

**Midwest Symposium on Circuits and Systems Steering Committee  
Minutes of meeting held in Knoxville, Tennessee, Monday, August 11, 2008**

**Steering Committee members present:**

Hoda S. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy, M. Omair Ahmad, Don Bouldin, Kwong Chao, Igor Filanovsky, Jose Delgado-Frias, Randy Geiger, Ken Jenkins, Hector Perez-Meana, Carla Purdy, Mohamad Sawan, Boris Taskin, Mona E. Zaghoul

**Guests Present:** Maataz Abdelwahab, Itamar Elhanany, Ruben Alejos Palomares, Saeid Nooshabadi, Jose Luis Vazquez

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Prof. Bouldin, 2008 Symposium Co-Chair. The minutes of the 2007 meeting were read and approved.

The treasurer's report, submitted by Prof. Wierzba via email, showed a balance of \$23,225.62 as of August 1, 2008. It was noted that the final report for the 2007 Symposium has not yet been submitted, and that there may not be a surplus. There is a policy of setting aside \$5.00 per registrant for the treasury. Prof. Bouldin indicated that the 2008 Committee expects to provide this contribution.

**Old business:**

Possible uses for the treasury funds were discussed. Prof. Jenkins noted that the Steering Committee needs to keep a reserve but it should not be too large. In previous years there have been suggestions to use some funds for student travel and prizes. The 2008 Committee did not ask for such funds but would accept them. If student finalists could be notified early that some or all of their travel would be covered, this would improve the number of finalists who can attend. This year, 3 finalists were not able to attend, and three alternates had to be chosen. Prof. Bouldin suggested that providing some funds to support the student contest each year could be made a standard policy. Then the availability of the funds could be announced in the call for papers. Prof. Geiger noted that the size of funds to be maintained in the treasury as a buffer needs to be decided first. Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy suggested that the current student contest awards of \$500, \$300, and \$200 should be raised because of inflation, with the top prize being \$1000 and the other prizes adjusted accordingly. For the 2005 and 2006 Symposia, the registration fees of all finalists were also paid from the symposium income. Prof. Elhanany noted that funds could also be used to promote future symposia, this is done with ISCAS, for example. Prof. Bouldin noted that there is free space available in IEEE-CASS publications to promote the symposium.

Prof. Sawan presented the final report for the 2007 Symposium, the 50th MWSCAS. There were 622 submissions from 35 countries, and 396 were selected for presentation. The 2007 Symposium had 5 keynote addresses, 6 half day tutorials, and 48 lecture and 24 poster sessions. All attendees received a DVD which included a history of MWSCAS, and there was also special entertainment at the banquet to mark the anniversary. The Reed Award was given to José C. Garcia, J. A. Montiel-Nelson, H. Navarro, J. Sosa, and S. Nooshabadi for the paper "High Performance CMOS Symmetric Low Swing to High

Swing Converter for On-Chip Interconnects", and the student contest winners were Behzad Mesgarzadeh, Linkoping University, Sweden, for "Low-Power Bufferless Resonant Clock Distribution Networks", Matthias Keller, University of Freiburg, Germany, for "Systematic Approach to the Synthesis of Continuous-Time Cascaded Sigma-Delta Modulators", and Pukar Malla, Cornell University, USA, for "A Digitally-Enhanced 2-0 Delta-Sigma ADC". The 2007 Committee has selected 20 papers to be expanded and published in two journal special issues.

There were a total of 400 registrations and \$6,000 from sponsors, but this did not fully cover expenses. The remaining balance will be shared by the 2007 Committee and IEEE-CASS. Prof. Sawan indicated that the 2007 Committee's share of funds could probably be provided by his research group. The negative balance was mainly due to the low number of conference hotel registrations, since there are many cheap hotels near the conference site in downtown Montreal. The shortfall will be about \$40,000. The questions of how this situation should be handled and who is responsible for the loss were discussed. Since IEEE-CASS is the sponsor, most were of the opinion that IEEE-CASS would take the loss, but it was noted that IEEE-CASS will probably approach the Steering Committee for assistance. There was also some support for the idea that the volunteer committee should not be responsible for the loss. After some discussion, Prof. Geiger made a motion that the Steering Committee choose a finance co-chair from those present at the meeting, and that the co-chair's first responsibility would be to look into the situation with the 2007 budget and come up with a recommendation for what to do about it. Prof. Zaghloul seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Prof. Abel-Aty-Zohdy then nominated Prof. Jenkins to be the Finance Co-Chair. The nomination was seconded by Prof. Zaghloul, and Prof. Jenkins was elected by a vote of 12 in favor, 0 against, and 1 abstention. Prof. Jenkins was then charged with contacting the Finance Chair, Prof. Wierzba, and working with him to discuss the situation of the 2007 funds and to prepare a report. After this is settled, more general questions about the use of the Steering Committee funds can be investigated.

Prof. Elhanany, the 2008 Co-Chair (along with Prof. Bouldin), presented the preliminary 2008 report. There were 362 submissions, with 248 acceptances from 28 countries, 200 for lectures and the rest for posters. Ten student paper finalists were chosen. Three of those were not able to attend the meeting, so 3 alternates were chosen to provide 10 presentations in the contest. There are about 240 registrants and it looks as though there will be some surplus when all accounts have been settled.

There was a brief discussion about the judging of the student contest. For a couple of the student presentations, there were only three judges. It was noted that there should be some experienced judges, since student judges may overlook some issues. There was general agreement that five judges is a good number, with some judges serving for more than one year to provide continuity. There was a discussion of whether to have a standing committee to run the student contest and also of whether to have a standard set of contest rules which carries over from year to year, to provide consistency. Papers could also be integrated into the regular sessions, with the judges attending these sessions. But it was noted that having a separate session for the contest does draw a

good student audience. Prof. Zaghoul moved that there be a standing awards committee to select the Student and Reed Award winners. Prof. Filanovsky seconded the motion and it passed with 12 votes for, 0 against, and 1 abstention.

Prof. Jenkins led a round of applause for the fine job the 2008 Committee has done with this year's symposium.

Prof. Perez-Meana presented the preliminary plans for the 2009 Symposium, to be held in Cancun, México, August 2-5. The first day will be for paid tutorials. About 200 participants will be needed for no loss, but it is expected there will be about 500, since Cancun is attractive. The hotel will be about \$150 per day and is close to the tourist section. There will also be a cheaper hotel in the tourist section for students. Proposed registration is \$500 for nonstudent participants and \$300 for students. Only 50 rooms will need to be used in the main hotel, so there should not be a problem meeting this. Prof. Geiger noted that in general it is a good idea to get help negotiating the hotel contract and that IEEE meeting and planning services should be able to provide this type of assistance. Prof. Perez-Meana also noted that it is fairly easy to get a visa for Mexico and that his university will be able to help with this (no visa will be needed for participants from the U.S. and Canada).

Prof. Delgado-Frias presented preliminary plans for the 2010 Symposium in Seattle. The Seattle hotels are expensive, so it is likely that the venue will actually be in Bellevue, which is close to Microsoft. Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy noted that the 2010 Committee and the hotel need to be decided soon. Prof. Delgado-Frias will send the names to Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy.

#### **New business:**

For 2011 there is no proposal at present. Prof. Nooshabadi, a 2007 Reed Award winner and a guest at the meeting, suggested Korea for 2011 or 2012. He will send a proposal to Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy. There was some concern about moving the symposium out of the U.S., especially since ISCAS will be in Korea in 2012. The Steering Committee previously decided that MWSCAS should be held in North America at least two out of every three years. It has not been held outside of North America since 2004, when it was in Hiroshima, Japan, and it will be in Seattle in 2010. So it would be all right to consider a proposal to hold the symposium in Korea. There was also some previous interest from Prof. Kocan in Dallas, and there are several people in the Dallas area who might help organize a conference there. It was also suggested that Prof. Sanchez-Sinencio at Texas A&M, a Steering Committee member not at the meeting, might be willing to help. Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy will follow up on these leads.

The process of publishing extended symposium papers in a journal was discussed. This year Prof. Nooshabadi has offered to coordinate publication of selected extended papers from the 2008 Symposium with the *Journal of VLSI Design*. It may be possible to make this a recurring commitment. But since this is not an IEEE journal, questions about copyright will need to be addressed. Prof. Zaghoul noted that there will be a concern from IEEE, since some of their budget decisions are based on the number of accesses of

their publications. Prof. Geiger noted that there is also the need for material to be published in a journal to be different from what is published in the symposium proceedings. Prof. Bouldin will check on these issues with the IEEE VP for publications, then discuss the journal publication further with Prof. Nooshabadi.

The tutorial schedule for upcoming symposia was also discussed. Prof. Bouldin noted that this year the tutorials were presented in parallel with the regular sessions instead of on Sunday. This does dilute technical session attendance, so may not be a good choice in the long run. Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy noted that it is a big plus that the tutorials are free this year. Prof. Bouldin noted that this scheduling did reduce the cost of room rental and that it also led to high student participation.

Prof. Bouldin requested that his 2008 Co-Chair, Prof. Elhanany, be allowed to take over his Steering Committee position, since Prof. Bouldin is retiring and Prof. Elhanany is helping with the 2010 Symposium.. It was agreed that there was no need for Prof. Bouldin to give up his Steering Committee position, his work on the 2008 Symposium and his experience are much appreciated. Prof. Geiger moved that Prof. Elhanany be elected to the Steering Committee, and Prof. Zaghoul seconded the motion. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

Prof. Bouldin also nominated Prof. Peterson, the 2008 Symposium Technical Program Chair, for Steering Committee membership, subject to Prof. Peterson's being willing to serve. Prof. Zaghoul seconded the nomination, and Prof. Peterson was elected unanimously, pending his agreement.

Prof. Geiger noted that more junior colleagues need to be active in organizing future symposia. There was general agreement that we need to recruit more junior colleagues to be Steering Committee members. Prof. Bouldin noted that an effective way to recruit is to have an experienced chair and an understudy for each organizing committee position. This also helps get the symposium tasks done efficiently. Prof. Geiger noted that another recruitment strategy is to ask early career members to organize a special session for the Cancun meeting and to make it clear that there are opportunities to get more involved. He restated this suggestion (i.e., one or more early career members will be asked to organize a special session for the 2009 Symposium, with a view to becoming more active in the future) as a formal motion, which was seconded by Prof. Zaghoul and passed unanimously. Prof. Geiger agreed to organize this effort.

Prof. Zaghoul moved that the meeting be adjourned, with Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy seconding the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Carla Purdy*