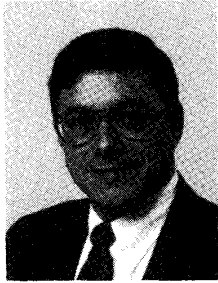


The Price of Improvement is Involvement

Harold L. Flescher, *Senior Member, IEEE*



ONE of the responsibilities of the president of any structured organization (like NPSS or IEEE) is to use his or her communication opportunities productively. Each of us has different perspectives on issues and their priorities, so "productive" means different things to different people. That is one of the great strengths of NPSS having a new President every two years, and one

of the great strengths of free people in general: different and (hopefully) new ideas and perspectives. That strength, however, the incorporation of new and diverse ideas, has a price. That price is change, a not entirely comfortable endeavor for humans.

As I look forward to my two years as NPSS president, I see change all around. The last two years have produced astonishing changes in our world. At the same time, IEEE is changing, as is NPSS. The restructuring of IEEE has become an ongoing process: IEEE's continuing budget problems create the need to operate more efficiently, the members are asking that IEEE operate more effectively, the debate about volunteer restructuring and AIEEE (an American EE society) is quiescent but not buried, and the internationalization of IEEE is accelerating (the fastest growing regions of IEEE are Europe and Asia). In NPSS, our publications are changing to either full peer-reviewed TRANSACTIONS or unreviewed Conference Records, and 1991 will see our first NPSS Conference outside of North America (The Real-Time Computer Applications in Nuclear, Particle and Plasma Sciences Conference in Aachen, Germany, from June 24-28). Conferences outside of North America will be a growing trend as the percentage of our membership from Regions 7, 8, 9, and 10 increases.

The changes we face will not only require the support but the involvement of all of us. It is no longer enough to sit on the sidelines and cheer or complain; IEEE, NPSS, their committees and conferences are no more spectator sports than is your technical work. There are many people in NPSS and its committees who have worked very hard and creatively for many years to achieve our present state. We applaud and thank them for their efforts; however their continued involvement alone will not necessarily guarantee our future success. For that we need more participation from

each of you. All of our members can and should participate. This is your society! We need the new and different ideas and perspectives that new people bring into our technical and operational processes.

There are many opportunities to participate. You can find a committee in which you have an interest. It may be a conference committee, a subcommittee of your technical committee, a functional committee of NPSS, or a liaison committee to IEEE or another society. Volunteer to help. It does not have to be a full-time job. You can, for example, offer your opinion on certain global or societal issues, review a technical paper for a conference of these TRANSACTIONS, or help the Local Arrangements Chairman of a conference in your locale. Volunteer to help.

Find out if you have a local NPSS or IEEE chapter. Attend the meeting and find out what they are doing. Chapters are organized to help and support IEEE members. You can help them do a better job. We can always do a better job.

Vote! Vote in our IEEE and NPSS elections. Return IEEE and NPSS questionnaires when you get them. Voting is one way of expressing your opinion, so vote intelligently. Read the information on the candidates and their views. The candidates' specific ideas and specific proposals are much more important than their personalities, opinions, or bland general statements. Past experience is not always an advantage; new ideas are frequently more critical.

Speaking of opinions, make your's known; to your technical committee officers, to our Editors, or to me. Talk to anyone who is currently involved with NPSS. We cannot involve you or address your issues if we do not know of your interest.

Your help, support, thoughts, and opinions will help to make NPSS and IEEE technical organizations of excellence in the 1990's; organizations that will continuously improve the way our members are supported, and will empower us, through our technical activities, to benefit mankind.

Volunteer and Help!

Editorial Note: Harold L. Flescher (SM'83) is Director of Total Quality for Raytheon Company's Equipment Division and has been involved with R&D in the effects of radiation on electronic systems since 1963. He has been active in the Radiation Effects Committee and the annual Nuclear and Space Radiation Effects Conference since 1966. He has served two terms on the NPSS AdCom and is presently President of the Nuclear and Plasma Sciences Society.

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