) awards. Each prestigious award has a unique mission and criteria, and offers the opportunity to honor distinguished colleagues, inspiring teachers and corporate leaders.

Do you know someone who has made substantial Regional contributions through innovative projects, exemplary leadership, service, or by fulfilling the goals as related to Transnational Activities? Consider nominating them for one of the following awards:

- * RAB Achievement Award * RAB GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade) Achievement Award
- * RAB Innovation Award * RAB Leadership Award
- * RAB Larry K. Wilson Transnational Award

The deadline for nominations is 15 October 2007. More information and nomination forms are available at the RAB Awards Website: <http://www.ieee.org/rabawards>. Questions can be sent to rab-awards@ieee.org.

3) ASSET PROTECTION FOR GEOGRAPHIC UNITS

As a reminder, Unit Chair and Treasurer should periodically review the original monthly account statements and compare them to a recent financial report. It is good business practice for unit leaders to review account activity so that more than one person has oversight of the financial records. Also, in order to provide an independent review of expenses, and to ensure that the Section Executive Committee is informed and approves unit expenses, the Treasurer should present the Section/Chapter check register(s) to the Section Executive Committee at least two times during the year for review and approval. A Check register should always include name, date, amount; budget line and purpose for each transaction (for example, expense reimbursement, services provided, etc).

4) TECHNICAL SYMPOSIA GRANT PROGRAM 2007

IEEE Regional Activities will provide grants of \$500 each to Sections or Chapters sponsoring a full day or longer technical symposium that meets the program's qualification guidelines. The purpose of the program is to encourage and enable IEEE Sections and Chapters to support their members through local technical symposia and workshops.

For the detailed guidelines and the grant request form, visit <http://www.ieee.org/geofinances> and click on the link for "Technical Symposia Grant". Questions can be sent to symposia-grants@ieee.org.

IEEECONTACT INFORMATION

IEEE Operations Center
<http://www.ieee.org>
445 Hoes Lane
Piscataway NJ 08855-0331
Switchboard: +1 732 981 0060

IEEE Regional Activities
<http://www.ieee.org/ra>
+1 732 562 5501 (voice)
+1 732 463 3657 (fax)
regional.activities@ieee.org

Those members who need to CHANGE CONTACT INFO on file with the IEEE, including e-mail addresses, should do so at:
<<http://www.ieee.org/membership/coa.xml>>

SYRACUSE SECTION Meeting Information

Our Executive Committee Meetings are held on the first Friday of the month and are open to all members. Minutes are available online at <http://www.ewh.ieee.org/r1/syracuse/meet.htm>

Check out the all new Syracuse Section website:
<http://www.ewh.ieee.org/r1/syracuse/>



Take Me Out to The Ball Game!

IEEE Family Night

June 15th, 2007

6:00PM

Picnic at Alliance Stadium

Syracuse Chiefs Ball Game Following the Picnic

\$10.00 per Adult

\$5.00 per Child (18 and under)

Your Check is Your Reservation

Due: June 8, 2007

Check Payable to: Craig Cobb

Reservations to: Craig Cobb 446-0625



IEEE/LM MEETING NOTICE

Institute of Electrical & Electronic Engineers, Syracuse Section



IEEE – all Life & Section Members, Spouses & Guests

When: Thursday, June 21, 2007

Plant Tour: Welch Allyn in Skaneateles Falls NY (followed by lunch at the adjacent WA Lodge)

Host and Tour Supervisor: ALBERT J. DI RIENZO
Senior VP and Chief Technology Officer
Research and Development

Mr. Di Rienzo is degreed in Computer Science from Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA. Dedicated to the ideal of lifelong learning, he is focused on continued professional development, successfully pursuing an extensive list of managerial, leadership, and technical skills courses. In the span of 23 years, his career in industry includes research and development appointments at Welch Allyn, Philips Medical Systems, Siemens Medical Systems, Honeywell/Sperry Aerospace, and General Dynamics Land Systems. Under his guidance, development at Welch Allyn has increased from eight products released in 2002, to 20 released in 2005 with ever increasing capability, complexity, quality, and performance. He serves on numerous boards and advisory committees in education, government and industry. He is active in the Syracuse Section of the IEEE and is Founding Chair for the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society.

Summary of Tour Areas: Welch Allyn, is one of the world's leading researcher, developer, and manufacturer of diagnostic, physiologic monitoring, and therapeutic solutions for frontline caregivers. Some of the products we will see: Holter Systems, OAE Hearing Screener, Vital Signs LXI, Blood Pressure Products with DuraShock, the CP100 and CP200 Electrocardiographs, and Propaque LT Monitor.

DATE/TIME/PLACE: Thursday, June 21, 2007, meet at 9:30 AM at the Greater Syracuse Business Center, 1201 East Fayette Street, Syracuse and we will car-pool to Skaneateles. The main WA plant is at 4341 State Street (i.e. route 321) and we will proceed to the main building entrance where there is plenty of parking. We will meet in the lobby for the tour. Those living close to the Welch Allyn plant can go directly to the plant and plan to assemble at 10:30 AM.

We need an estimate on the number for lunch so please either call George Kirkpatrick 458-0082 and leave a message or e-mail: georgekirk@ieee.org Call as soon as you can firm up your plans but not later than Tuesday, 19 June 2007. Questions ? either call or e-mail.

June 15	6:00 PM	IEEE Computer Society & Circuits & Systems Chapters open to all members	Alliance Stadium	Baseball Night Picnic & Game	Craig Cobb
August 3	12:00 PM	IEEE Syracuse Section open to all members	C&S Engineers	Section Executive Committee Meeting	Mike Hayes
August 16	11:30 AM	IEEE Circuits & Systems Chapter open to all members	Verizon 201 South State St. Syracuse	IEEE Membership Value	Craig Cobb
September 7	12:00 PM	IEEE Syracuse Section open to all members	C&S Engineers	Section Executive Committee Meeting	Mike Hayes
October 5	12:00 PM	IEEE Syracuse Section open to all members	C&S Engineers	Section Executive Committee Meeting	Mike Hayes
November 1	6:00 PM	IEEE Computer Chapter & Student Branch open to all members	Syracuse University	Verizon Networking Trends	Craig Cobb
November 9	12:00 PM	IEEE Syracuse Section open to all members	C&S Engineers	Section Executive Committee Meeting	Mike Hayes
December 14	5:50 PM	IEEE Computer Society Chapter open to all members	RSVP	Holiday Party hosted by the Cobb's	Craig Cobb
January 4	12:00 PM	IEEE Syracuse Section open to all members	C&S Engineers	Section Executive Committee Meeting	Mike Hayes

Committees & Officers

Chair	Mike Hayes
Vice Chair	Prasanta Ghosh
Secretary	Larry Durante
Treasurer	William H. Maxwell
Newsletter Editor	Brian O'Hern
Professional Activities Chair	Scott Stumpf
Membership Chair	Lisa Osadciw
Educational Activities Chair	Prasanta Ghosh
Student Activities & Branch Advisor	Jay K. Lee
Syracuse University Student Branch President	Marian Chaffee
Webmaster	Don Herres
Chapter Chairs	
Aerospace/Communications (co-chairs)	Lisa Osadciw & Biao Chen
Circuits & Systems	Craig Cobb
Computer	Craig Cobb
Engineering in Medicine & Biology	Al DiRienzo
Industry Applications/Power Engineering	Mary Reidy
Life Members	George Kirkpatrick
Microwave Theory & Techniques/Antennas & Propagation	Ercument Arvas



Meeting the Growing Demand for Engineers and their Educators 2010 – 2020

International Conference, Munich, Germany, 9 – 11 November, 2007

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

The conference will bring together decision makers from industry, government, the pre-university education system, and academia to discuss and plan the preparation of future engineers and the people who educate them.

Discussion:

Over the next decade, most Western countries will face acute shortages of newly qualified engineers. At the same time we project a scarcity of teachers of mathematics, technology and science in the pre-university school systems that are preparing students for the academic study of engineering. The combination of these difficulties casts a shadow on the ability of industry to create new products and sustain the current rate of research and innovation.

Objectives:

- Analyze and understand the dimensions of the problem: shortages of engineers and technical educators worldwide
- Review successful programs that are designed to address the problem
- Develop a road map for purposeful future action

Strategy:

The conference will seek ways to create and expand collaborative efforts between the stakeholders, improve communication, and encourage joint projects. One of the important outcomes of such collaborations is expected to be a reversal of the declining trends of the teacher ranks in science, technology and mathematics. As result, recommendations for major constituents (school systems, ministries of education, industry leaders, university departments of engineering and professional societies), will be published as a 'call for action'.

Agenda:

- Invited speakers and authors assess the current situation, and identify best practices
- Paper and poster sessions, expert panels, and breakout sessions
- Data driven presentations, using examples from employment markets and educational systems

Location: ArabellaSheraton Grand Hotel, Arabellastrasse 6, Munich (Germany)

Total Attendance: Limited to about 100 to guarantee a maximum of interaction

Call for papers, posters, and panel discussions: Authors and panel session organizers are invited to send a **500-word synopsis** of each paper / proposal electronically to the Technical Program Committee: www.ieee.org/go/demandsummit/abstracts.html, by **30 June 2007**. Authors will be notified of acceptance or nonacceptance by 30 July 2007.

For more information about conference program, registration, hotel arrangements or paper submission, please visit the conference web site: www.ieee.org/go/demandsummit

European Commission
Information Society and Media



TACNY Technology Alliance of Central New York

Officers 2007-2008

President	Howie Hollander	456-6287
First Vice President	Gwendolyn Maturo	
Second Vice President	Marc Viggiano	445-5754
Secretary	Michael Masingale	445-4108
Treasurer	William Busher	434-1242
Technologist Editor	Maria T. Welych	637-0663
Web Page Editor	Kevin Lucas	
Teacher Awards Chair	Dr. Vernon A. Tryon	343-9692

E-mail Contact Information

E-mail addressed per the following list will automatically be forwarded to the appropriate officer or committee person:

president@tacny.org
programs@tacny.org
technicalsocieties@tacny.org
secretary@tacny.org
treasurer@tacny.org
membership@tacny.org
technologist@tacny.org
webmaster@tacny.org
teacherawards@tacny.org
jr.cafe@tacny.org
communications@tacny.org

Website of the Month

<http://arstechnica.com/index.ars>



Keep up on top tech news

Ars Technica recently underwent its fourth redesign in eight years, bringing readers all the latest technology news – with fewer advertisements.

And the winner is ...

The Technology Alliance of Central New York honored 10 individuals, educators, companies and projects May 14 at its Ninth Annual Celebration of Technology Awards Banquet at the Holiday Inn Conference Center, in Liverpool. The winners:

- Technologist of the year: **Robert M. Hussey**, director of imaging technology at Hand Held Products.
- Technology Project of the year: equal2new Information System 3.0 by **CXtec**.
- Technology company of the year: **Lockheed Martin**.
- Young technologist of the year: **Guruprasad “Guru” Madhavan**, biomedical engineer at the State University at Binghamton.
- Engineer of the year: Former Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection Commissioner **Richard L. Elander**.
- College technology educator of the year: **Eric M. Lui**, associate professor at Syracuse University.
- Continuing technical excellence award: **Syracuse Research Corp.**
- Project implementation award: vConnect Teleconferencing Technology by **Progressive Expert Consulting**.
- Science and technology outreach award: Syracuse University Chancellor **Nancy Cantor**.
- Lifetime achievement award: **John Oldfield**, Syracuse University professor emeritus.

Look for profiles of the people, projects and companies in upcoming issues of The Technologist, beginning in the September issue.

The story of one man's amazing life, and lessons we can draw from it

By Maria T. Welych

This year's Celebration of Technology banquet went where one man – featured speaker Story Musgrave – had gone more times than any other man: into outer space.

A retired astronaut, Musgrave spent 30 years working for NASA – from the Apollo era of the 1960s right through to the space shuttle program of the 1990s. Selected in 1967, he was among NASA's first scientist-astronauts. He is the only astronaut to have flown on all five space shuttles.

But Musgrave is more than just an astronaut; he's a true Renaissance man. He has worn many other hats during his storied career: surgeon, mathematician, computer analyst, pilot, parachutist, ex-Marine, student of the humanities and metaphysics, believer in intelligent life in outer space. He is the real-life version of mythical "Star Trek" Captain Jean-Luc Picard, which he has often been compared to, right down to the bald head.

Musgrave, a graduate of Syracuse University, listed the lessons he learned while recounting his life story. "It's a personal story, but it's how you weave a life," he said. "It's not a space story, it's a lesson in life story."

Lesson 1: "Whatever you do in life, you have to have passion for it," Musgrave said. "If you don't have passion, find something else to do."

That's what led Musgrave from farm boy to airplane mechanic, to airplane pilot, to multivariate mathematician, to trauma surgeon, to astronaut: He pursued roles that he was passionate about.

Lesson 2: "Think of yourself as a choreographer, and choreograph your life," Musgrave said. "Work out your plan and then practice it enough to when it comes to the real thing, you can do it."

That's the approach he took when figuring out how to handle space walks in general and, especially, in how to repair the Hubble telescope. He rehearsed and rehearsed underwater until motions in his bulky space suit became second nature.

Lesson 3: "Whatever problem you're working on, don't expect the solution to come when you're working at your desk," Musgrave said. "The answer may come when you're doing something else, and you have to be open to that."

That's exactly how he solved the problem of how to fix the Hubble telescope: He was inspired by the way a European showerhead worked and decided to put the Hubble mirrors in a box that could be inserted into the telescope, reducing the amount of fine work that needed to be done.



Lesson 4: "Appreciate and remember the people looking after your back, supporting you, because you would be nowhere without them," Musgrave said.

Lesson 5: "Don't ask if you can or should do something," he said. "Do it, and ask for forgiveness later. That's how you should go through life."

Lesson 6: "If things aren't going well, confess that things aren't working out, ask for help and get it corrected," Musgrave said.

That's what nearly derailed his efforts to fix the Hubble. After repairing the telescope, Musgrave had difficulty closing its door and later found out that scientists had the same problem on the ground before sending Hubble into space, and solved it by ramming the doors into place. No one told Musgrave, so he had to come up with a creative solution in space.

Lesson 7: "If you don't have a mission, get one," he said. "That's what brings a team together. Bring passionate people together and let them do their jobs."

Lesson 8: "Every second of every day, be the best you can be," Musgrave said. "That's what it's all about. You have to have perfection in the moment; you have to be concentrating in the moment. ... It's not what you do in life that important, it's that you do your absolute best."

Five Central New York teachers honored last month

The Technology Alliance of Central New York honored five Central New York teachers for their extraordinary contributions to the advancement of mathematics, science, and technology education for elementary and secondary students. Financial awards of \$1,000 were presented at the Nineteenth Annual Outstanding Teachers Awards Banquet on May 4, 2007.

“From the outset, TACNY’s Board of Directors founded the Outstanding Teacher Awards on the firm belief that there is a direct relationship between high quality teaching in the schools and qualified workers for Central New York’s technology enterprises,” said Howard R. Hollander, president of TACNY.

TACNY established the Outstanding Teacher Awards in 1988 to recognize teachers from Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego counties who:

- Inspire students to pursue study in fields related to mathematics, science, or technology.
- Encourage students to demonstrate outstanding academic achievement.
- Involve students in co-curricular activities

such as mathematics, science, or technology exhibits or competitions.

- Serve as role models for students in the responsible use of technology.
- Demonstrate active participation in professional development.
- Share their expertise and enthusiasm with colleagues.

Forty-four nominations were submitted by local societies, educational institutions and employers. Award winners for the 2006-2007 school year include:

- Henninger High School science teacher **Suzanne DeTore**.
- Liverpool High School technology education teacher and three-time winner **Todd Dischinger**.
- Fulton G. Ray Bodley High School biology teacher **Daniel Mainville**.
- Tully Junior-Senior High School technology education teacher **James M. Paccia**.
- Skaneateles Middle School mathematics teacher **Ruth Ann Parker**.

Look for profiles of award winners in future issues of *The Technologist*.

Junior Café Scientifique to hear about Earth’s magnetic field

Dr. Peter Plumley, a TACNY board member and program manager at the Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology is the next featured speaker at Junior Café Scientifique, a lecture program covering science and technology topics that is geared toward Central New York students attending middle and high schools. He will talk about random wandering of Earth’s magnetic field.

The free program, which is founded and funded by TACNY, meets at 9:30 a.m. the third Saturday of every month at the MOST. The event begins with a light breakfast, then the presentation, and finally a question-and-answer period. After the program, which ends at 11 a.m., participants are invited to tour the museum for free.

The next Junior Café will be at 9:30 a.m. June 16.

Technical Societies Council meets at Sensis Corp.

TACNY unfolded some preliminary plans to invigorate the Technical Societies Council at its April 18 meeting at Sensis. Much of the conversation focused on helping the attending societies meet their most pressing needs, especially via a reinvented and redesigned newsletter.

Among the ideas discussed for The Technologist were:

- Revamp the look and organization of The Technologist.
- Include event and other information from all TSC members at no cost.
- Option of electronic or print versions.
- Distribute every month of the year.
- TACNY would design and publish The Technologist.

Some ideas for the content of the new Technologist:

- Feature articles from TSC members, such as:
 - Interview with upcoming speakers.
 - Reaction to national topics in your industry.
 - Closer look at a local company's project.
- Profile a technical society or teacher award winner in every issue.
- Highlight a technology Web site, weblog, or book in every issue.
- Comprehensive calendar of events.
- Volunteer, speaking and professional development opportunities.
- Highlight a fact about Central New York's technology history.

These are just some ideas and nothing is set in stone. TACNY's Communications Committee wants to hear what you think. Contact co-chairs Amber Markow and Maria Welych at communications@tacny.org.

TACNY, though both through the Technical Societies Council and the Communication Committee, looks forward to working with all technical groups to help them achieve their goals. Stay tuned: The next council meeting will be in late June. Attend and help set the agenda.



This is an example of what the new newsletter could look like.

‘The Best Kept Secret’: that engineers make good writers

By Bill Busher

You never know where research and writing are going to take you. This started out as a book review, but has become more than that. It is a story involving writing within one’s comfort zone, using familiar names and places to enrich and make a story line relevant – without getting sued – and using technical career experience while keeping the result reader-friendly.

“The Kept Secret” by Stan Wilczek Jr. involves post-9/11 terrorist acts, but is more than the clichéd phrase “ripped from the headlines” would have us believe. There have been no comparable acts since that fateful day. Have we been duly diligent, or have we been lulled into a false sense of security by one too many terror alerts, combined with the false calm that creeps in with ever increasing distance?

Wilczek uses incidents from history, including the Cuban nuclear missile crisis of 1961 and the fact that Nikita Khrushchev died on 9/11 although 20 years earlier, that lends credulity to his premise, and expands that series of events into a present day threat that has a tinge of plausibility.

A plot unwinds that engages the reader to the end. What makes the premise unnerving and believable is not only the description of the attacks, but the way in which the attacks are carried out. In 1954, the ending of the movie “The Thing From Another World” had a reporter warning us to keep watching; keep looking to the skies for the next possible attack. The sky is not where this series of attacks comes from. Indeed, using common biological agents to infect a food supply should peg the reader’s paranoia meter, given the contamination problems involving spinach, onions, chicken and peanut butter that have occurred over the past year. It’s not so large a stretch to have similar events happen that were planned in advance by an enemy willing to use any means available.

The use of historical events to underpin a storyline is not unusual, nor is using local color that the author is most familiar with to enhance the plot. When information regarding actual places and institutions is incorporated in the storyline, however, the author has to use care. There is a danger in literary name-dropping. It can be overused in an effort to make the story more accessible. The author has succeeded in using an amount of location detail that enhances the story without dragging it down.

Wilczek is a degreed nuclear engineer, and in fact was at one time an officer in Niagara Mohawk. His intimate knowledge of the nuclear industry gives him

rare insight into that aspect of our power production and distribution system. It does the same in giving his writing a legitimacy that should further engage, and unnerve, the reader. Unfortunately, having a talent for a good story with the right amount of technical detail and local color doesn’t guarantee you will be published.

It has been said that there are some five million aspiring writers in the United States, and less than five thousand of them ever get published. Most discouraging to potential writers is that only about fifty will make enough money from it to earn a living.



Stan Wilczek

Wilczek’s quest to be published ended with him being self-published through a company in Utica. His experiences in getting published could fill a book all by themselves, but he has compiled several “lessons learned” for those wondering where to start.

First, develop writing skills. For those who have not been through formal training, it may mean buying books on general technique, but

it also means commitment to practice.

Second, set up reasonable goals for your time and output.

Third, be dedicated. No one is going to be standing over your shoulder pushing you to come up with the five pages or thousand words that you established as a goal for the day.

Fourth, be aware of continuity. Changes on page one hundred will likely have impact on previous pages.

Fifth, have a great story. If you are not enthused, chances are your readers won’t be, either.

Lastly, have a plan. What is your literary end goal, and how are you going to get there? Write it out, outline it, and revise it as you go along. Use it as your blueprint to keep yourself on track.

Writing isn’t hard; good writing is. It requires dedication, skill, and attention to detail. When successful, it also combines a writer’s educational, professional and personal experiences into a work that is satisfying to both writer and reader.

A conversation with paranormal investigator Joe Nickell

Nationally renowned paranormal investigative author and researcher, Joe Nickell – also known as “The Modern Sherlock Holmes” and “The Original Ghostbuster” – recently spoke at Onondaga Community College at an event cosponsored by the Technology Alliance of Central New York and Central New York Skeptics. Nickell has investigated scores of haunted-house cases, including the “Amityville Horror” house on Long Island, and he has been interviewed on “Larry King Live,” “Oprah,” “Unsolved Mysteries” and “48 Hours” about his work on paranormal activity. Contributing writer Bill Busher spoke with Nickell:

Joe, you are described as the world’s only paid, full-time paranormal investigator. How did that come about?

Well, there are a lot of paranormal investigators, and plenty of good ones, but as far as I know, I’m the only full-time, professional one. I became interested over 30 years ago in the paranormal, as an outgrowth of my being a professional magician and a detective. About a dozen years ago, I was invited to a full-time position at the Center for Inquiry at Amherst, N.Y. This has enabled me to go around the world and do various investigations.

I know that conducting paranormal investigations is not all there is to Joe Nickell. What would our readers be most likely to associate you with, in the paranormal realm?

I suppose the most famous of my cases would be the investigation of the Shroud of Turin. Of course, I’m well known for many haunted place investigations.

The one on Long Island comes to mind.

Yes, the “Amityville Horror,” of course is the world’s most famous haunting. I did investigate that, and found it to be the Amityville “hoax,” confirmed many times over by evidence. I’ve written a number of books on the paranormal. I would hope that even my detractors would concede that I’m a hands-on investigator, not a mere debunker.

One of the most common paranormal occurrences seems to involve the Virgin Mary: statues crying “real” tears, or her image appearing in tree bark or, in one case, on a cheese sandwich. What’s happening here?

There are two major categories. One is where someone sees the Virgin Mary, or sometimes Jesus, in something like tree bark or skillet burns on a tortilla or grilled cheese sandwich. These are simply random stains, in which humans beings can, with their



imagination, see pictures, as in clouds or inkblots. The most famous instance is probably the man in the moon. These are not “created” images, they are just random patches, blurs and so forth. When we look at a random stain, we are sometimes able to see something that looks like a figure or a face. This is very common.

The other category is what I’ll call the “animated” effigy – some statue or icon or picture that takes on qualities of life, as in moving or weeping. A famous one is the swaying statue at Ballinspittle, Ireland. Careful investigation showed that the statue was not swaying, but the people watching it, expecting it to sway, were themselves unconsciously swaying. I’ve investigated many weeping statues and icons and they invariably turn out to be pious frauds. In many cases, people have applied non-drying oil to simulate tears.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

What is the church's position on these and others, such as the Shroud of Turin?

About many such things, the Catholic Church takes a rather skeptical stance in that it's not quick to endorse a variety of these phenomena, but leaves it up to individuals to make a determination.

What I find problematical is that in those cases where there is powerful evidence that something isn't genuine, I would like them to come out and declare it so. They sometimes rationalize that this or that may not be a true miracle, but if it brings people to Christ, then maybe it's a "good thing." I would say that the end justifies the means is not appropriate.

In the case of Shroud of Turin, the Catholic Church was instrumental in having it radiocarbon dated, and the dating indicated that it was created at the time of the forger's confession, according to a Bishop's report, about the middle of the fourteenth century. That's to the Church's credit.

On the other hand, some within the Church, particularly the Archbishop of Turin, have been trying to rationalize that away, often leaving out things like the report of the forger's confession or trying to apologize for the radiocarbon dating, or omitting the fact that tempura paint was found on the shroud by the laboratory (not blood).

To touch on some of your recent activities, I believe you were in Peru recently?

I attended a conference in Peru a few months ago. ... I was able to ... view the famous Nazca lines, the giant drawings on the desert there. In 1982, I had duplicated one of the largest of those figures, giant condor, four hundred and forty feet long, and I made a replica of it using only sticks and strings and a crew of six. More recently, I made another one for National Geographic, for their series "Is It Real?"

So natives using tools available at the time and rudimentary knowledge of geometry could have easily made the figures?

That's right. The method I used was a simple enlargement from a small drawing. People exaggerate how difficult it is. You could draw it in segments from a master sketch, without any real knowledge of surveying techniques or measuring of angles. The Nazcas could draw very beautiful stylized figures, and it is clear that they were able to draw rather large ones.

I think the idea that extra-terrestrials had to be involved in making them, a la Eric Von Daniken's book "Chariots of the Gods," is really an insult to our ancient native peoples. VonDaniken suggests that the pyramids, the stone figures at Easter Island etc. couldn't have been made by what he seems to characterize as ignorant savages; I rather prefer to

consider them our brilliant early ancestors.

What can we do, in general, especially in improving critical thinking skills about many of these topics in our young people?

We have to realize that we need to think with our heads and not our hearts involving the paranormal, because it does promise wonderful things. If ghosts are real, then we live on after we die. Most of us would vote for that. If extraterrestrial contact is real, then we are not alone in the universe. We have to judge: is the evidence there, or are we just wishfully thinking?

Most of the paranormal is not based on positive evidence, but argument from ignorance. The argument goes: "We don't know what the bright lights in the sky are, so they must be flying saucers." We cannot draw a conclusion from "I don't know." We can teach that point of logic to young people and the principle of Occam's razor: If you have two or more hypothesis that account for the known data, the simpler one is probably true.

Teaching about who has the burden of proof is important: Do skeptics have to prove that the house is not haunted, or do the believers have to prove that it is?

Is that the real "bottom line" then? That we really live in a rational, real world?

Everything that I have looked at for the last 30 years, has convinced me increasingly that we live in a real, natural world, and we don't need to invoke the paranormal in order to explain any part of it.

"We need to think with our heads and not our hearts involving the paranormal, because it does promise wonderful things. If ghosts are real, then we live on after we die."

-- Joe Nickell

June 2007 Technologist

Distributed to over 750 professionals!

Technologist Contact Information

Editor (also IEEE)	Brian O'Hern	697-2352	b.ohern@ieee.org
President IEEE	Michael R. Hayes, P.E.	455-2000	mhayes@cscos.com
President TACNY	Howie Hollander	456-6287	hollander@tacny.org
Editor TACNY	Maria Welych	637-0663	mwelych@tacny.org

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
POSTMASTER, PLEASE RUSH**



*Reach your audience
through us!*

Ten Issue Price (annual subscription)

Full Page - \$900
Half Page - \$600
Quarter Page - \$400
Business Card - \$200

Single Issue Prices:

Full Page - \$150
Half Page - \$100
Quarter Page - \$75
Business Card - \$40

The **Technologist** is published monthly except July and August by the Technology Alliance of Central New York. P.O. BOX 196 SYRACUSE, N.Y. 13201. Cost is included in dues for each member of the affiliated club sections. Please send address changes to the affiliate organizations.

Deadline for **Technologist** submissions is the 17th of each month.

Technologist Advertising Rates

Single Issue Prices:

Full Page - \$150 Half Page - \$100
Quarter Page - \$75 Business Card - \$40

Ten Issue Price (annual subscription)

Full Page - \$900 Half Page - \$600
Quarter Page \$400 Business Card - \$200

www.tacny.org

Recyclable

