



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

North America Region

Interview with T. Scott Atkinson, Director of the NA Region

By Stefano Bregni, Vice-President for Member and Global Activities, and T. Scott Atkinson, Director of the NA Region

This is the fourth article in the series started in November 2016 and published monthly in the IEEE ComSoc Global Communications Newsletter, which covers all areas of IEEE ComSoc Member and Global Activities. In this series of articles, I introduce the six MGA Directors (namely: Sister and Related Societies; Membership Services; AP, NA, LA, EMEA Regions) and the two Chairs of the Women in Communications Engineering (WICE) and Young Professionals (YP) Standing Committees. In each article, one by one they present their sector activities and plans.

In this issue, I interview T. Scott Atkinson, Director of the North America Region (NA).



Stefano Bregni



T. Scott Atkinson

Scott is retired and spends most of his time volunteering for the IEEE. He received the B. S. degree in physics, with minors in mathematics and chemistry, from Texas A&I University, Kingsville, TX, USA in 1961. From 1961 to 1967, he was a communications officer in the United States Air Force. In 1967, he worked as a communications engineer with Lockheed Electronics Company on a contract with the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston, TX. In that position, he supported the testing of the

Apollo spacecraft communications sub-system. In 1968, he joined the IEEE and the Communications Society and became a volunteer supporting Section and Chapter activities in Houston, TX. In 1973, he joined Tenneco Inc, Houston, TX, spending 14 years performing engineering tasks on their telecommunication systems. His last major work activity was as a senior technical support specialist for the United Services Automobile Association (USAA) in San Antonio, TX. Retiring in 1997, he now volunteers full time for the IEEE, the IEEE Communications Society, and IEEE Region 5.

I have known Scott since a long time, as one of the most dedicated and best appreciated volunteers in the entire NA Region of the IEEE Communications Society. It is a pleasure for me to interview Scott today and offer him this opportunity to outline his current activities and plans as Director of the NA Region.

Bregni: Scott, would you introduce briefly the North America Region Board?

Atkinson: Our Region consists of the 92 Communications Society Chapters in IEEE Regions 1 through 7, which include all of the United States and Canada.

Per the ComSoc Policies and Procedures, our Board “is responsible for stimulating, coordinating and promoting the activities of ComSoc members and chapters throughout the North America Region.” Therefore, we support the activities of the 92 Chapters and its members.

Our NA Board consists of individual IEEE Region Representatives and several other volunteers, namely:

- IEEE Region Representatives Ali Abedi (R1), Kafi Hassan (R2), Scott Midkiff (R3), William Ashe (R4), Fawzi Behmann (R5), Upkar Dhaliwal (R6), and Wahab Almuhtadi (R7).
- NAR Board Vice Chair Fawzi Behmann.
- Distinguished Lecturer/Distinguished Speaker Coordinator Zafar Taqvi.
- Past Chair Merrily Hartmann.
- Advisors Richard Miller, Anader Benyamin-Seeyar, Paul Cotae and John Lyons.

In addition, we have set up an Awards Committee.

Meetings of the Board are held monthly via telecon and twice a year during the ICC and GLOBECOM Conferences. In short, what are the activities of the NA Region which the NAR Board oversees?

Bregni: What is your special focus?

Atkinson: The Board oversees the ComSoc activities at the Chapter level through each of the Region Representatives, maintaining contact with each of their IEEE Region Chapters to assist them by suggesting activities and resolving any issues. Special focus is given when a chapter has not shown any recent activity as shown on the IEEE L31 reports. Additionally, at the direction of the Director, each Regional

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ComSoc Membership		
Region	Members	Percent of total
NA	12,211	42.2
EA	6,787	23.5
LA	1,149	4.0
AP	8,788	30.4
Total	28,935	100.0

Table 1. Shares of ComSoc membership among the four Regions.

Region	Higher grade	Percent of total	Senior grade	Percent of total	Member grade	Percent of total	Student grade	Percent of total
North America	11.164	44.1%	2.184	47.7%	7.214	39.3%	873	27.2%
European Area	5.813	23.0%	1.178	25.7%	4.333	23.6%	881	27.4%
Latin America	845	3.3%	134	2.9%	693	3.8%	291	9.1%
Asia Pacific	7.505	29.6%	1.083	23.7%	6.108	33.3%	1169	36.4%
Total	25.327	100%	4.3579	100%	18.348	100%	3214	100%

Table 2. Members by category in the four Regions.

2016 International Conference on Advanced Technologies for Communications (ATC2016), Hanoi, Vietnam

Organized Jointly by the IEEE ComSoc Sister Society Radio Electronics Association of Vietnam (REV) and the IEEE Communications Society

By Duc-Tan Tran, VNU-UET, Viet Nam

The 2016 International Conference on Advanced Technologies for Communications (ATC2016) was jointly organized by The IEEE Communications Society, The Radio-Electronics Association of Vietnam (REV), and VNU University of Engineering and Technology in Hanoi, Vietnam, on October 12-14, 2016. The technical program of the conference featured 86 papers, including 81 oral presentations and five poster presentations. All papers are indexed by IEEEExplore.

The IEEE Communications Society was actively involved in the conference organizing committee with Prof. Stefano Bregni (IEEE ComSoc Vice-President for Member and Global Activities) acting as the Technical Program Co-Chair, Prof. Vijay Bhargava (2012–2013 President of IEEE ComSoc) as the Steering Co-chair, and Prof. Hikmet Sari (2014–2015 IEEE ComSoc Vice-President for Conferences) as the General Co-Chair. The conference was also honored to welcome Prof. José Roberto Boisson de Marca, 2014 President of IEEE, as the Honorary Co-Chair.

ATC2016 attracted more than 200 scientists and researchers from 29 different countries around the world to discuss the latest technologies in electronics and communications. Typical discussion topics included antennas and propagation, microwave engineering, communications, signal processing, biomedical engineering, networks, IC and electronics design.



Conferring the best paper award to Dr. Pham Ngoc Nam.

The conference was successful in inviting the world's leading researchers to deliver three important keynote speeches in the area of wireless communications and multimedia. The first speech, entitled "Power Efficiency in Wireless Communications—A Historical Review," was delivered by Prof. Hikmet Sari, Head of the Telecommunications Department at SUPELEC, France, and Chief Scientist of



Prof. Hikmet Sari delivered keynote speech.



A technical session.

Sequans Communications, France. The next keynote speech was on "Wireless-Powered Communication Networks: Architectures, Protocols, and Applications," given by Prof. Dong In Kim, Director of the Cooperative Wireless Communications Research Center, Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU), Korea. The two speeches garnered the special attention of more than 200 delegates. The third speech was presented by Prof. Minh N. Do, IEEE Fellow, Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) on the hot topics of "Quantifying and Extracting Visual Information from Mobile Devices." The technical sessions of the conference, with 86 papers, were divided into nine tracks and three special sessions running over three consecutive days. The conference received 174 submissions, of which 86 papers were accepted, for an acceptance rate of 49%. Two excellent papers were selected by the technical committee to receive the best paper awards.

The ATC2016 conference was a great opportunity for long-term and sustainable collaborations between the scientists in Viet Nam and other countries. The next conference is scheduled for 2017 in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam.

For further information, please see the conference web site <http://rev-conf.org/>. More photos of ATC2016 are available at <http://rev-conf.org/conferences-photos>



Opening ceremony.

IEEE ComSoc North-America Regional Chapter Chair Congress at IEEE GLOBECOM 2016, Washington, DC, USA

By T. Scott Atkinson, NA Region Director, IEEE ComSoc

We are pleased to present the activities of the recent North America Regional Chapter Chair's Congress held in Washington, DC USA on December 3rd and 4th, 2016

The meeting was approved by our Vice President, Stefano Bregni, and the ComSoc Board of Governors during meetings at the ICC Conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 23-27 May 2016. Immediately thereafter, the North America Region Board began planning our upcoming meeting at IEEE GLOBECOM 2016.

I would first like to introduce our NA Board, where you can find more information on our web site: <http://na.regions.comsoc.org/board/>. Our Board is composed of the following volunteers:

Chair (NAR Director): T. Scott Atkinson

Vice Chair: Fawzi Behmann

Past Chair: Merrily Hartmann

DLT/DSP/MDSG Coordinator: Zafar Taqvi

IEEE Region 1 Representative: Ali Abedi

IEEE Region 2 Representative: Kafi Hassan

IEEE Region 3 Representative: Scott Midkiff

IEEE Region 4 Representative: William "Bill" Ashe

IEEE Region 5 Representative: Fawzi Behmann

IEEE Region 6 Representative: Upkar Dhaliwal

IEEE Region 7 Representative & NAR Information Technology

Coordinator: Wahab Almuhtadi

Advisor (R7 DLT Support): Anadeer Benyamin-Seeyar

Advisor (Conferences): Richard Miller

Advisor: John Lyons

Advisor: Paul Cotae

Our Region is unique in that we cover seven IEEE Regions, whereas each of the other ComSoc Regions have one each, Regions 8, 9 and 10. Thus, we need to have a rather large Board to oversee the activities of the 92 chapters (42% of all ComSoc) in the seven Regions.

We operate on a set of ComSoc Policies and Procedures that have been approved by the ComSoc Member Global Activities Committee and ultimately the ComSoc Board of Governors.

Leading up to the NARCCC at GLOBECOM, we began by holding monthly conference calls to develop an agenda for the meeting and our approach to inviting the chapter to participate. Since we have a large contingent of the ComSoc chapters, we divide them into two areas, the Eastern Area and the Western Area, and focus our NARCCC on each separately. The last NARCCC was held in Austin at the IEEE GLOBECOM 2014 and focused on the Western Area Chapters. So in 2016, our focus

was on the Eastern Area Chapters. Additionally, we included a few chapters from Region 5 plus one chapter (Houston) in the process of being reactivated. Overall we had representatives from 24 chapters: Maine (R1)–Ali Abedi; Montreal (R7)–Reza Soleyman; North Jersey (R1)–Amit Patel; Baltimore (R2)–Anna Romaniuk; Jamaica (R3)–Devon Gayle; NJ Coast (R1)–Newman Wilson; Kingston (R7) – Francois Chan; Toronto (R7)–Eman Hammad; Ottawa (R7)–Wahab Almuhtadi; London (R7)–Hao Lin; New York (R1)–Warner Sharkey; Washington (R2) – Debi Siering; Houston (R5)–Russell Roy; Mohawk Valley (R1)–Brian Spink; New Hampshire (R1)–Mary Bzezenski; Princeton Central Jersey (R1)–Ashutosh Dutta; Worcester County (R1)–Sundar Sundaramurthy; Pittsburgh (R2)–Balaji Palanisamy; Austin (R5)–Fawzi Behmann; San Antonio (R5)–Brian Kelley; Tulsa (R5)–Ali Imran; New Orleans (R5)–Richard Miller; San Diego (R6)–Upkar W; Galveston Bay (R5)–Zafar Taqvi.

Our agenda included:

- ComSoc President's Report: Harvey Freeman, President
- Member & Global Activities Report: Stefano Bregni, VP MGA
- ComSoc Financials (Treasurer): Bob Shapiro, Treasurer
- Executive Director's Report: Susan Brooks, Staff
- Technical Activities & Industry Outreach: Adam Greenberg, Staff
- North America Region Report: T. Scott Atkinson, NA Director. During this presentation, Scott passed out a copy of a Vitality Checklist for successful IEEE ComSoc Chapters. This Checklist can be found on our web site under our RCC tab.
- Chapter Achievement Award (Outstanding Chapter): Wahab Almuhtadi, Chair
- Austin Chapter Report: Fawzi Behmann, Chair
- Membership Services: Zhensheng Zhang, MS Director
- Panel Discussion: Merrily Hartmann
- DLT/DSP Updates: Zafar Taqvi
- ComSoc Seminars (5G, Big Data, IoT, Cybersecurity): Ashutosh Dutta
- Second Panel Discussion: Merrily Hartmann

Also at lunch we had a special speaker, Mr. Michel Jansan, Open Net Ombudsman, U.S. Federal Communications Commission.

All presentations are located on our website:

<http://na.regions.comsoc.org/RCC>.

Additionally, we announced, thru our IEEE Region Representatives, the opportunity for all chapters to nominate someone in their chapter who had provided exemplary service to their chapter in 2016. Six nominations were received and judged by five Board members not associated with those chapters. We required at least three votes for an individual to be chosen. There were three awards that could be given, which included a plaque and a check for \$400.00. There were two winners: Raed Abdullah from the Ottawa Chapter, and Reza Soleymani from the Montreal Chapter. Congratulations to these two outstanding supporters of their chapters.

And finally, one of our own long term Society members was selected to become "Director Emeritus" for Region 5. Ross



Group photo of participants to the IEEE ComSoc North-America Regional Chapter Chair Congress at IEEE GLOBECOM 2016, Washington, DC, USA.

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Representative may be appointed Chair of one of the Board Standing Committees.

Bregni: Is it possible to attend the NA Board meetings and collaborate on some of its activities?

Atkinson: Yes, certainly. The NA Board is open to any IEEE ComSoc member from the NA Region at our Board meetings held during each of the two flagship conferences each year, which are usually held during the Technical Sessions of GLOBECOM/ICC. I hope that as many of our members as possible will get involved and serve on one of our Committees, as the best networking often occurs when you are working toward a common goal.

Bregni: Now, would you give us a brief overview of the membership of the NA Region? How are they distributed?

Atkinson: The number of ComSoc members in the NA region is 12,211, and this represents 42.2% of the 28,935 ComSoc members in total (as of Jan 2017). This is the largest share among all Regions, as shown in Table 1. See Table 2 for more details on ComSoc membership and the various categories.

Bregni: In 2016, the IEEE NA Region Chapter Achievement Award was presented to the Ottawa Communications Society Chapter. Could you tell us about this Chapter and what they did to be awarded?

Atkinson: My pleasure. Their chapter official IEEE name is "Joint Chapter of Communications Society, Broadcast Technology Society and Consumer electronics Society."

The Chapter Chair is Dr. Wahab Almuhtadi, P.Eng. He is a professor and coordinator of the Algonquin College-Carleton University Joint Degree Program "Bachelor of Information Technology-Photonics and Laser Technology-BIT-PLT" in the School of Advanced Technology, at Algonquin College. Dr. Almuhtadi is also the R&D Coordinator at the Algonquin College Faculty of Technology and Trades. Dr. Almuhtadi has more than 20 years of university and college teaching experience at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

During 2016, the Chapter (1) was heavily involved in communications with local industry, academia, Ottawa Tourism and the City of Ottawa in the preparation for hosting Conferences in Ottawa; (2) co-organized with the student branches and the young professionals many events; (3) held five meetings with Distinguished Lecturers plus five meetings with other noted technology speakers; and (4) the Chapter was also heavily involved in community technical activities.

To make the selection for the Chapter Achievement Award, we examined questionnaires of the chapters, who were reporting



Visit to the Ottawa Chapter.

their activities for the previous year. The Ottawa Chapter was clearly superior among all those submitted.

Their award was presented during the Luncheon Awards Ceremony at the recent IEEE GLOBECOM 2016 Conference in Washington, DC. To further recognize the Chapter volunteers, I made a personal visit to Ottawa to congratulate the various Chapter Leaders, who played a significant role in the success of the Chapter.

Bregni: You just had your NA Region Chapter Congress last December at GLOBECOM 2016, in Washington, DC. When do you anticipate the next opportunity for another NA Region Chapter Chairs Congress?

Atkinson: The next opportunity to hold an NA Regional Chapter Chairs Congress could be in 2018, most likely at the IEEE International Conference on Communications (ICC) to be held in Kansas City, MO, May 19-25.

Bregni: Scott, in conclusion, what would you recall as main highlights during your term as Director of the North America Region?

Atkinson: Here are some highlights during my term as Director. We committed extra time and effort to ensuring that we had a fully staffed and active Board. To maintain communications, I frequently communicated via phone calls and emails with the IEEE Region Representatives to keep them active and informed on current activities.

Additionally, we proposed an RCCC in June and delivered a very successful RCCC meeting at the IEEE GLOBECOM 2016 in Washington, DC with 24 Chapters represented. A highlight of the meeting included a luncheon speaker, Michael Janson, the Open-Internet-Ombudsman for the U. S. Federal Communications Commission.

To complete the year, we accomplished two additional items of note: a personal visit to the chapter winning our Chapter Achievement Award, Ottawa, Canada, to congratulate the Chapter leaders on their achievements; and receiving six nominations for our Exceptional Service Award and provided, for the first time ever, awards to two outstanding chapter individuals in the Montreal and Ottawa chapters.

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Anderson was a ComSoc volunteer since 1977, when he was Secretary of the 1980 National Telecommunications Conference in Houston, TX. He went on to be the Chair of the 1986 National Communications Conference, now named IEEE Globecom, and became the director of the flagship conference committee and a member of the ComSoc Board of Governors as their Treasurer. Select members of ComSoc participated in recognizing him at a special dinner in his honor on January 21, 2017 in Houston, TX.

**GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS NEWSLETTER**

STEFANO BREGNI
Editor
Politecnico di Milano — Dept. of Electronics and Information
Piazza Leonardo da Vinci 32, 20133 MILANO MI, Italy
Tel: +39-02-2399.3503 — Fax: +39-02-2399.3413
Email: bregni@elet.polimi.it, s.bregni@ieee.org

IEEE COMMUNICATIONS SOCIETY
STEFANO BREGNI, VICE-PRESIDENT FOR MEMBER AND GLOBAL ACTIVITIES
CARLOS ANDRES LOZANO GARZON, DIRECTOR OF LA REGION
SCOTT ATKINSON, DIRECTOR OF NA REGION
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TAKAYA YAMAZATO, DIRECTOR OF AP REGION
CURTIS SILLER, DIRECTOR OF SISTER AND RELATED SOCIETIES

REGIONAL CORRESPONDENTS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ISSUE
EWELL TAN, SINGAPORE (ewell.tan@ieee.org)

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