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Forefront

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spring 2006

Listening for signals from the past

New radio telescope expands our search for intelligent life

- INTERNET GIANTS JOIN FORCES WITH BERKELEY
- STARDUST BRINGS A COMET DOWN TO EARTH
- BAY AREA MARKS 1906 QUAKE CENTENNIAL





RACHEL SHAFER PHOTO

The red lounge chair in his Berkeley office is Jim Young's favorite workspace. Within a week of launching HOTorNOT.com in 2000, he was so busy he had to ask his thesis advisor, Dean Richard Newton, for permission to set aside his research so Young could focus on his new business.

WACKY WEBSITE IS HOT STUFF

Jim Young (B.S.'94, M.S.'97, Ph.D.'04 EECS) rides to work every day on his Ducati motorcycle. He tries to get there about noon. His office, located in a corporate building in downtown Berkeley, looks more like a college pad. The overhead lights are off, but Christmas tree lights and computer screens glow. There's a cubicle here, a desktop propped on boxes there and a mess of empty bottles and magazines lying about.

"I really, really love my job," he says. "Before, I was lazy. But now I'm a bit of a workaholic."

Young, 33, is cofounder and CEO of *HOTorNOT.com*, a Web forum where people post their photos, and visitors rate them from 1 (not) to 10 (hot). If it sounds a bit like high school (or maybe college), that's precisely why it's wildly popular. Launched in autumn 2000, the site is now home to 21.5 million photos seeking a rating, with more than 11 billion votes counted.

It all started one evening, when Young and his friend James Hong (B.S.'95 EECS) were discussing a woman they knew. Young said he thought she was a perfect 10. In a light bulb moment, Hong came up with the idea for the website. A few days later, Young (who was rated a 3.9) did the engineering, and they sent the URL to their friends.

"Within an hour, we were getting submissions from people we didn't know!" says Hong (rated a 4.1). Friends told friends and, suddenly, it was mentioned in the *New York Times*, *Salon.com*, *People*, *Entertainment Weekly* and *Business Week*. Like many wacky dot.com ideas, HOTorNOT could have faded out as quickly as it ignited, but the two friends wouldn't let it.

"It was our baby," Young explains. He nursed the site along, spending every extra minute maintaining the technical side while trying to complete his thesis in embedded systems. He added an online dating component called Meet Me and, when banner ad funds fizzled, decided to charge a fee for it. (Hong and Young both use the dating service themselves.) Single people signed up, hooked up, and even got married. HOTorNOT now employs five staff, including several engineering alumni, and the cofounders pay themselves a salary. By giving visitors the chance to rate any photo as "inappropriate," they try to keep the site tasteful and fun.

"We love this place," Young says. "There's a sense of curiosity and freedom about the Bay Area. We couldn't have done what we've done without it."

BY RACHEL SHAFER

LOUIS DE WAAL (M.S.'72 CEE) is located in Cape Town, South Africa. He writes, "I have retired from a consulting engineering firm but still am very active as chairman of Table Mountain Cableway, director of the Automobile Association of South Africa, and chairman of a non-government organization called the Bicycling Empowerment Network (BEN), which brings mobility to lower income folk by supplying affordable secondhand and new bicycles. I am also conference director of Velo Mondial 2006."

DAVID FRIEDMAN (B.S.'75 CEE) of San Francisco received a Trustees' Citation from UC Berkeley Foundation at an awards dinner last February.

ANGELA KASPRZYK (B.S.'74 CEE) is a consulting civil engineer in San Mateo.

GORDON KELLER (M.S.'72 CEE) of Taylorsville, California, has written a book, *Low-Volume Roads Engineering Best Management Practices Field Guide*, recently published by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The guide, targeted to road managers, inspectors, regulators and other specialists involved with roads, presents a summary of sound engineering principles for building environmentally friendly, storm-resistant and cost-effective roads. It is available in English (www.epa.gov/owow/nps/roadshwys.html) and Spanish (<http://zietlow.com/docs/ingenieria%20de%20caminos%20rurales.pdf>).

EDWARD "TY" LARSON (B.S.'73 ME) of Gaithersburg, Maryland, is working on a large coal-fired power project in the midwest. He writes, "I recently returned from a 15-

month assignment in Iraq, working on infrastructure improvements. It was a tough assignment and a difficult place to live and get work done. My youngest daughter is a freshman studying engineering; I still think engineering is a good major and am glad to see one of our three children pursue it."

elarson@bechtel.com

THOMAS LAW (B.S.'73 ME) of Longview, Washington, has been promoted to paper mill section leader at Longview Fibre Co.,

supervising engineering work in the shipping-finishing operations and recycling plant. Law worked for six years at Exxon in Los Angeles before joining Fibre, where he has been for 25 years.

TIM MCCARTHY (B.S.'74 CEE) of San Jose is working on construction of the new eastern span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

DAVID MULLER (B.S.'74 CEE) of Larkspur, California, is manager of hydropower relicensing at Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

LIEN OUYANG (M.S.'76 NE) of Los Altos is an engineer for General Electric in San Jose. He writes, "Go Bears! Keep the ax forever!" lien.ouyang@gmail.com

JOHN WATERHOUSE (B.S.'79 ME) of Seattle is president of a consulting engineering firm that provides naval architecture and marine engineering services.

BOND YEE (B.S.'72, M.S.'73 CEE), deputy director and city traffic engineer for the City and County of San Francisco, writes, "We've had many student interns from UC Berkeley working with us over the

years. They are the best! Join us for a rewarding experience, and the pay is great! Contact me for more information." bond.yee@sfgov.org

1960s

ALEX CHEN (B.S.'69 EECS) of Hillsborough writes, "Our son Eric is a junior at Stanford, majoring in computer science."

LYNDEN DAVIS (B.S.'64 ME) retired in July 2002 after 12 years with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, as director of the Western field office in San Rafael. davisl@asme.org

DOUGLAS HEWETT (B.S.'68 EECS) of Tustin, California, is a firmware engineer at Crane Aerospace, where he performs system tests of aircraft braking systems.

RALPH IWENS (M.S.'64, Ph.D.'67 EECS) of Rancho Palos Verdes, California, writes, "Joanne and I spent seven months during 2005 living in Europe, mostly Germany, where I grew up. We have many relatives and friends there and enjoyed our stay tremendously."

ROBERT JACOBSEN (B.S.'66 EECS) of Los Altos is retired after 35 years at HP/Agilent. He is now restoring vintage Pierce-Arrows and other classic cars.

BILL MADDAUS (B.S.'67 CEE) owns Maddaus Water Management of Alamo, California. The company, he writes, "continues to flourish with the addition of my daughter Michelle (a civil engineer with an M.B.A., both from UC Davis). My most recent project was a forecast of water demand with conservation for the San Francisco Bay Area."

ALLAN MARIS (M.S.E.'67 Engr. Naval Arch.) of Albany, California, is retired after 30 years as a naval architect. He is now mayor of Albany and teaches math, science and building trades at MacGregor Continuation High School.

JOHN MARTINEZ (Ph.D.'62 NE) of Del Mar, California, is former chairman and CEO of JMAR Technologies, Inc., the world's leading developer and manufacturer of collimated laser plasma lithography. jmartil7@san.rr.com

MICHAEL MCCULLOUGH (B.S.'60, M.S.'63 EECS) is now retired in Aliso Viejo, California.

PER MIKKELSEN (M.S.'67 CEE) of Bellevue, Washington, writes, "I am consulting engineer and owner of GeoMetron Inc., founded in 1999, one of only a few consultants in the world highly experienced in geotechnical field instrumentation and monitoring."

CARLOS MORALES (B.S.'69 IEOR) of Jackson, New Jersey, writes, "In early November 2005, my wife and I attended the fourth biannual reunion of the Berkeley Big Bang (BBB) Club, an informal association of (mostly) engineering graduates who studied at Berkeley in the 1960s. The reunion was at the old alma mater. We toured the campus, partied and visited a few sites around the Bay Area, including San Francisco and a couple of Livermore Valley vineyards. A great time was had by all, and we look forward to our next reunion, somewhere in the world, in the fall of 2007." carlosm224@aol.com

WILLIAM NEAL (B.S.'66 EECS) writes, "I retired from the computer industry in Sacramento, and my daughter and I now run two Sacramento businesses. I live half-time in Sacramento and half-time at North Lake Tahoe." tahoe.bill@comcast.net

SAM OCHI (B.S.'69, M.S.'74 EECS) of Saratoga, California, writes, "I was one of the few engineers protesting against the war in Vietnam."

UDAYA KUMAR RATH (M.S.'66 ME) of San Diego is now retired. He writes, "I am proud to be a graduate of Berkeley Engineering."

RAUL ROMERO SANCHEZ (B.S.'66, M.S.'67 CEE) of Stockton is working for Caltrans.

M. VALI SIADAT (B.S.'67 EECS)

has been named Illinois Professor of the Year for 2005 by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and

Support of Education. Siadat is now professor and chair of mathematics at Richard Daley College and adjunct mathematics professor at Loyola University in Chicago. An educator for 31 years, he is also co-developer of the Keystone Teaching Method, which evaluates students at every class meeting to help them master their concentration and critical thinking.

TOM TRAUTWEIN (B.S.'65 IEOR) of Laguna Beach is retired after 28 years with Procter & Gamble in operations and manufacturing management. He also served 32 years with the U.S. Naval Reserve and retired as a rear admiral in aviation.

VITALY TROYAN (B.S.'66 CEE) of San Rafael retired as city engineer of Los Angeles and is now consulting, traveling with his wife Mira and preparing their five-year-old granddaughter to be a Cal engineer.

WILLIAM WARNOCK JR. (B.S.'66 CEE) of San Rafael is currently working at Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. as chief engineer for the Walnut Creek office.

GEORGE WEATHERSBY (B.S.'65 Eng. Physics, M.S.'66 Eng. Science, M.B.A.'67 Bus. Ad.) of Skillman, New Jersey, created Genesys Solutions LLC, which works with CEOs of major companies to develop tools for monitoring management processes and outcomes. In his 40-year career, he has also worked in higher education and served as CEO of several companies. He was a White House Fellow in 1972-73, shortly before the terrorist attacks at the Munich Olympic Games, and became head of the Working Group of President Richard Nixon's Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism. Drawing upon his engineering background, Weathersby initiated installation of magnetometers and X-ray screening of air passengers and baggage, which successfully eliminated airline hijacking in the United States from early 1973 until the September 11 terrorist attacks.

MARK WEISS (B.S.'64 EECS) of Woodland Hills, California, retired

from the bench as Los Angeles Superior Court commissioner last February. He plans to do private judging, continuing his career focus on family law as well as technology-related matters. Weiss received his law degree from UCLA. His previous jobs as an attorney include deputy public defender and private practice in Encino before he was appointed commissioner in 1986.

1950s

MIHRAN AGBABIAN (Ph.D.'51 CEE) of Los Angeles delivered the keynote address at last October's 108th Annual Harvest Banquet at the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, California's oldest Armenian church. A consulting engineer for 21 years, Agbabian is emeritus professor and former chair of civil engineering in the School of Engineering at the University of Southern California.

HENRY BURNELL (B.S.'51 EECS) of Bellevue, Washington, retired in 1995. He writes, "I'm enjoying retirement with travel and some control system consulting." edburnell@hotmail.com

RICHARD ELLIOTT (B.S.'51, M.S.'58 CEE) of San Luis Obispo is retired from Caltrans and the U.S. Naval Reserve and is enjoying the central coast.

DAVID HAMMOND (B.S.'54 CEE) of Palo Alto is still working at the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

GEORGE HUMPHREYS (B.S.'51, M.S.'53 ME) of Alameda worked 38 years for Kaiser Engineers in Oakland and retired in 1993. He currently serves on the Alameda Point Restoration Advisory Board, the City of Alameda Housing and Building Code Hearings and Appeal Board, and the Navy League. He is also a member of the senior golf club.

JAMES MCLAIN (B.S.'59 CEE, M.B.A.'63 Bus. Ad.) of San Mateo is working with the Project Management Committee of Bechtel Corporation, based in San Francisco. He has served 44 years at Bechtel in cost engineering and project management.