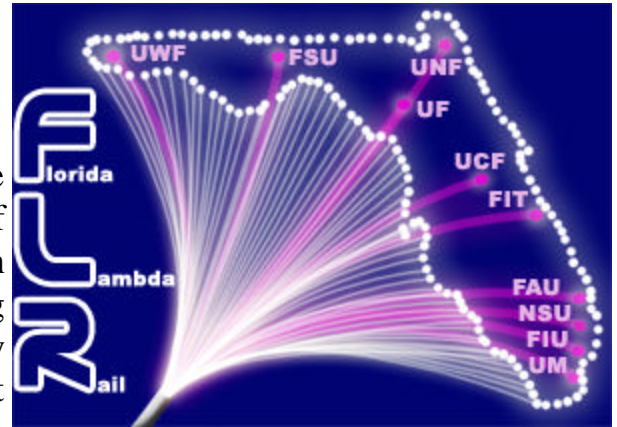


AITP—North Central Florida

Newsletter—September 2005

Florida's LambdaRail



The September speaker for the North Central Florida chapter of the Association of Information Technology Professionals meeting is Dave Pokorney. Dave Pokorney directs the Network Services unit at Computing and Network Services

for the University of Florida and also serves as the Chief Technology Officer, Director of Engineering for the Florida LambdaRail, LLC. He has lived in Gainesville since 1971 and has been active on several City/County task force and committees that relate to communications. He has been a member of the IEEE Communications division for over thirty years.

See Florida LambdaRail on Page 6)

Chapter Meeting

Tuesday

September 27, 2005

Social Hour: 5:30-6:30 PM

Dinner: 6:30-7:30 PM

Program: 7:30-8:30 PM

Make your reservations
by Friday,
September 23, 4:00pm.

[http://aitp-ncfl.org/
reservations.php](http://aitp-ncfl.org/reservations.php)

Paramount Resort
2900 SW 13th St
Gainesville, FL
377-4000



Cost:	Members.....	\$17.00
	Non-Members.....	\$20.00
	Presentation Only (no dinner).....	\$10.00
	AITP National student members..	\$12.00
	(includes dinner)	
Menu: (choose One)	<p>Chili Lime Marinated Flank Steak Seasoned and Marinated Caribbean Chicken Mahi Mahi with Mango Chutney Salsa Pasta Primavera</p> <p>Dinners include: Tossed garden salad, vegetable, starch, rolls and butter, dessert, coffee, iced tea and water</p>	

2005 Officers

President	Jean Clark 334-3400 ext 1126
Vice President	Frank Duncan 562-9595 fgator@cox.net
Treasurer	Dianne Hope 393-1315
Secretary	Sandy Trapp 384-5005 SandyAITP@aol.com
Chapter Liaison	John Tucker 337-2140 John.tucker@cox.net
Director	George Arola 334-3400 ext 1125
Past President	Michael Lucas 392-1374 ext 7266 aitp2@lucas-photo.com
Region Director	John Tucker 337-2140 John.tucker@cox.net

2005 Committee Chairs

Programs Committee	George Arola 334-3400 ext 1125
Membership Committee	Shari Duncan 265-0111 ext 45315
Newsletter Committee	Sandy Trapp 384-5005 SandyAITP@aol.com
Publicity Committee	Michael Lucas 392-1374 ext 7266 aitp2@lucas-photo.com
Accommodations/ E-Mail Tree Committee	Dianne Hope 393-1315
Web Site Committee	Michael Lucas 392-1374 ext 7266 aitp2@lucas-photo.com
Student Chapter Liaison	Claire Lindberg-Bakr 374-9657 cbakr@352media.com
Nominating Committee	Michael Lucas 392-1374 ext 7266 aitp2@lucas-photo.com
Faculty Advisor SFCC Chapter	Wesley Lindberg 395-5587
Faculty Advisor UF Chapter	Asoo Vakharia 392-8571
Auditing Committee	George Arola 334-3400 ext 1125
How Would YOU Like to Help?	You

Nominations for 2006 Officers
are under way.

If you are interested in becoming
more involved in AITP, please
contact the Nominating
Committee Chair, Michael Lucas.

Board commitment too much?
Join a committee!

Cox Communications Tour

Master Telecommunications Center (MTC)

6020 NW 43rd St, Gainesville

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Tuesday, October 11, 2005

5:30pm social gathering

Tour begins at 6:00

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

In addition to the general tour of the technology in delivering video and data, the tour will be emphasizing the technology behind the newest Cox Communications product, Cox Digital Telephone service.

<http://www.cox.com/gainesvilleocala/telephone/>

And be sure to read the Gainesville Sun article about it:

<http://www.gainesville.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050512/LOCAL/205120338&SearchID=73220348238633>

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

After the tour, join us at Las Margaritas, 4401 NW 25 Place
for dinner and the AITP Board Meeting

Web Site Design for the Visually Impaired

by Sherry Wetzel

It has been ten years since the debut of the first commercial Web browser. During that time the percentage of Americans connected to the Internet has risen to about 60%, with the average user spending about 3 hours per day online. According to a Georgia Tech study, about 8% of the Web users have a disability, and about half of these are blind or visually impaired. Since the Web is primarily a visual experience, while an increasing amount of information is found through Internet access, Web page accessibility for the disabled is becoming increasingly important. Luckily some basic design principles will not only make a Web page more accessible for the visually impaired, but offers the added bonus of making it more comprehensible to everyone viewing the page.

A visually impaired person surfing the Web is most likely to use the same computer a sighted person would, but with supplemental technology to translate information into either synthesized speech or Braille. When accessing a Web page the user is most likely to check out the hypertext links by jumping through the links with the Tab key and allowing the screen access software to read the text as the focus moves from one link to another. This method of accessing the Web requires meaningful hypertext. For instance, if instead of the text reading "Click Here" the text says something like "Email Us" or "Go to Shopping Cart" the user will be able to understand the purpose of the link.

This same principle applies to graphics. For purely graphical objects, each item should be labeled with an HTML "ALT" tag and the file representing the graphic should have a meaningful and descriptive name. Likewise, the LABEL tag is needed to assist the user in navigating through online forms. It is important to remember that the screen access software is looking for ASCII text to be converted to a usable format for the visually impaired.

In general, the use of proper markup is needed for the visually impaired to successfully navigate a Web page. However, using inappropriate markup can have a broad reaching affect on the effectiveness of a site. For instance, improper markup also affects the ability of search tools and software to identify important information such as summaries. Many of the Web authoring tools utilize improper markup, and can actually hamper a site's ability to attract users.

Another simple approach to increasing visual accessibility involves allowing the user to change the text fonts, text colors, font sizes, and background colors to suit their visual needs. For instance, the *Action for Blind People* Web site (<http://www.afbp.org/Default.asp>) allows users to alter the color and font settings, and the *Guide Dogs for the Blind Association* Web site (<http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/>) allows for altering the text size and for the use of speech synthesis software.

Statistics show that some form of color blindness affects approximately 8% of the male population and about 1% of the female population. Though the use of color in Web pages is an excellent way to increase the visual interest and to draw the user's attention to key portions of the page, using color without regard for the problems associated with color perception can lead to pages that are difficult or impossible to decipher for the visually impaired.

Continued on Next Page....

Web Site Design for the Visually Impaired*by Sherry Wetzel**(Continued from page 4)*

To compensate for color perception problems, a Web designer shouldn't use color as the sole means of providing information, and should create good color contrast between the page elements. Figure 1 demonstrates the design principle of selecting colors from opposite sides of a color wheel, rather than from neighboring colors to create good visual contrast. In addition, it is important to consider hue, lightness, and saturation when selecting colors for proper contrast. At http://www.lighthouse.org/color_contrast.htm Dr. Aries Arditi has published guidelines for effective color contrast with these considerations in mind.

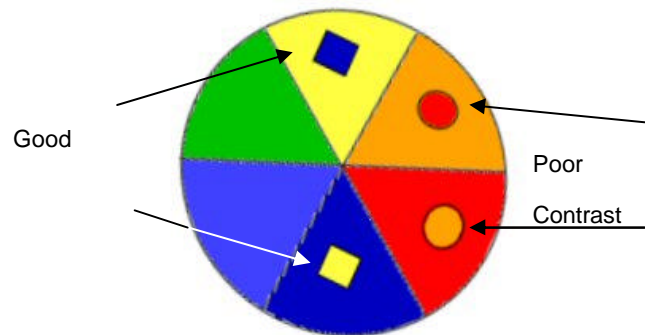


Figure 1

Generally, following these additional guidelines will greatly improve the accessibility of a Web page for visually impaired users:

- ?? Provide methods for skipping over navigation links to get to the main content of the page
- ?? Tables should be set up so that line by line reading will produce sensible text
- ?? Use the TH element to mark up table heading cells
- ?? Use descriptive ASCII text on all buttons, menus, and labels
- ?? Frames should incorporate the NOFRAMES element and meaningful titles
- ?? Layout forms so that headings are adjacent to the fields to which they correspond
- ?? Provide alternatives to scripts, applets, or plug-ins, and avoid blinking or moving elements
- ?? Summarize graphs and charts, or use the LONGDESC attribute
- ?? Use consistent structure
- ?? Avoid redundant links on the page
- ?? Allow the disabled user to avoid splash screens or other timed displays
- ?? Provide captioning and transcripts for multimedia elements

Use meaningful text for image map hotspots

Once a page has been designed, accessibility can be tested at the *Bobby Accessibility Checker* site (<http://www.cast.org/bobby>) which generates a report on a number of accessibility issues for an existing Web site. Running a report on several commonly used sites provides a good look at the types of problems the disabled face when attempting to utilize the Internet. Running the same test on the UF site (<http://www.ufl.edu/>) will demonstrate the report generated by a site which does well at providing accessibility.

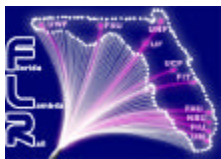
Continued on Next Page....

Web Site Design for the Visually Impaired**by Sherry Wetzel***(Continued from page 5)*

Providing better Web access for the visually impaired is not only an appropriate concern for designers, but makes good business sense. The tools utilized to improve access for the disabled also provide better access and comprehension for non-disabled users, and encompass the principles of good graphic design. With the tools now at our command it is easy to incorporate this concern during the planning and design process for the Web pages we design and implement.


Resources:

- Arditi, A. (2005.) *Effective color contrast: Designing for people with partial sight and color deficiencies.* Retrieved on June 15, 2005, from http://www.lighthouse.org/color_contrast.htm
- Chisholm, W., Vanderheiden, G. and Jacobs, I. (1999.) *Web content accessibility guidelines; W#C recommendations 5-May-1999.* Retrieved on June 15, 2005, from <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG/>
- Chong, C. (2002.) *Making your Web site accessible to the blind.* Retrieved on June 15, 2005, from <http://204.245.133.32/tech/webacc.htm>
- Nie, N.H., Simpser, A., Stepanikova, I., and Zheng, L. (2004.) *Ten years after the birth of the Internet.* Retrieved on June 16, 2005, from http://www.stanford.edu/group/siqss/SIQSS_Time_Study_04.pdf
- Shepherd, I. (2001.) *Providing learning support for blind or visually impaired students undertaking fieldwork and related activities.* Retrieved on June 15, 2005, from http://www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/disabil/blind/ch9_6.htm
- IBM Corporation. (2001.) *IBM Web accessibility checklist.* Retrieved on June 15, 2005, from <http://www-306.ibm.com/able/guidelines/web/accessweb.html>

Florida LambdaRail (cont from Page 1)

Dave will be speaking about Florida LambdaRail. Part of the National LambdaRail, the Florida LambdaRail is a consortium of higher education institutions working on a state-wide high bandwidth optical network that will link Florida's research institutions and will typically provide a 100-fold increase in data transfer capacity. The network operations center is hosted at the University of Florida. Member institutions include Florida Atlantic University, Florida Institute of Technology, Florida International University, Florida State University, Nova Southeastern University, University of Central Florida, University of Florida, University of Miami, University of North Florida, and University of West Florida. According to the LambdaRail's Internet site at www.flrnet.org, "Florida LambdaRail will establish the state of Florida on the cutting edge of computer connectivity, and provide strong economic development potential through industry partnerships with Florida's colleges and universities."

Sherry Wetzel



Board Meeting Minutes—June

AITP Board Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2005

Meeting Location: Cedar River Seafood, Gainesville, FL

In attendance: Jean Clark, Dianne Hope, Sandy Trapp, George Arola, Michael Lucas, John Tucker.

Meeting called to order at 6:15pm.

Minutes: Name correction in paragraph about the tour. John moved to approve, 2nd by Dianne, all in favor, none opposed.

Officer's Reports

Treasurer (Dianne): Spreadsheet of expenses and income distributed. Income in May was \$476.36; expenses totaled 438.60 for a Net Income of \$37.76. 2 no-shows at the May dinner meeting will be billed for their dinner. George moved to approve, 2nd by Michael, all in favor, none opposed.

Committee Reports

Programs Committee (George):

June dinner meeting speaker will be Michael Lucas, topic EAGLE.

July and August – No dinner meetings

Ideas for a gathering over the summer were discussed, possibly getting together with members of the Jacksonville chapter. Jean is discussing it with their president to see if she can get something lined up.

September speaker will be Dave Pokorney on Florida LambdaRail

Membership Committee: E-mail sent to board prior to the meeting by Phoebe Bowers. Currently we have 37 members. Claire Lindberg-Bakr was inadvertently assigned to the Central Florida chapter in Orlando when she joined in December; we have now corrected this and transferred her to our chapter. Phoebe Bowers, Cindy Ragan and Steve Ware renewed, and Tom Harris' registration was corrected, removing the double entry. Sharon Miller and Michael Schneider are no longer in the area and will probably not renew. Other renewals pending include Jim Estaver, Lou Linde and Shari Duncan.

Chapter Liaison (John): John sent a letter to HQ as required for ROCA, he'll forward a copy to Sandy to put with the secretarial materials. John will follow up soon, as it is generally decided very soon. John mentioned to Michael (Past President) to form the nomination committee ASAP and not to wait until fall.

Student Chapter Coordinator (Sandy): Student chapters not very active over the summer break, nothing new to report. Claire Lindberg-Bakr has agreed to be the new

Board Meeting Minutes—June

Student Chapter Coordinator; agreed to it on day of board meeting, so no activity yet in that new role.

Education Committee: One more tour is needed in 2005 to meet the COPA requirements. Suggestions include Cox Communications or the Brain Institute.

Website Committee (Michael): The reservation system is ready for testing in the fall.

Unfinished Business

2006 call for nominations – none made at the meeting.

Marketing info was received from the Jacksonville chapter; Jean will send the board electronic copies. John will send copy of last year's flyer – we'll all work on designing a brochure over the summer and discuss further in the fall.

New Business

Summer Picnic? Was a lot of work for last year's, only 15 people showed up, perhaps weather contributed to that?

Another suggestion: Imax Theater (giant screen), Michael will collect info and send to us.

Next Meeting

September 13 2005, at Carraba's 6 PM.

Sandy moved to adjourn, 2nd by Dianne all in favor, none opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

AITP Members Recently in the News

Kevin Smith, director of information and telecommunication services of Alachua County, was selected as a College-Career Tech Prep Outstanding Business Partner for 2005. The award was for the classes Smith taught through the Junior Achievement Program serving the Academy of Entrepreneurship program at Buchholz High School. He was able to use volunteer hours allotted to employees of the county.

David Neelands is a programmer-analyst who sometimes does graphic design for Alachua County, and in his free time made a drawing of County Manager Randy Reid using a tablet PC.

Read this July 11 Gainesville Sun article for additional details:

<http://www.gainesville.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050711/COLUMNS03/207110303&SearchID=73220973557720>

North Central Florida Chapter

PO Box 12375

Gainesville, FL 32604

www.aitp-ncfl.org

University of Florida AITP

Student Chapter

<http://aitp.cba.ufl.edu/>

Santa Fe Community College AITP

Cyber Saints

www.cybersaints.org

National AITP

www.aitp.org

Vision

AITP is the Information Technology professional organization of choice for providing leadership opportunities, professional development and personal growth.

Mission Statement

AITP offers opportunities for Information Technology (IT) leadership and education through partnerships with industry, government and academia. AITP provides quality IT related education, information on relevant IT issues and forums for networking with experienced peers and other IT professionals

INVITE SOMEONE TO JOIN AITP

10 Reasons to do it...

1. They may want to help us out and work on a committee.
2. They may want to run for an officer position.
3. They may make a good speaker.
4. They may know of a good speaker.
5. They might invite someone else to join AITP.
6. They might give you some free computing advice.
7. They may help you make more networking contacts.
8. You get to see them every month.
9. You might get a free ride to the meeting.
10. They might buy your dinner.

Help Wanted: Articles are needed for the AITP Newsletter.

If you would be interested in interviewing one of our members, or writing an article about IT News, please contact Sandy Trapp at 384-5005.