

# A modest Proposal to the SEG

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During my trip home from SEG's 1992 Annual International Meeting in New Orleans, I reflected on our ability to recognize papers whose presentation goes beyond the norm. We laud the top presentations and choose one to which we give *The Best Presentation Award*. But I think a single award really fails to recognize the true breadth of presentation uniqueness. A whole variety of presentation characteristics, besides just the overall best, are distinguishing and deserve proper notoriety. I feel it is time that we recognize the truly exceptional, and thus I propose that we expand our awards to include the following which are grouped under the categories Presentation, Content, Slides, and Miscellaneous.

## I. Presentation

**The Nod Award:** Given to that individual whose presentation causes the greatest number of audience members to nod off. Judging for this award will be quantitative and in case of a tie the number of members of the audiences in adjacent rooms who nod off because of this talk will be considered.

**The LM. Gone Award:** Given to that individual whose paper causes the greatest number of audience members to exit *during* his/her talk. Judging will be based on the number of door slams during the talk.

**The Stampede Award:** Given to that individual whose paper causes the greatest number of audience members

to exit *before* his/her talk. Judging will be based on the size of the stampede and resulting jam at the exit.

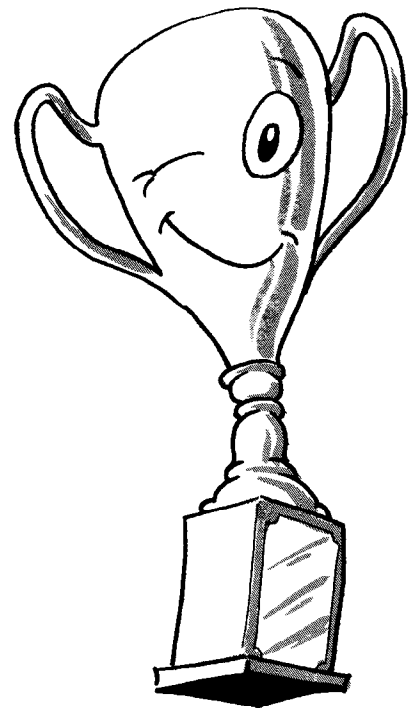
**The Non-Intrusive Award:** Given to that individual who fails to awaken the greatest number of audience members who fell asleep during the previous presentation. Judging will be in conjunction with the Nod Award.

**The Fourier Award:** Given to that individual who speaks in the purest, single frequency (i.e., monotone) throughout his/her talk.

**The Next Award:** Given to that individual who most effectively continues to say "Next" or "Next slide" to a projectionist, who has been singularly instructed to respond only to the beeper before advancing the slides. Judging will be based on the level of anger attained by the presenter and ties will be broken by the size of the headache of each projectionist.

**The Academy Award (aka SEG's Oscar):** Given to that individual who creates the best motion picture simulation by speeding through his/her slides. Judging will be quantitative with ties being broken by the quickest audience accompaniment of humming the chase from the *William Tell Overture* (i.e., the Lone Ranger music for those old enough to remember).

**The Mmbmbmbmb Award:** Given to that individual who most thoroughly mumbles throughout his/her entire talk. Judging will be based on the extent of quizzical looks on the audience faces and number of shoulder shrugs following the talk.



## II. Content

**The Longevity Award:** A unique award, given only once every five years to that individual or group who has most often, in this time period, presented the same material. Judging will be based, in part, on the cleverness in rephrasing the presentation title.

**The Resume Award:** Given to that individual or group who authors or co-authors the highest number of papers per session on generally the same work.

**The Equals Award:** Given to that individual who puts the greatest number of equations in his/her presentation. Judging will be quantitative, but a spe-

cial citation will be given to all whose number of equal signs meets or exceeds triple digits.

**The Bingo Award:** Given to that individual who uses a data table with the greatest number of entries.

**The Cubism Award:** Given to that individual whose slide pairs least complement each other, requiring the audience either to look in two directions at one time or to turn their heads as if at a tennis match. Judging will be based on the Q of eye movements or horizontal head oscillations following the talk.

### III. Slides

**The Sardine Award-Text:** Given to that individual who stuffs the greatest amount of surface area text on his/her slides. Judgment will be based on number of lines of text with consideration for the smallest font. Ties will be broken by the row in the audience beyond which the slide is no longer legible.

**The Sardine Award-Graph:** Given to that individual who stuffs the greatest number of data points on a single graph. Judging will be quantitative, but consideration will be given for the cumulative number of data sets included.

**The Otto Focus Award:** Given to that individual with the greatest number of out-of-focus slides.

**The Rainbow Award:** Given to that individual who uses the greatest number of colors on a single slide. Judging will be based on the extent to which the individual used the 256 000 colors presumed available.

**The RG-But-Not-B Award:** Given to that individual who uses the greatest number of shades of only red and green combinations to show contrasts. Judging will be based on the extent of confusion of all color-blind members of the audience.

**The Clash Award:** Given to that individual who uses the greatest number of unbelievably clashing colors per slide. Judging will be based on the extent of brow-wrinkling of all non-color blind members of the audience and the contented smiles of the color blind members.

### IV. Miscellaneous

**The Creativity Award:** Given to that individual who throws off convention and shows the greatest creativity in generating new and previously unknown notation for previously known quantities. Judging will be based on the number of shoulder shrugs in the audience.

**The Hook Award:** Given to that individual who most adroitly avoids the chairperson's "hook" and continues to talk for the longest period after his/her allotted time has elapsed. Judging will be quantitative, with ties being broken subjectively, based on the cleverness with which the individual eludes the chairperson.

**The Obtuse Award:** Given to that individual who has been able to effectively ignore the weeks/months preceding the convention and presents his/her talk with the greatest number of hand-drawn, hastily-prepared viewgraphs. Judging will be based on the number of viewgraphs brought to the meeting but not used. Ties will be broken by the greatest number of times the viewgraphs are dropped on the floor during the talk.

**The Gong Award:** Given to that individual who cracks the worst joke. Judging will be based on the volume of groans following the delivery and on whether or not it can be recognized as a Joke.

**The Beyond Einstein Award:** Given to that individual who best shows that  $c$ , the speed of light in a vacuum, is not the ultimate speed, but that the dot of light from a laser pointer zipping across a screen can far surpass all relativistic limitations. Judging will be based on the amount of time the dot exceeds  $c$ , remains essentially invisible to the audience, but is continued to be used as a locator by the presenter.

**The Lissajous Award:** Given to that individual who creates the largest and wildest Lissajous figure with the laser pointer while attempting to locate a single spot on a slide. Judging will be based on the frequencies used to generate the figure and the area it subtends.

**The Get-A-Life! Award:** Given to that individual who authors or coau-

thors the most papers at the meeting. Judging will be based on whether or not the individual can recognize a picture of his/her spouse. In case of unmarried candidates, judging will be based on whether or not the individual can distinguish human life forms based on gender. Individuals who are accompanied to the convention by a spouse or companion are disqualified from consideration.

**The "Scottie, Beam Me Out of Here" Award:** Given to that individual who expresses the greatest wonder why his/her paper is in a particular session. Judgment will be subjective, based on the number of members of the audience who agree and have no earthly idea about what he/she is talking.

(And finally one special award that will be dear to all session chairpersons.)

**The Nosho Award:** Given to *all* would-be presenters who do not show up and fail to give prior notification.

Well, that completes my list. I realize that it is a bit long, especially compared to our present single award, but these awards only begin to fill the need. The list is really incomplete and misses many efforts of equally dubious distinction: protracted use of poor grammar, malapropisms, insufficient preparation, lack of critical review prior to presenting, last minute slide preparation, etc. The list could grow without bound!

Finally, I also feel that the winners of these awards should be given a hall at SEG headquarters. So as not to appear to be copying professional athletics, we can call ours "The Hall of Shame." **E**

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*The author wishes to emphasize that this proposal is meant only in good fun. However, although the article is tongue-in-cheek, if it gives anyone food for thought-great! And, with regard to the RG-But-Not-B Award, the author is himself color blind and recognizes that he has generated a great volume of laughter over the years via his attempts to match clothes (especially neckties), choose interior decoration schemes, and ask fellow audience members which are the red data and which are the green.*