

# BANKS OF THE BONEYARD

*A Journal of the Association  
for Computing Machinery at UIUC*

acm

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## What is the ACM?

The ACM is the Association for Computing Machinery. Founded in 1947, the ACM is the oldest national scientific society serving the computing community. The ACM currently has more than 80,000 members nationwide.

The major purposes of the Association are: (1) To advance the sciences and arts of information processing, (2) To promote the free interchange of ideas about the sciences and arts of information processing, and (3) To develop and maintain the integrity and competences of individuals in the practices of the sciences and arts of information processing.

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## ACM Questionnaire

The results are in! In the May 6th issue of *BANKS OF THE BONEYARD*, we asked our membership to fill out the attached questionnaire so we could get a better idea of what the membership wanted from the ACM. This is what you told us ...

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## ACM General Meeting Announcements

The first **ACM General Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, September 9th at 3:00 pm. This organizational meeting will cover the topics of membership renewal and the election of committee heads. All interested are welcome and, of course, refreshments will be served.

Our General Meeting location has changed! The ACM will now meet in Room 116 Roger Adams Lab (RAL):

	Green	Godwin
Mathews		
	California	
	Oregon	

*So come and see what the ACM has to offer. Now is your chance to become involved. Don't miss out!*

*--Lisa Marchese, Publicity*

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### Questionnaire Results

Starting off, it came as no surprise that just about everyone is a member of the ACM at UIUC. No wonder it's one of the fastest-growing ACM chapters in the nation. But only one member in five is a bonafide ACM National member. Either we're very dedicated to our alma mater, or we just didn't know about ACM National ... well, now you know.

Most members came to know about the ACM through announcements, postings, and the *BANKS OF THE BONEYARD* newsletter. Some passed the good word on to their friends, who told their friends, etc. Other members just got lost one day and ended up at the ACM Office looking for directions (one of them is now our chairman, Bob Camp).

Nearly half of the ACM membership joined because of their mutual interests in computer science and related fields. One quarter of ACM members joined to become part of the many successful Special Interest Groups (SIGs) sponsored by the ACM. Some of us were honest and said that the ACM looks good on a resume ... so much for honesty.

Activity in the ACM is increasing. Not surprising, since in the past couple of semesters, the ACM has grown drastically in membership. And to accomodate this growth, we're sponsoring more lectures, organizing more social events, and bringing you more news from the computer science world. And to think, some of you folks out there just read the newsletter ...

The **ACM Lectureship Series** is changing its format in response to your ideas and interests. This semester, the ACM is striving to schedule more speakers from the corporate world, and introduce more faculty members from the Department of Computer Science here at the University of Illinois. Lectures will focus on research and development, and computer applications at the forefront of technology, and discuss how students might best prepare themselves now. In addition, plans are being readied to record the ACM Lectureship Series on audio cassette for those members unable to attend the discussions. Copies should be available at the Computer Science Library in the Digital Computer Lab (DCL) soon after the Series begins.

The **ACM General Meetings** will still be held on Wednesdays at 3:00 pm. Unlike previous semesters, however, General Meetings will be held at 116 Roger Adams Lab

(RAL). Also, in an effort to benefit more of the membership, speakers for the ACM Lectureship Series will be scheduled apart from the General Meetings.

And as for the newsletter ... an overwhelming majority of members chose the "Calendar of Events" as the most newsworthy newsletter column. General Meeting information follows, with SIG updates and "Faculty Spotlight" close behind. In direct response to this, the "Spotlight" column will expand to include corporate and business interviews in "Corporate Spotlight", and "Applications Only" will bring ACM members into contact with professionals using the computer as a tool in the business world.

Thanks to all those who spent the time to fill out the questionnaire. And special thanks to those members who made an extra effort and volunteered their time to helping the ACM become what it is today.

--Rich Bloch, Editor

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### Cooperative Education Program

4+2=5? Yes, it's true. Four years of college plus two years of work experience equals five years for graduation. Students enrolled in the **Cooperative Education Program** gain valuable work experience while attending school. What would normally take six years for graduation requires only five years of college through the Coop Program. Coop students interview with such corporations as IBM, Sundstrand, McDonnell Douglas,

FermiLab, and many others, and if accepted, tailor a work schedule around their college career. Usually, a coop student will work for a semester at their company, then school for a semester. And upon completion of their degree, coop students are often offered full-time employment by their coop company. For more information about becoming active in the Cooperative Education Program, contact Dean Hunt at 244-0906, or call the ACM Office at 333-5828 and ask to talk with a coop student.

--Michael Ries, Coop Liaison

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## BANKS OF THE BONEYARD

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### What is the ACM?

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Student Chapter of the ACM is the official professional society of the Department of Computer Science. As one of the largest student chapters in the country, the ACM at UIUC provides its membership throughout the year with: corporate speakers, discussing their work environment and life in the computer industry; sponsors the annual Career Day which exposes students to the opportunities that companies have to offer in the field of computer science; represents the Department of Computer Science at the Engineering Open House, and

supports Special Interest Groups focusing on a variety of computer-related areas.

Other committees that the ACM organizes are: the **BANKS OF THE BONEYARD** newsletter that published over a dozen issues last year, the Professor Symposium series that features research projects of the faculty in the Department, and the High School Programming Contest which acknowledges outstanding work in computer science by high school students. ACM has two seats on the Engineering Council and also appoints students to various Departmental committees.

—Robert Camp, Chairman

### Career Day

Again this year ACM is sponsoring the annual **Career Day**. This is an excellent chance to talk to many corporations and see what opportunities they have to offer in the computer field. The Career Day will be held on November 9th, 1987 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm in the Illini Union Rooms A&B. Responses early on have been great. We already have commitments from IBM, Harris Corp., National Semiconductor, GTE, Lachman Associates, Convex, Proctor & Gamble, Northrop, and BNR.

We are putting together another resume book to be issued to each company attending the Career Day and are offering additional copies which may be purchased by the 200 companies invited. The resume book will only contain resumes of current members. If you wish to submit a copy of your resume for the resume book, please be sure to renew your membership and drop off a copy of the resume at the ACM office at 1204 West Springfield Avenue, Room 201. Resumes must be submitted by 5:00 p.m., October 16th, 1987, to be included in the resume book.

--Pete Hlavach, Vice Chairman

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### Computer Science Open House

If you didn't catch the Computer Science part of **Engineering Open House** this year, you missed some good exhibits. Lisa Hartweck, Amy Moore, and Diane Seibert had the monumental task of putting everything together, and they accomplished a lot in a short time. SIGART had great success with their robotics exhibit. "The Guiding Byte"—a video depicting the rise of the ACM—was shown every half-hour. SIGGRAPH showed a video composite of graphics projects from SIGGRAPH National. SIGUUCP ran a logic lab exhibit over at the Woodshop. And SIGMICRO gave away free PC and Macintosh software. Professor Ray was a great help (as usual) in tracking down equipment and setting up.

Next March, the **Computer Science Open House (CSOH)** can be even bigger. We will need lots of ideas and help from our members and from the faculty. Given the reputation of our Computer Science Department and the resources available to us, we should be able to turn CSOH into a really BIG event.

It's time to start thinking about 1988. We need to get in touch with members of the faculty to get their help and ideas for exhibits. Also, we should contact companies who might be interested in setting up demonstrations. This a great chance to get to know CS department faculty and make contacts in the business world.

People are needed to head these areas: Corporate Contacts, Publicity, History, Project Coordination, and possibly others

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as things get going. If you are interested in helping out, or have ideas or comments about the 1988 CSOH, leave a message for me at the ACM office (333-5828) or at home (367-0464). Or, stop by during my office hours, which will be posted on the ACM office door.

--Chris Walquist, EOH

### **I/O**

I/O is a column designed to enlighten its readers about some aspect of computer science, and perhaps, encourage a response. The forum is open to anything remotely related to computer science -- fact or philosophy. A question will be posed, and opinions to the question will be printed in subsequent issue of the newsletter, hopefully making for interesting reading ...

With the field wide open, I'll begin with an area of computer science most everyone seems interested in these days: **artificial intelligence.**

For years, mathematicians, linguists, psychologists, and philosophers, not to mention computer scientists, have been trying to create an architecture with such a design as to allow the implementation of what we consider today to be artificial intelligence. Elaborate formulations have been derived from the structure of language itself, and programming languages such as LISP and

PROLOG have boasted of their powerful abilities to approach the problem of language logically. Yet theorists are still skeptical, and no recent breakthroughs in artificial intelligence seem to support their claims.

One theory, though, does appear to be keeping even the skeptics quite interested. A theory so obvious and simple that it is bound to raise a few eyebrows. A theory not of duplicating language patterns, nor of programming languages, but rather of replicating the physical brain. Neurons, synapses and grey matter, all replaced with silicon equivalents. Certainly, it seems, computers are developing fast enough to effectively test this theory. And without getting too deep, it seems to be a very plausible idea, technically.

But there appears to be an equally obvious drawback to this silicon representation of the brain. Given that the brain, and its functions of intellect and reasoning are copied exactly, bit for bit. And given that in the end, we do in fact have truly artificial intelligence. The question

then is, do we not now also face the very problems that are so common with our physical, human counterparts: the ability to make mistakes? We learn by making mistakes; we learn from our mistakes. Computers mimicking our intelligence and reasoning, therefore, will be bound to make mistakes. Yet computers now do not make mistakes. We trust corporate bank accounts and global assets to computers, all with the knowledge that computers will not make mistakes, ever. Forgetting to file an account is a mistake. Dropping an occasional decimal point is a mistake.

If we follow the plans for artificial intelligence in ourselves, and we mold our physical brains into silicon, then isn't this also a mistake?

Send any opinion or ideas, in writing, to the ACM Office, 1204 W. Springfield Ave., Room 201, or call me at 333-5828 and leave a message.

--Rich Bloch, Editor

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### **\$20.00 Computer Fee** *So where does it all go?*

If you've received your registration statement, and we all should've by now, you've probably noticed the new "computer fee" added to it. What exactly are we paying for? The next issue of **BANKS OF THE BONEYARD** will take a look at how our \$20.00 is being spent here at the University.

--Rich Bloch, Editor

### **ACM Membership** *Become active in the ACM*

Are you an ACM member yet? Would you like to join the growing number of students, professors and CS professionals here at the University of Illinois expressing an interest in computer science and applications? Become a member of the **ACM Student Chapter at UIUC**. Pick up a membership application at the ACM Office on 1204 W. Springfield, Room 201

(333-5828) and join. Membership fees are \$5.00 a year and benefit you as well as helps the ACM bring its members more services and benefits in the field of computer science.

Also, as a reminder, for those of us already ACM members: don't forget to renew!

—Rich Bloch, Editor



### ACM Lectureship Series on Cassette

In a further effort to benefit students, future lectures and discussions of guest ACM speakers will be available on audio cassette tape. Copies of these tapes will be held at the Department of Computer Science Library on the second floor of the Digital Computer Lab (DCL) for reference by members of the ACM at UIUC.

--Rich Bloch, Editor

### ACM Officer Changes

During the summer months a few changes were made in the four officer positions. Our previous chairman, Jim Dobyns, will not be returning to the organization this fall, so Bob Camp is stepping up to fill the vacancy. Pete Hlavach is returning to the Vice Chairman position which he held last year until a new Vice Chairman comes forth. The office of treasurer has also had a change. Chris Gerrib relinquished his position to Nick Petrone but will still be a part of the Association. The current officers are as stated below:

Chairman	Robert Camp
Vice Chairman	Pete Hlavach
Secretary	Kathy Boka
Treasurer	Nick Petrone

There will be a special election at the October 7th general meeting to confirm the appointments of the officers.

—Kathy Boka, Secretary

### SIG Update *Special Interest Groups at UIUC*

One of the most successful services that the ACM has brought to it's members is special interest groups, or SIGs. Every SIG is different in terms of interest, but the same in one important respect: to bring students together with similar interests in the fields of computer science and computer applications.

The ACM begins this year with seven special interest groups, introducing a new SIG to the UIUC membership: SIGPLAN (programming languages). The following is a brief description of the ACM SIGs for the fall semester:

**SIGUUCP (Unix/C)** — by far the most active ACM special interest group, providing information to those students using the Unix operating system and/or the C programming language.

**SIGART (artificial intelligence)** — probably the fastest growing SIG, SIGART has seen an increase in meeting attendance due to the growing interest and support in artificial intelligence at the University.

**SIGMUSIC (electronic music)** — incorporating the latest technology in computer science with music, SIGMUSIC has managed to bring together members from completely separate fields of study, and increased their understanding of computer-assisted composition and music production.

**SIGGRAPH (graphics)** — formed to promote the growing field of computer graphics in computer

science, SIGGRAPH has recently produced demonstrations using current graphics technology, and traveled to the ACM National Convention in St. Louis earlier this year.

**SIGNET (networking)** — brings together ACM members interested in computer communication via networking. Over the past few semesters, SIGNET has provided the ACM with networking capabilities, allowing the ACM to communicate directly with department faculty.

**SIGMICRO (microcomputers)** — one of the newest ACM special interest groups, SIGMICRO was formed late last year, and its potential has yet to be realized. SIGMICRO is aimed at ACM members who own microcomputers and want to learn more about their machines. Future plans for SIGMICRO include the formation of sub-groups such as SIGIBM (IBM users), SIGATARI (Atari users), and SIGAPPLE (Apple/Mac users).

**SIGPLAN (programming languages)** — faculty members in the Department of Computer Science have already expressed an interest in forming the new ACM SIGPLAN. This special interest group will be geared toward all aspects of programming languages including language theory, application, and proper programming procedures.

— Greg Freeman, SIG Coordinator  
— Rich Bloch, Editor

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## ***BANKS OF THE BONEYARD***

### **Calendar of Events**

Wed Sep 9th ACM General Meeting

Topic: Organizational

3:00 pm

Location 116 RAL

Wed Sep 9th SIGUUCP Workshop

Beginning UNIX

7:00 pm

Location TBA

Wed Sep 16th SIGUUCP Organizational Meeting

Time and Place TBA

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### **The ACM at UIUC**

**240 Digital Computer Lab**

**1304 West Springfield Avenue**

**Urbana, IL 61801**

**ACM Office: Room 201**

**1204 West Springfield Avenue**

**Telephone: (217)333-5828**

**Arapanet: rbloch@s.cs.uiuc.edu**