

❖ Consultants in Minnesota ❖

February 1998

Presidents Letter

by Ray J. Giske

The Minnesota Chapter of ICCA launched its New Year with its Broker Fair and Annual Meeting. I would like to consider it a successful start to a new year thanks, in large part, to Ben Moyle who managed organizing all the brokers. Excellent participation by the broker community and I hope those of you who attended had the chance to renew old acquaintances and make some new contacts. A list of the brokers attending along with a write-up appears elsewhere in the newsletter. If you weren't able to make the meeting, I am sure the vendors would be happy to hear from you.

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The Annual Meeting provided the opportunity to take a look at the past year and do some planning for the coming year. Items on the agenda included a Treasurer's Report, Election of Officers, a review of a Preliminary Program for 1998, and Other Business.

Although Sheridan Timms, Treasurer was unable to make the meeting, he did provide a brief report which was presented by the President. We are pleased to report that the chapter has a bank balance of about \$3,700. At the beginning of 1997, the Board decided to set a single fee for the dinner meetings without regard to location. It appears the fees were set appropriately since, without significant additional expenses, the balance at the end of 1997 is approximately the same as it was at the beginning of the year. Anyone interested in more detail re: the chapter

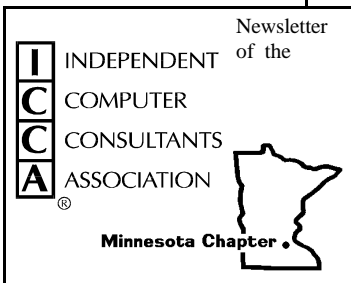
finances may contact Sheridan or me at your convenience.

Election of Officers was a fairly routine matter since all but one of the incumbents agreed to serve again and there didn't appear to be a overwhelming support for any other candidates at the last minute. As a result, the officers as of the Annual Meeting are: Ray Giske, Pres.; Gordon Schesel, Vice-Pres.; Ben Moyle, Secretary; and Steve Roetzel, Treasurer. I want to thank Steve for agreeing to serve as Treasurer; we are happy to have him as part of the Chapter Board of Directors. In addition, special thanks are in order to Sheridan for his work as Treasurer over the past year.

A preliminary 1998 Program Schedule was developed by Gordon Schesel and presented to the Board of Directors at a recent meeting for their review. This schedule was presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting for review and comment. A full set of topics has been prepared and for the most part sponsors for each of the programs have been identified. The dates and locations have also been identified and, for the most part, we will make every attempt to adhere to the schedule for time and place. In some cases, for example, when meeting at a vendor's facility, it may be necessary to make a change. We are willing, however, to make further changes in the program topics if someone has a good program they would like to propose. In any case, please contact Gordon if you have suggestions or comments.

Over the past year, a chapter participated in a number of events and activities. We expect some of these to be repeated and/or continued along with taking on some new

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opportunities as they present themselves. Last year, the Chapter participated in two vendor shows including Strictly Business (in May) and NetCom (in Sep.). We expect to be invited to participate in each again this year. In both cases, a chapter member was on the program for making a presentation and other members served as attendant at a booth. If you are interested in serving as a presenter, you may wish to begin making plans. Contact me for details. As you know, a Website Task Force was established last year and continues to operate. Bill Buending, Task Force Chair, provided a brief update at the Annual Meeting and also has prepared a write-up for this issue of the newsletter. We look forward to the recommendations of the Task Force and getting a Chapter Web Page up and operational.

From time-to-time over the last several years, members have suggested that additional training opportunities should be provided the membership. These might be sessions four hours or more in length which would provide the opportunity to develop a topic in greater depth than is possible at a dinner meeting. We had some additional discussion regarding that

activity and, hopefully, we will be able to make some progress in that regard this year. Each of the chapter members, no doubt, has a skill or talent that others of us would like to learn more about. I would hope that we will be able to put such a session together in the next several months.

As the chapter President for 1998, I am interested in making this organization the kind of organization you would want it to be. In order to do that, however, I need to know what you want the organization to be. Please feel free to contact me with suggestions and ideas rgiske@compuserve.com or 861-6054.

Broker fair.

By: Ben Moyle <BIMoyle@compuserve.com>

The Fourth Annual Broker Fair meeting was the best yet! Twelve brokers did an excellent job of clearly and concisely summarizing their companies specialties. Food was good, too.

For those of you who missed the meeting, or who were there but failed to get a card from someone you meant to, here's a list of the broker representatives and companies.

Barry Baer
Baer Wolf and Associates
2979 Valento
486-8063 Little Canada MN 55117

Jim Reistad
Alternative Resources
3800 West 80th St., #900
835-7166 Bloomington, MN 55431

Bret Beinke
Renaissance Worldwide
2850 Metro Drive
851-3628 Bloomington, MN 55425-1405

Greg Lamothe Swanson Consulting
1468 Lametti Lane
766-9224 St. Paul, MN 55112

John Nilson
Synesis Placements
10800 Lyndale Avenue S., #244
887-1611 Bloomington MN 55420

Jannie Higgins
Sysdyne Corporation
1660 S. Highway 100, #424
541-9889 Minneapolis, MN 55416-1533

Larry Bremer
Customized Personal Computing, Inc.
5930 N. Oakview Lane
553-1994 Plymouth, MN 55442-1536

Michael Steinmetz
Karlsson Consulting Group, Inc.
8400 Normandale Lake Blvd., #911
820-8965 Bloomington, MN 55437

Christine Wisch
Kestral Consulting Ltd. P.O. Box 16351
841-6366 St. Paul MN 55116

Tim Sheehan
Preempt, LLC 8000 W. 78th St., Suite
145 943-5017 Minneapolis MN
55439

Lori Weed
Parallel Technologies 4814 Park Glen
Road
920-7185 St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Dave Vadis
TechPro, Inc.
3000 Centre Pointe Drive
634-1444 Roseville, MN 55113

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[ed. note]

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Attention all ICCA members:
Get involved, write a story for the newsletter. I need stuff to fill these white(blue) pages!!.

Website Task Force Is Alive!

By: Bill Buending

As Ray Giske announced in last month's newsletter, a Task Force has been formed to develop a preliminary plan for an ICCA-MN website. This august body met for the first time on a brisk January 2. The plan we are to produce will address four areas; (1) developing the website (a little cart before the horse thinking), (2) identifying the content of the site and procedures for changing the content, (3) operating the site including procedures for maintaining current data, and (4) the budget impact of the site and options for covering the costs. On the Task Force are Jane Bersie, Alan Kelsey, Alan Hill, Rod Picard, Steve Roetzel, Don Peplinski, and I, your scribe and obedient servant.

Ms. Bersie and Mr. Kelsey were otherwise engaged. The remaining lads and I, along with Ray Giske (who wanted to see us off on the right foot), gathered at the Lincoln Del in time for breakfast. Ray began things with a little historical perspective on what led to the formation of the Task Force. The discussion that followed was free and wide-ranging. Ideas heaped up in the table's center until we attracting comments from those around us.

The airware site eventually identified had everything. Banners, graphics, scrolling this and running that. Hot buttons galore. Even direct links to Bill Gates, the CIA, and the Vatican. This latter button is for use when your application's or system's Help file proves inadequate.

Reason at last prevailed, however. At this point, certain things have been deeply etched in Jell-O. Creating the website will be a multi-phased project. In Phase I, the existing Chapter web page will be "improved," a term as yet a bit nebulous. We want to make the page eye-catching, informative, and unique. If you find time on your hands some day, take a walk through the 26 chapter web pages currently linked to icca.org. Thirteen of the chapters have pages like ours; generic, dull, listless.

Seven chapters have taken the next step, by expanding the chapter information displayed and perhaps even adding a hot button or two. Six chapters have hosted websites, with lots of bells and whistles. Our Phase I efforts will be to join the seven chapters that have taken that first tentative leap into the Internet unknown.

Phase II of our project depends on what National does with icca.org. Even as we speak, National has a Task Force of its own working on improvements to the National website. Some of the things they are working on include allowing members and chapters to update their own web pages, allowing the NO to make adds, changes, and deletes to member pages, and allowing the NO to maintain a library of useful documents on-line for members and the public. If these improvements come about in a timely fashion, our Phase II would include procedures for enabling our members to develop unique web pages and participate in the development of the on-line document library.

It is in Phase III that the o-o-o-hs and a-a-a hs would come about. This would likely require a hosted website for the chapter. We see a menu-based home page that includes such things as a button for "who we are and what we do" about the chapter, another for meeting and other event announcements with locations and maps, and yet another that provides a member database searchable (my spell-checker didn't like it, either) by member or client seekers that extols our individual virtues. Our own member pages, be they the ICCA version or our own website, would be linked to the database records.

We also discussed the possibility of an on-line Referral Service, updated by potential clients, but viewed only by those knowing the password and secret sign. Another menu button might bring up the latest issue of Consultants in Minnesota, our esteemed newsletter. Yet another button would link to a collection of member-contributed white papers on which we have a smattering

of knowledge. We also might have a Guest Book, where visitors to the site can leave comments or messages. Finally, there would be a button that would take those with the proper authorizations into the Maintenance Mode, where member page and chapter page changes could take place.

There would also be a link to the ICCA home page, or to another local button-menu National page, that would make available all of those National items like member benefit and services descriptions, information regarding why to join ICCA, the membership information and application pages, the Code of Ethics and Standards & Practices, and other pages available through the icca.org home page. These would not be duplicates, but would be links to the National pages.

So, that's where we are now. We are gathering information specifics at this time from the TF members, just to find out how everyone views the website. As soon as we settle on some of these details, we can begin developing the plan. Ray Giske has set a date of June 1, 1998, as when we should be ready to present the plan to the chapter Board. But, since Ray is only ex officio on the Task Force, we will give his request all the consideration and respect it deserves. Where does he get off giving us deadlines, anyway? We're consultants. We don't need no stinking deadlines!

If, in spite of my little outburst in the preceding paragraph, I still chair the



Your National Web Page

By: Bill Buending

Did you know that you have a web page out there in the great beyond of the cyber highway? Absolutely true!. It's a member benefit. Some ICCA-MN stalwarts have, I know, their own website. There are cutting-edge folks in any organization. But, whether you have trouble spelling PC or are a heavy metal mainframer who believes that "www" is some obscure 370 instruction meaning "wring and wash woodwork" and used infrequently in certain home-based 4300 household help systems, a web page identifying your firm is out there, linked to the ICCA home page at www.icca.org.

To be sure, your current ICCA basic web page will not win any awards for glamour and pizzazz. It is a basic early Henry Ford black on gray text screen that identifies your firm name, your name and address, phone/fax numbers, chapter connection, and email address. If you have provided them, there is also a list of keywords by which interested parties may search you out, on the off chance they have some work for you. Just a thought.

This basic information about you and your firm comes from the ICCA database in St. Louis. Once a week during normal times, your basic data is extracted from the database and sent to the webmaster, where it is massaged and posted to ICCA's website. When National finds itself between webmasters, as occasionally happens, the update frequency may stretch just a bit. If, perchance, you have moved from above the pizza parlor to a choice location next door to Angie's Personalized Temporary Help, or better yet have taken over the entire 20th floor of the IDS Building, you need to let National know of this change. Send a written billet-doux by email, fax, or snail mail to National advising them of the changes. National will, in turn, update the database and the new data will be ready and waiting when that week's extraction is performed. Do NOT send changes in basic data to the ICCA webmaster, as he/she is only

peripherally interested in them.

On the other hand, if you feel that you deserve a web page a cut above the basics, you can prepare a more extensive description of your company that will appear only on the website. This new, expanded description will override the brief generic description that results from the database extraction. You prepare the description as the text body of an email message addressed to webmaster@icca.org. The subject of the email will be "ID.txt," where ID is your member number. Just as you did not send basic data changes to the webmaster, do NOT send expanded company descriptions to the National Office. Fair is fair, don't you know. The NO cannot make this type of change to your web page, and sending such changes to the NO will only delay the process.

Your expanded description file can be up to 10KB in size, so do not rhapsodize too extensively. It can contain HTML tags, including links to other websites. The file must be in ASCII text, as required by HTML files. The webmaster will insert it into the appropriate place on your web page. There is no need to include the opening and closing <BODY>, <HTML>, and <HEAD> tags, as these are already on the web page. You also need to insure that tags are properly matched (i.e., <H3> </H3>), but you knew that, for heaven's sake. You cannot include graphics (it is a text file, after all), but you can include a link to a graphic stored on another website such as your CompuServe pages. And try not to use exotic HTML instructions that confuse the standard web browsers (Netscape, Microsoft Explorer, Mosaic).

If your knowledge of HTML is limited to being able to spell it, your word processing software may help. MS Office 95 and Office 97 both have web page editors, as does WordPerfect 7 and, I believe, recent versions of Lotus SmartSuite. Create your page using the editor and then delete everything from the beginning of the file up to and including <BODY> and everything from </BODY> to the end of the file. What is

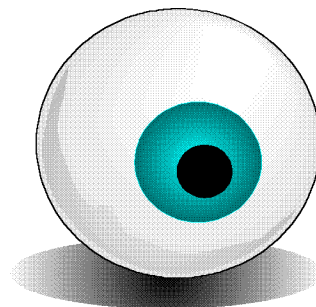
left is what you send to the webmaster.

If you don't have a web page editor, you can send a plain text file. Save it as DOS TEXT. No .doc files, please. A file without HTML tags will display as a single block of text. Leading spaces are ignored. You can have multiple paragraphs by inserting the tag <P> at the end of each paragraph.

You can send a new expanded company description to the webmaster for free on or about your membership renewal date. Changes required at other times during the year might well cause the webmaster to bill you. And also look forward to a invoice if the webmaster has to fix your HTML file because it contains a faux pas or two.

What can you say on your home-grown web page? Anything that is in good taste. Link to your own website by including the anchor (<A>...) properly formatted in your text. Include your rates, if you would like. You can have someone help design your page (preferably another ICCA member) or you can contract with the webmaster for design services (contact the webmaster directly for this).

The material in this article was plagiarized extensively from an National Office document that is sent to each new member as part of the New Member Kit. I, for one, have a limited understanding of what I have just written.



1998 ICCA Minnesota Program Schedule

	Program topic	Presenter	Sponsor	Location	Date
Feb	Y2K	CSC Randy Spiess 868.9358 cell	Gordy Schesel	Lido	Thurs Feb 19
Mar	Financial Planning	TBA	Steve Roetzel	Wyndham	Tues Mar 17
Apr	e-net Connection	IBM	Norm Nelson	Lido	Thurs Apr 16
May	Project Management	PMI VP Education Rita Mulcahey, PMP	Gordy Schesel	Wyndham	Thurs May 21
Jun	Annual Conference		Joan Barnes	Philadelphia	Jun 19-21
Jun	No monthly meeting				
Jul	Business Accounting; desktop software	Bill Buending	Bill Buending	Lido	
Aug	Advice on Legal Is- sues from Jerry's cor- porate attorney		Jerry Stiff	Wyndham	Wed Aug 19
Sep	Negotiating Contracts		Don Peplinski	Lido	Thurs Sep 17
Oct	Voice Systems		Alan Hill tentative 819.1803	Wyndham	Tues Oct 20
Nov	Hewlett Packard	HP	Karl Hella	Lido	Wed Nov 18
Dec	Xmas Party		?	TBA	
Jan '99	Broker Fair		Ben Moyle	Lido	

Frog Story

From: "Joan E Barnes"<jbarnes@allina.com>

A man was crossing a road one day when a frog called out to him and said, "If you kiss me, I'll turn into a beautiful princess."

He bent over, picked up the frog, and put it in his pocket.

The frog spoke up again and said, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a beautiful princess, I will tell everyone how smart

and brave you are and how you are my hero"

The man took the frog out of his pocket, smiled at it, and returned it to his pocket.

The frog spoke up again and said, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a beautiful princess, I will be your loving companion for an entire week."

The man took the frog out of his pocket, smiled at it, and returned it to his pocket.

The frog then cried out, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a princess, I'll stay

with you for a year and do ANYTHING you want."

Again the man took the frog out, smiled at it, and put it back into his pocket.

Finally, the frog asked, "What is the matter? I've told you I'm a beautiful princess, that I'll stay with you for a year and do anything you want. Why won't you kiss me?"

The man said, "Look, I'm a computer programmer. I don't have time for a girlfriend, but a talking frog is cool!"

Meeting Reservations: Members may phone your reservation to Joan Barnes' office at 257-2570, by 3:00 PM, Tuesday, February 17, 1998. Non-members should mail this form to: ICCA Minnesota, c/o Steve Roetzel, 4428 Lakeshore Terrace, Eagan, MN 55122.

Name: _____ Company: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Phone: () _____

Italian Buffet

Members \$20 Non-members \$23 x _____ =



Next Meeting

**Thursday February 19
Y2K**

**Italian Market Deli by
Lido**

**2801 North Snelling Ave 636-
9721 (north of Rosedale)**

Social Hour at 5:30PM
Dinner at 6:30PM

For reservations call
Joan Barnes @ 257-2570

FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday March 17
Financial Planning
Wyndham Garden Hotel

Y2K Presenter: Randy Spiess CSC

By: Gordy Schesel@gffc.com

Mr. Spiess is a Senior Partner with CSC Consulting & Systems Integration's National Year 2000 Practice. He has been active in information technology since 1982 and in the management consulting and systems integration industry since 1986. Mr. Spiess has significant experience in a variety of application areas including distribution, financial and manufacturing systems. He was the Operations Manager of CSC Consulting's Minneapolis Business Unit for 7 years and has considerable experience in business planning and operations including financial management, recruiting, and career development. He has also been responsible for quality assurance of all ongoing projects for the location.

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