

TAMPA BAY INVENTORS COUNCIL
Post Office Box 1620, St. Petersburg, FL 33731

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"Inventors Helping Inventors"



THE Tampa Bay INVENTOR NEWSLETTER

The Official Publication of the Tampa Bay Inventor's Council

PO. BOX 1620 St. Petersburg, Florida 33731-1620

January 2001

NEWSLETTER GETS NEW LOOK

The Tampa Bay Inventor Newsletter has a new look beginning with this issue. Some of the differences are: new size (obvious), some color added to spice it up, and some regular columns such as "Letter from the President," a column on the ins and outs of patenting and selling your invention and a column where club members can report on progress of their projects.

This front page location in the future will be reserved for news of up coming presentations. Speaking of presentations, we have some good ones scheduled for the next few months. Starting with January 10, we will have Victoria Morton, inventor with over 50 inventions in the health and beauty field on the market internationally and founder of Suddenly Slender. She has appeared on over 2,000 radio and TV shows. Her TV appearances include the Sally Jessy Raphael Show, Gail King Show and the Roseanne Barr Show, Her web site, www.suddenlyslender.com gets over a million hits per year.

Then January 24, we will have Dr.

CALENDAR January

GENERAL MEETINGS

- Jan. 10 7:30 pm
- Jan. 24 7:30 pm
- Feb. 14 7:30 pm
- Feb. 21 7:30 pm

The Board of Trustees Meeting

TBA
Largo Library, 5:30 pm

All meetings held at:
Largo Library
 351 East Bay Drive
 Largo, Florida on
 2nd & 4th
 Wednesdays

For information call:
See listing of Directors on page 2

LUNCHEON MEETING

- Jan. 17 12:00 noon
- Feb. 21 12:00 noon

Santa Madeira Restaurant
 Madeira Beach

George Springer, inventor of the "Facial Toner Mask" giving us a report on his experience with development and marketing this product. This should prove to be very interesting.

February 24 Steve Harris of Task Marketing will give us the inside story about his company and the need for new products to market. Task Marketing is involved in marketing new product in kiosks. They recently sold eight million dollars worth of a new product- a spray marker pen.

Be sure to mark your calenders for April 24th. Jerry Osteryoung from the Jim Moran institute will return. Jerry is a popular favorite and always has some interesting things to present.

We also will have Ray Niro Jr., from Niro, Scavone, Haller, Niro-the Chicago attorney who represented yours truly in a successful infringement suit.

Need to Reach TBIC?

Website:
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or call Dave Kiewit, Secretary:
Phone - 727- 866-0669

Submit Articles to our Editor at:
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The Tampa Bay Inventors' Council (TBIC) is a corporation as defined in Chapter 617, Florida Statutes, as not for profit. The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, education and scientific purposes. The TBIC is a 501 (C) (3) charitable corporation which allows the receiving of tax deductible contributions of goods and services. There are over 100 active members willing to share their expertise and experiences with fellow inventors. Meetings are held at the Largo Library on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. Yearly dues are \$45 and include the Membership Directory & Resource Reference Book.



Make your Inventing Process More Effective and More Fun!

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
TAMPA BAY INVENTORS' COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 1620, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33731
Attn: Treasurer

Membership Application
Dues \$ 45 per year

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We will be updating the membership roster soon. This is a perfect time for you to add or update your profile. This way other you and other members will be able to network to get needed support for development projects. Just fill out the data below, cut this page out and mail it to:

Tampa Bay Inventor's Council, P.O. Box 1620, St. Petersburg, FL 33731.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email: _____

What is your business or occupation? _____

What is your training? _____ Degrees? _____

What services, skills or resources could you make available to members?

What are your hobbies?

Patents or applications? If patent is issued give numbers

What else do you want to tell us?



Letter From the President

Hello. My name is Chuck Van Breemen. I am the new President of the Tampa Bay Inventor's Council. I am proud to be able to serve you.

I am an independent inventor with several patents. I have a degree in mechanical engineering which I got in order to be able to a better job at inventing. I have worked for twenty-five years as a new products engineer, mostly in the automotive field. I market one of my inventions myself. It's called Tarp Guard and is used by truckers to keep their tarps from ripping.

I feel that the purpose of the Tampa Bay Inventor's Council is to help each of its members be successful inventors. It is my intention as your President to do my best to achieve that purpose. In order to do that I need to know what each of you needs and wants. Included in this newsletter is a survey. Please fill it out and send it to me or better yet, bring it to the next meeting.

The best way for you to get the most out of your membership is to participate. Come to the meetings--we will have interesting and helpful programs at each meeting. Some of our best programs have been put on by our own members, and I invite you to contact me if you have an idea for a program. For instance, one of our members, Randy Landeneau, gave us a report on his progress in making prototypes for his pet brush invention. He will be giving us updates as he progresses.

I'm planning an interesting, exciting year and I'm looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2000 MEETING
TAMPA BAY INVENTORS' COUNCIL

Roller Cleaning: an Update

Steve Gates brought us up to date on his paint roller cleaner and showed us a snappy video that he put together to show the product in action. About a year and a half ago he had worked out an arrangement with a company in Tallahassee that was going to market the product. That's now ancient history, and Steve is busy doing his own marketing and trying to get one of the versions of the roller cleaner added to the product line of some painting supplies company or another.

An Innovation Methodology

Winston Kao is an agricultural consultant who has profited from new products and processes that he has developed. He has recently concentrated on the olive growing industry in California, and has developed several new by-products from what had been a waste product that the processors had to pay to get rid of. The major guideposts to success that Winston has found are:

- Read all the trade magazines in the industry that you're working in. Every industry has magazines, and they're generally a good introduction to the business.
- Learn the language. Every business has its own special terminology. Expect to run across words you've never heard before. Also expect to run across words that the industry uses just a little bit differently from the way other use them – misinterpret these and you'll go astray.
- Talk to the industry. Find out who the opinion leaders are, and get to them. Find out what people in the business want and can't get. Find out what frustrates them.
- Notice the un-noticed.

Dave Kiewit, Secretary, TBIC

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WHERE'S THE MONEY?

When inventors are talking about funding new companies, the term "venture capitalist" always comes up. But is this the best place for a company to seek start-up money? Probably not.

It's true that venture capitalists have record sums of money to invest. But in every year since 1995, just 9% of companies funded by VC's were start-ups, receiving a total of 1 billion dollars. This is a small number of companies--about 350. It is more worthwhile for a new companies to look for "angel investors." These are wealthy individuals who are looking for companies to fund and mentor. There are currently about 2.5 million angels in the United States, 400,000 of which are active. Together they fund about 50,000 ventures for a total of \$30 billion to \$40 billion annually.

Taken from *INC.* magazine, September 2000, "Where the Money Is." page 52.

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IS THAT FLY WATCHING ME?

By Randall Landreneau

For many years, scientists have marveled at the flight capabilities of insects. A male hoverfly can accelerate at 3 g's and reach speeds of 25 miles per hour. It can change directions while in flight in 30 thousandths of a second. Until recently, scientists didn't understand flight. With the support of military research agencies in the United States and Britain, that has changed. The military wants a device that can quietly go to a spot without being seen and collect intelligence – like a fly on the wall. Whether or not that will ever be accomplished, Insect Flight 101 has arrived.



Insects do not flap their wings up and down. They move them back and forth through the air, like you do with your hands when treading water. They adjust the angle of the wings with respect to the air just like you change the angle of your hands. They do this at amazing speeds— around 600 times per second. Mosquito wings operate at 1,000 cycles per second causing the high-pitched whine that they emit. In addition, they are able to time the forward and backward strokes, and the wing rotation to make the most advantage of the vortexes created for greater lift.

Groups working on prototypes include Vanderbilt University, University of Toronto, and Aerovironment in Monrovia, CA. Various materials are being experimented with, like piezoelectric ceramics that convert electrical power into mechanical vibrations. Perhaps more promising is the work being done with dielectric elastomer artificial muscle, known as rubber muscle.

People involved with this project say it will probably be at least ten years before there is a workable device. In ten years, if you see a really big fly, about 3 inches long, looking at you –smile.

Reference: "Fly on the Wall", Glenn Zorpette, *Red Herring Magazine*, October 30, 2000

LEONARDO DAVINCI


by Randall Landreneau

Most are aware that Leonardo DaVinci had an unique method of writing. For his personal notes, he wrote from right to left in such a way that his writing would look normal when viewed in a mirror. He wrote normally when the material was intended for someone else. No one knows for sure why he did this. It could have been to keep others from easily seeing what he was writing, which the rest of us paranoid inventors can appreciate. It could have been to stay out of trouble with the Roman Catholic Church, which wasn't exactly open-minded regarding scientific research. Another theory is that because he was left handed, writing right to left kept the ink from smearing.

I have another theory. If you look at ancient languages like Hebrew, you will find that they go from right to left on a page. This is because for a right-handed person to chisel words onto stone, it is much easier to go right to left because you are holding the chisel with your left hand. Likewise, it is easier for a right-handed person to write from left to right on a page. If most people were left handed, we would be writing from right to left.

I say that Leonardo, as an inventor looking for the best solution, was simply writing in the most efficient way for a left-handed person. It happened to be a mirror image of what a right-handed person would do.

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SELLING YOUR INVENTION, Signing Waivers by Chuck Van Breemen

If you plan to submit your idea to a corporation for sale or license, you will sooner or later be asked to sign a waiver before the corporation will accept your submittal.

DON'T DO IT!

First, what is a waiver? A waiver is a document designed to protect the corporation from being sued for violating an implied non-disclosure agreement or implied offer to buy. It asks you to give up some very important rights that you would otherwise have under law. Some companies may misleadingly call it a "disclosure agreement" which may lead you to believe you are signing a conventional non-disclosure agreement.

This document is most likely to be presented to you by large corporations. If you sign one of these waivers the only right you will have is the right to sue the corporation if you eventually get a patent. There are four basic points to a waiver. Some companies add other stipulations and I have seen waivers that were actually small books. In all cases, though, you will be asked to agree that the company:

- 1) Has no obligation to pay if they use your idea.
- 2) Is not bound to keep your idea in confidence.
- 3) Has no obligation to return any paper you submit.
- 4) Has no obligation whatsoever to you, what you may have from any patent you may eventually get.

Why would a large corporation ask you to give up your ideas? Because many companies have been sued and, in the absence of any such documentation, lost. They are gun-shy and would rather pass up a good product idea than run the risk of an expensive lawsuit.

The usual procedure when your inquiry letter is received, is to send your letter to the legal department. You will then get a waiver and a form letter. If you sign the waiver and return it they will then notify you that you may submit your idea. If you do this you will have given them your idea for free. Don't be so anxious to show someone your idea that you give it to them.

The best way to avoid this problem is to concentrate on small companies—at least at first, until you have received notice of approval for issue from the patent office. Most small companies will sign an agreement—which you should draft—as they are frequently looking for outside ideas. The agreement I use includes a clause wherein they agree that the idea is mine and of value even if I don't get a patent. This is the best possible relationship since it demonstrates trust on both sides.

Editors Note: This article is what I hope will be the first in a series covering various aspects of getting a patent and selling your idea. The following book was used as a reference for this article: "PATENT IT YOURSELF," by David Pressman, Nolo Press, Berkeley, California.

JIM MORAN INSTITUTE NEWS

The 6th annual JMI Entrepreneurial Showcase will be held on Friday March 23, 2001 at the University Center Club at FSU in Tallahassee. It will be from held 11:45AM to 2:00PM. Keynote speaker will be Jennie Halloran who is CEO of Brand New You, Inc. Before that she was President of Tupperware, Canada and Senior VP, Managing Director of Tupperware, U.S. Jennie will be speaking on HOW TO LIGHT THE FIRE THAT IGNITES YOUR SALES.

Jim Moran and Jennie will be taking questions from the audience at the end of the program. The MC for this event will be the dynamic Lynda Keever.

I hope you will be able to attend this special event.
Contact Jerry Osteryoung
Jim Moran Institute
850-644-7898, www.cob.fsu.edu/jmi/

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