Faculty Spotlight

("Faculty Spotlight," a regular feature of the ACM Newsletter, attempts each month to introduce one CS faculty member to our readers. -Ed.)

Professor Sylvian Ray received his PhD in EE from the University of Illinois in 1961. His graduate work included circuit design and core memory for the ILLIAC II. He also worked on memory systems for the ILLIAC III. In the late 1960's, his research included writing "cognitive knowledge" systems which would allow a computer to identify items in a natural scene.

By 1975, Professor Ray's work had led him into biomedical devices. He has developed software for some of these devices. An example of this is a micro-processor that is worn by an individual to gather medical data, such as heart rate, in a real-time setting.

Professor Ray is currently working on developing a good algorithm which will allow a computer to analyze an individual's sleep stages. This will ease the work for personnel at sleep disorder centers, who must currently determine the sleep stages by hand. This analysis must be done in a real-time environment, since one night's sleep will generate 40–60 Megabytes of information.

Those of you who have been to our general meetings will recognize Professor Ray as one of our more consistent attenders. This is mainly because in addition to his research and teaching activities, Professor Ray serves as the Faculty Advisor to the ACM Student Chapter. In this capacity, he provides a link between the chapter and the Department of Computer Science, which is especially important in large ACM projects such as Engineering Open House.

Professor Ray is teaches C.S. 389 Advanced Digital Circuits and has earned a reputation as a clear lecturer and an effective teacher. As many C.S. students consider hardware to be a terrifying notion, this is a considerable help.

Our Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, April 24th at 4:00 pm in room 115 Digital Computer Lab. This meeting will be the ACM general election meeting. If you are a member of ACM come and cast your votes. You have the power to decide who will run ACM next year. Refreshments will be served.

Nominees for Election

The following is the present list of nominees for offices:

Chairman: John Tullis

Vice–Chairman: Julie Helmer, Pete Illavach, Chesi Gianetti

Secretary: Chris Gerrib, Tony Alonso, Rob Dobyns

Treasurer: Nevin Liber

Come to the ACM Elections meeting April 24th and cast your vote!

Faculty Awards

Professor Belford has won the Halliburton Educational Foundation award for the fall of 1986. This award is given to the faculty member who has demonstrated educational leadership in the College of Engineering.

Professor Dershowitz has won the Xerox award which is given to the associate professor who has demonstrated the best research over the last five years in the College of Engineering.

Murphy's Laws of Technology

- Logic is a systematic method of coming to the wrong conclusion with confidence.

- Technology is dominated by those who manage what they do not understand.

- A failure will not appear until a unit has passed final inspection.

- New systems generate new problems.

- The primary function of the design engineer is to make things difficult for the fabricator and impossible for the serviceman.

- Any sufficiently advanced bug becomes a feature.

- Any circuit design must contain at least one part which is obsolete, two parts which are unobtainable, and three parts which are still under development.

- A complex system that works is invariably found to have evolved from a simple system that works.

- Computers are unreliable, but humans are even more unreliable. Any system which depends on human reliability is unreliable.

- Under the most rigorously controlled conditions of pressure, temperature, volume, humidity, and other variables, the system will do as it damn well pleases.

- If you can't understand it, it is intuitively obvious.

- If it's not in the computer, it doesn't exist.

- If an experiment works, something has gone wrong.

- When all else fails, read the instructions.

- If there is a possibility of several things going wrong, the one that would cause the most damage will be the one to go wrong.

- Any instrument when dropped will roll into the least accessible corner.

- Any simple theory will be worded in the most complicated way.

- The degree of technical confidence is inversely proportional to the level of management.

Election Procedures

The ACM elections will occur at the next general meeting on April 24th. Here are some important things that you should know:

1. If you cannot attend the meeting (it's at 4:00), get in touch with Rob Ekblaw if you want to cast an absentee ballot. You can contact him by phone [398-5937], email on Unix [login:ekblaw@wa], or by leaving a note in the ACM mailbox addressed to him. Please do this as soon as possible before the elections.

2. We will be accepting floor nominations at the meeting. If you are interested in running for an office, or you know someone who is, it is still not too late to get nominated. However, you must be a member in good standing to do so.

3. All of the nominees for the offices will be allowed a 2-minute speech prior to the election. The purpose of this speech is to introduce the candidate to the voters and to give that person a chance to state why he/she feels that he/she would make a better officer than the other nominees, and what he/she can contribute to that office and ACM in general. All nominees should be planning their speech now. The nominee can give the speech, or the nominee can get a friend to do it. All nominees who will be absent from the meeting should leave a copy of their speech in the ACM mailbox, addressed to Robert Ekblaw, prior to 4PM Thursday.

4. Everyone who plans to vote should bring some form of identification. This means student id, drivers license, or other form of identification with your picture on it. Bring along your blue membership card as well if you have it.

5. After the elections, we will be accepting applications for the appointed positions, such as the committee chairs and the newsletter publishers. The committee chairs are for Publicity, EOH, Social events, (and some more).

— Rob Ekblaw