



Banks of the Boneyard

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Editor: Jim Dobyns

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Faculty Spotlight

("Faculty Spotlight", a regular feature of the ACM newsletter, introduces a Department of Computer Science faculty member to our readers. -Ed.)

Our "Faculty Spotlight" this issue is on Assistant Professor Daniel Reed. After completing his undergraduate degree at the University of Missouri at Rolla, Professor Reed studied at Purdue University. His Ph.D. thesis concerned message parallel processing, a subject that has, with the appearance of commercial hypercubes, since become an active research area.

Upon completing his Ph.D., Professor Reed taught at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for one year. In 1984, he was appointed to the Department of Computer Science at UIUC. During that year, Professor Reed received the IBM Faculty Development Award. His current research centers on the development of PICASSO, an operating system for hypercubes. The operating system is being implemented on an Ametek S/14 hypercube, a group of 32 Intel 80286/80287 processors with one megabyte of memory each. In many ways, each processor resembles an IBM PC.

Since joining the Department, Professor Reed has taught several higher level courses. He continues to be impressed by the quality of students in the Department. Professor Reed is particularly pleased by their "willingness to work" and high degree of motivation. However, Professor Reed feels that many students, especially undergraduates, do not know what faculty members actually do. To help students better understand the role of the faculty, Professor Reed suggests establishing a series of seminars. These seminars would allow professors to explain the general nature of their research to students. Such seminars would be of particular benefit to graduate students looking for an adviser and an area of research.

— Jim Dobyns

Cray and NSA

Larry White of Cray Research will speak at the next ACM general meeting on Wednesday September 24th at 3:00 pm in 151 Electrical Engineering Building. He will discuss the Cray X-MP/24 supercomputer, what progress has been made during the last year, and what is planned for next year. He will also talk about Cray Inc. itself and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA).

Lynn Weistock-Wechselberger of the National Security Agency (NSA) will talk at the October 15th meeting. She will discuss computer applications with the NSA and what it is like to work for an intelligence agency. As always, refreshments will be served.

— Pete Harvach

UNIX Group

The UNIX Users and C Programmers special interest group is holding a general meeting on Thursday October 2nd at 7:00 pm in 105C Woodshop Building. UUCP conducts workshops and seminars in the use of the "vi" editor and UNIX. Anyone interested in UNIX should contact the SIG coordinator Metaxia Lianos at the ACM office (phone 333-5828).

— Mike Stegeman

Argonne Tour

ACM is planning a tour of Argonne National Laboratory on Saturday, October 4th. Argonne is a multidisciplinary scientific research laboratory near Chicago. If enough people sign up, we will charter a bus. Otherwise, we will car-pool and split the gas money. Anyone interested in attending should sign up at the next general meeting or call or stop by the ACM office.

— Jim Dobyns

An Era of Change

A few of you may remember the "good ol' days" of punch cards and batch jobs on this campus. Nowadays, work stations and UNIX-based systems dominate the CS Department. The biggest changes, however, are yet to come. "Banks of the Boneyard" recently interviewed Professor William Kubitz, associate head of the Department, about this new era.

Plans are now underway for constructing an annex to DCL. This new structure would roughly double the size of the current building. Kubitz noted that if it were erected adjacent to DCL, the new building would geographically unify the Department. Right now, DCS faculty, researchers, and graduate students are scattered among nine separate buildings across campus. Still in the design stages, the new building is scheduled to include a study lounge and an atrium, as well as additional office space.

A system to network faculty and students is also under consideration. This system would allow students and faculty to "talk" via electronic mail and notesfiles, Kubitz explained. The network itself would take advantage of the \$30 million underground fiber optics system currently being installed throughout the University.

The equipment available in the Department's labs will also continue to improve. Private industry has made "generous gifts in recent years for undergraduate labs," Kubitz pointed out. The AT&T 3B2 microcomputers in the Woodshop Building, for example, replaced the out-dated Horizon and Advantage system just last year.

Greater support from taxes is also contributing to the growth of the Department. "Increases in state funding have allowed us to add 19 new members to the faculty in recent years," added Kubitz. By increasing the number of professors by 40 percent, the student-to-faculty ratio and class size should improve noticeably. Professors, rather than graduate students, may also begin teaching individual sections of some courses. New courses, particularly at the graduate level, will now be possible with the larger faculty. The number of graduate students is also expected to increase from 350 to as many as 500 in the next few years.

— Jim Dobyns

CSO Sites

Around campus, there are several CSO sites known as RJE's. These sites are open to the public, and you can obtain a list of all the sites and their hours at any RJE or at the consulting office in 1208 W. Springfield.

The primary reason for the existence of RJE's is to allow users to access the University's mainframe computers. Thus, each site has several terminals which serve this purpose. The most common method of connecting these terminals to the mainframes is either through the Gandolf Switch, or through Localnet. Both of these systems allow users to access computers ranging from the CYBER to the Cray Supercomputer. Of course, to use any of these mainframes, you must have an account on that machine. For information on obtaining accounts, go to the CSO accounting office located at 1208 W. Springfield.

Most RJE sites are now equipped with IBM PCs, Apple Macintoshes, or both. Wherever these micros are located, CSO also has a supply of software, which although it cannot be copied, is available for use by any individual who has a valid picture ID. Available software packages include Volkswriter, Word Perfect, Lotus 1-2-3, and dBase III for the PCs and MacWrite, MacDraw, and MacPaint for the Macintoshes.

In room 70 Comm West, there are two letter quality printers connected to the PCs, and in 60 Mechanical Engineering Building, there is a laserwriter connected to the Macintoshes. These sites are ideal locations to type in papers or resumes.

Every year, CSO hires many students to work as computer operators. If you are interested in filing an application, or have any questions about the services offered at the sites, just stop into the site at 65 MEB and ask the operator on duty.

— Andy Torchalski

Meeting Wrap-Up

("Meeting Wrap-Up" is a new regular feature of the ACM newsletter. It briefly summarizes the last meeting for anyone who could not attend).

The first general meeting of ACM for 1986-87 featured Professor Gear, head of the Department, and Professor Friedman, undergraduate advisor. Professor Gear welcomed everyone to the meeting and to the new school year. Professor Friedman discussed the undergraduate curriculum, including several new programs. A combination CS/Statistics major is in the works and may be instituted next year. A "gleam in the Department's eye," Professor Friedman revealed, is a new CS/LAS program with a CS core and a minor in any field of study.

ACM chairman John Tullis discussed the formation of special interest groups (SIGs) concentrating on electronic music, artificial intelligence, graphics, microcomputers, UNIX, and several others. Anyone interested in these SIGs, or in forming another group, should contact John at the ACM office (phone 333-5828). Vice chairman Pete Hlavach talked about the ACM Job Fair planned for February 16th. He also mentioned the tours to Argonne National Laboratory on October 4th and to Gould in Urbana later in the year. Treasurer Tony Alonso reviewed our current financial status and asked for committeepersons for the Fundraising Committee. Secretary Chris Gerrib discussed the ACM high school programming contest and the collegiate programming contest.

Publicist Jackie Reisdorf talked about the ACM notesfile on PLATO (enter member for name and acm for group—see the last issue of the newsletter for details). Membership chairperson Mary Podborny needs people to update the membership database using dBase III on the IBM PC. Engineering Council representative Mary Peterson asked for people to attend EC meetings twice a month as official representatives of ACM. SIG UUCP member Dan Weber talked about the already-formed UNIX special interest group. Newsletter editor Jim Dobyns announced the expansion of the newsletter from two pages to four, and asked for writers and illustrators.

—Chris Gerrib

Our Social Activities

I was very happy to see that many people came forward at the last general meeting to volunteer for committees and Special Interest Groups. Unfortunately, due to an oversight, we did not have signup sheets available for the social and entertainment committees at our last meeting. At this upcoming meeting, we will have signup sheets for people interested in these committees. As we come up to full speed this year, we are planning many more events and activities than have been done in the past couple of years.

We are hoping to have a cookout at Allerton Park in the very near future, and another one at Lake of the Woods park in the end of October. Planning and carrying out the logistics of these operations will be somewhat demanding. People interested in organizing the Allerton expedition should sign up at the next meeting. People who want to attend should sign up at the meeting, or at our office, so we can determine how much hamburger and how many hot dogs to purchase. The current date for Allerton is Sunday, October 5. The current date for Lake of the Woods is Saturday, October 26.

People interested in Hayrack rides through Heritage Park on Friday evenings should sign up at the next general meeting or at our office. Times are 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM, on September 26; and October 3, 10, 17, and 24. Groups are limited from 8 to 15 persons. Hay, rackdriver, snacks and bonfire materials will be provided.

Outings to the Putt-Putt miniature golf course are being planned. We will check into group rates. People interested in playing should sign up at the next general meeting or at our office.

Also, several members of the ACM executive committee can be found at Murphy's Pub at 4:30 PM on Fridays, following our 3:00 PM weekly executive meeting. There you will find us recuperating from an exhausting week. If you want to drop by to give us suggestions, ideas, find out what's going on, or just to socialize; feel free to drop by.

—John Tullis, Chairman

ACM Film Series

ACM films are shown every Monday at 3:00 pm in room 115 DCL. Admission is free. The combined running length is usually 45 minutes to one hour.

If anyone has suggestions for films to be presented, please contact the Entertainment Committee chairperson at the ACM office (333-5828).

On September 29th we are showing "The Computer Programme: It's on the Computer." Broad and encompassing history of information systems from Egyptian hieroglyphics to computers. Also showing is "Connections: Yesterday, Tomorrow, and You." Final episode of critically acclaimed BBC series discusses the impacts of the computer revolution.

October 6th we are presenting "Ballet Robotique." Assembly line robots choreographed to classical music. The feature film has not yet been decided, but our entertainment people will be getting hot on getting us a film for this slot.

On October 13th is "The Computer Programme: The New Media." Implications of the computer for future office environments. The second film is "How Does a Data Base Management System (DBMS) Work?" Illustrates the workings of a DBMS through animated sequences and case studies.

— Jim Dobyns

ACM Office and Lounge

Our office is located in Room 201 at 1204 W. Springfield Avenue in Urbana. Officers and committee chairpersons staff the office from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Our telephone number is 333-5828. The ACM Study Lounge is open during office hours for general use, and after office hours for Special Interest Groups who have it reserved with me.

— Tony Alonso

Newsletter and Membership

All ACM members receive a copy of this newsletter in the mail. Blue membership cards are also included with this mailing. If you did not receive a card and/or a newsletter, please call the ACM office at 333-5828. If the word "EXPIRE" is printed on your address label, now is the time to renew your ACM membership. Applications for ACM and its SIGs are available in the office at 1204 W. Springfield Room 201 and at various displays around campus.

— Jim Dobyns
