

Forthcoming Meeting, Saturday, May 20, 2006 at 10 AM in the 2020 Building in the Oak Ridge Industrial Park (% TIA Member, Terry Carpenter)

Randy Boyd will speak on his company, **Radio Systems, Inc.** The company makes underground electric fencing for pets. There was a long article on the company in the News Sentinel of Friday, March 24, 2006.

From the Newspaper, Knoxville News Sentinel, Friday, March 15, 2006

“The typically quiet pet product purveyor, Radio Systems is making a big splash this week as it reports the results of a national invention contest that’s resulted in national media coverage for the Knoxville tech company.

With 30 local employees on site, including Radio Systems president and CEO Randy Boyd, the company Thursday announced the winners of the Pet-Safe IdeaFetch contest at the American Pet Product Manufacturer’s Association Global Pet Expo in San Diego.”

See the website at **PETCO.com**.

Past Meeting, April 15, 2006 (% TIA Recording Secretary Tom Kulaga)

The April 15 meeting of the Tennessee Inventors Association was a lively and informative one. In addition to the scheduled speaker, Charles Gibbs, the Association also heard from Ron Peabody, the regional manager for the new Knoxville office of IBI Global. The Association heard updates from members Martin Skinner and Danny Browning. The meeting concluded with an association board meeting.

Charles Gibbs

The scheduled speaker, Charles Gibbs, is a prolific inventor who demonstrated several of his inventions and discussed his current projects. Charles is an avid caver, that is, he likes to climb around in caves. That avocation led to one of his commercially successful inventions: a rope climbing device, or ascender. Charles never protected that invention with a patent, but he competed in the marketplace by marketing his unique device directly to other cavers. The rope climbing invention is currently manufactured and marketed by family members.

The second invention Charles displayed was his battery operated drain snake. The snake was designed to provide a convenient and easy way to clean hair from drains. Again, this invention was not protected by a patent. Charles said that he sold several hundred of these snakes. A marketing deal fell through and Charles didn’t continue to pursue selling the invention.

The third invention Charles displayed was a two-faced clown to let children know when they were too noisy. A sound sensor illuminated the clown face so that it had a frown instead of the normally visible smiley face. The clown face had a time delay to remind the children to be quiet. Charles patented this invention, but was not successful in marketing it.

The fourth invention Charles displayed was the Florida Probe, an electronic periodontal probe that was patented in 1988. (US Patent Number 4,791,940). In the last 5 years, Charles said that sales have increased almost 10 fold to over 1 million dollars per year and that sales are up 45% so far this year. The probe is FDA approved, and Charles said that FDA approval, at the time he obtained it, was free and took him only three months after submitting a 10 page report.

A fifth project Charles told the Association about is a testing chamber for lab mice that is being developed. He described the testing chamber and how it was used for testing pain sensitivity in mice for various drugs.

The sixth project Charles described was book publishing. Charles talked about his new book that he and a partner published last year. The book is titled "The Function of Teeth." He said that it took him four months to break even after a total \$26,000 investment.

As Charles was telling the Association audience about his inventions and projects, Charles offered a few valuable tips and advice to the members.

First, Charles strongly advocated making, or inventing, something that the inventor personally uses. Charles described how the rope climbing device was invented to meet a need that he had personally.

Second, Charles advised to make something that businesses will buy. He suggested avoiding marketing products to consumers and suggested targeting businesses in order to have a market to sustain a product during the initial stages of marketing.

Third, Charles advocated recruiting marketing help. He said that marketing an invention is essential. He said that oftentimes the success of a product relies upon getting a good salesman or marketing person involved. Charles said that in his case, he found that a good trainer helped sell his Florida Probe product.

Fourth, Charles said that it is hard to sell a business or an invention until the business is big. He noted that many larger companies want a proven track record before they will invest in a new product or a new company. Charles said it is much easier to sell a 100 million dollar company than a 1 million dollar company.

Charles Gibbs concluded his presentation with a discussion of SBIRs. The Department of Defense (DoD) has the SBIR and STTR programs to providing funding for early-stage R&D projects at small technology companies -- projects that serve a DoD need and have commercial applications. The SBIR Program provides up to \$850,000 in early-stage R&D funding directly to small technology companies (or individual entrepreneurs who form a company). Charles described the three phases of funding of the SBIR program and how inventors can benefit from participating. For more information, see <www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/sbir/>.

Ron Peabody, IBI Global

The next presenter was Ron Peabody, who is the regional manager for the newly opened Knoxville office for IBI Global. See <www.IBIGlobal.com>. IBI Global offers business mentoring to help business people develop and build their business. Ron said that there is a mastermind luncheon open to the public every Tuesday from 11:30 to 1pm at Cozymel's Mexican Grill in Knoxville. The luncheon is a networking event that Ron invited everyone to attend. There is no cost to attend the luncheon meeting, other than the cost of the lunch. Ron can be reached at 865-560-9600 for more information. **(See Alexeff's note below on IBI)**

Martin Skinner

Martin Skinner addressed the members and described an e-mail message that he received from Inventors Digest magazine. Martin said that the e-mail discussed three topics. The first topic discussed the current lawsuit regarding diversion of patent fees to other agencies of the government. The second topic was the regarding the new reality television show, American Inventor. The e-mail suggested that inventors contact their local television affiliates to encourage them to run programs on local inventors. The third topic of the e-mail was about the 26 million dollar verdict against Davison Associates, an invention promotion company, for misrepresenting its services and misleading inventors.

Danny Browning

Danny Browning gave an update on the progress of his invention, the Clean Cut tool for cutting holes in ceilings while minimizing dust. Danny discussed his marketing efforts and the trade shows he has been attending. Danny said that he has introduced the second generation device and hopes to be shipping it soon. He also said that he is moving toward doing his own manufacturing, which includes thermoforming. He said that he recently acquired a CNC machine.

Having no other business for the general members in attendance, the April 15th meeting came to a close.

Board Meeting

A TIA Board Meeting was held after the regularly scheduled meeting of April 15.

Martin Skinner asked the Board about contacting the local television stations regarding featuring local inventors. After some discussion, Tom Kulaga volunteered to contact the local stations, in particular the producers of Alive at Five and Schwall's World.

Martin also raised the subject of having a reception type event for the members. A lively discussion ensued, during which a public event featuring the inventions of the members was proposed and discussed.

The TIA web site was discussed. Tom Kulaga asked about listing contact information on the web site. It was agreed to list contact information for the officers, but it was not necessary to do so for the board members. Acquiring a domain name for the TIA web site was also discussed. The consensus was that having a domain name was a good idea. Tom Kulaga volunteered to come up with a list of available domain names for the next meeting so that a domain name could be selected.

Note from Igor Alexeff on IBI

I attended the IBI special kickoff dinner at Cozymel's in Knoxville on Tuesday, April 18. The special speaker was B. J. Dohrmann, IBI Founder, Best Selling Author, Radio and TV Personality & Fortune 100 Business Trainer. The bottom line is that to participate in the workshops held in California requires an up-front payment of \$ 5,000. **See the note below.**

Dear Dr. Alexeff:

I just wanted to follow up with you after our meeting a couple of weeks ago. You may still be in England, and I hope you both have had a great time.

I was not able to speak with you before you left that meeting with BJ, but I wanted to remind you that BJ had offered the Founding Members of the IBI Knoxville Club a substantial discount. Your enrollment fee is discounted from \$ 6500.00 to \$ 5000.00. And if Anne wanted to attend with you, her enrollment fee is discounted from \$ 1950.00 to \$ 1450.00. To receive these discounts, the total amount would have to be paid by May 14th, even if you were unable to attend the May forum, you could go in July, but still receive this special discount.

Please call me with any questions or comments, and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Regards,

Ronald L. Peabody
Regional Manager
IBI Global Knoxville

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/ DUES RENEWAL

Mail to TIA Treasurer, P.O. Box 11225, Knoxville, TN 37939-1225

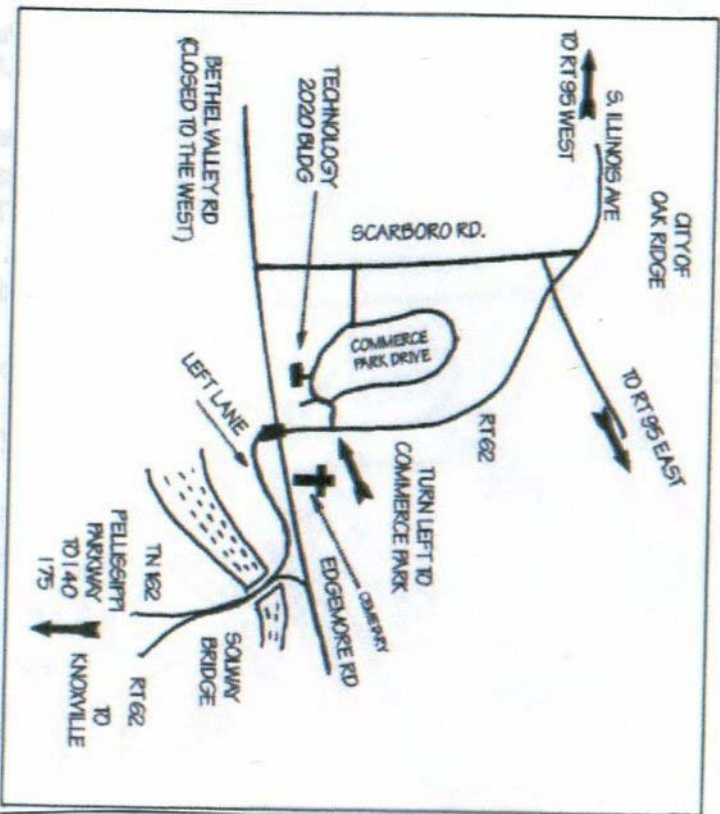
Dues are \$30.00 per year , and due in January. Anyone joining after January will pay a pro rated amount.
Please make checks payable to Tennessee Inventors Association.

Name _____

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INVENTIONS



REGULAR MEETINGS

1020 COMMERCE PARK DR.

(2020 BUILDING)

THIRD SATURDAY EVERY MONTH

10:00 A.M. TILL NOON

FOR INFORMATION CALL

865-483-0151



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