

"Inventors Helping Inventors"



THE Tampa Bay INVENTOR NEWSLETTER

The Official Publication of the Tampa Bay Inventor's Council

7441 114th Avenue North, Suite 607,

Largo FL 33773-5124

JULY 2004

The Tampa Bay Inventor's Council is here to help you succeed, forge ahead, maintain your purpose, and achieve what you intend to. Everyone in this group is behind you.

This Month's Events

Welcome to July. Well, we asked for it and we got it. We wanted to have a great month as we did the month before, that's exactly what happened and there's no end in sight. We've been showing our products to some great markets and getting some great responses. We're lined up with two presentation days this month and some great speakers so let's get ready to have another great month! There's no better place for an inventor to be than TBIC!!!

July 10th

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will probably have gone to Orlando for the Seminar/Presentation day that is being held there by the Electronic Retailers Association. They contacted us on very short notice, so I hope that I was able to contact all those who wanted to attend. I apologize now if you were left out. I hope that everyone was able to attend that has a product in the works, because this was to be a Seminar on "How to present to the Industry" put on by the industry to let us know what they want to see and how they want to see it. There will be a 5-member panel made up of people representing Reliant/Thane, QVC, Shop NBC, Info-tainment, and an England-based company named See Spot Run. This panel will give us pointers as to what they want to see when we are doing a live presentation of our products as we do here at TBIC on Presentation days. They will tell each of us about our specific "do's and don'ts" when we do our live presentations later that afternoon after the seminar. We will pass on as much gained knowledge from the seminar as possible and any more news in our next newsletter for our long distance members so you can include them in your video presentations that you send to us to present in your absence.

July 14th

Reliant will expect to start their presentations today at 2:00 pm and end around 4:00.

If you have shown your product to them already, you won't need to show again today. Greg will be contacting you to put you on the presentation list. If you are a new member and you haven't presented

before to anyone, then you may want to contact Greg to give him the information he will need to get you on the list. He can be reached at 813-909-8193. In our meeting this evening we have Mark Fitzgerald as our speaker. Our members with e-mail addresses will recognize him from the newsletters we have forwarded. Mr. Fitzgerald is a very motivational man. He teaches Sales Training in Tampa and holds classes and bootcamps there on a regular basis.

July 21, 2004

Well, as far as we know we will be showing today. Remember that you are allowed to show all your ready products, even if you don't think it is an infomercial type of product. Idea Village asked that we show them everything because they can sell everything. The presentations will start at 4:00 PM and end when we are through all the products. Greg should have contacted you by now to put you on this list or tell you where you will be. If not, please contact him so you will know approximately what time to be here.

July 28th

We have a speaker for this evening. It's not the Speaker we were expecting. He had a conflict and couldn't make it, but he is sending a gentleman to take his place. This gentleman is Mr. Chris Laney and he is a patent lawyer. He's going to try to enlighten us on the patent laws and processes. From what I hear, he is very good at what he does and he charges a decent fee for his services. This is a very critical subject for some of us who are looking into patenting our products, whether it be provisional or full patents. There will definitely be information shared tonight that you will find helpful.

All Meetings Held At:
7441 114th Avenue North
Suite 607
Largo FL 33773
on the
Second & Fourth
Wednesdays
each month

For More Information:
Call 727-548-5083
Toll-Free: 866-787-8242
8:30 am -- 5:00 pm
Monday -- Friday

A Message from Our President

JULY 2004



A group of us were brainstorming the other day. The topic was “what is the main reason you come to TBIC meetings?” The two most common responses were:

1. To be reminded that they were not in this process alone; that there were others who were traveling a similar path. Friendships develop based on shared outlooks and common goals.
2. The networking aspect: the bank of people willing to offer help and advice, and share new sources which could possibly be resources for the inventor. This latter phenomena has a geometric dimension as sources lead to multiple other sources, etc.

But for any of this to happen, you need to be at the meeting, preferably early, as sharing before the speaker or other main event is a key element. We are going to encourage modified “Bruce’s” where we will solicit group topics before a meeting and let members gravitate to one or more groups of their choice.

The second meeting in August is targeted for elections for a new Board. All interested candidates should send a basic resume, including biographical data and a brief outline of how you see improving the Council, to Jennifer Knoepp our Council Secretary, no later than the third week of July. It will be particularly helpful if you can also provide a picture that members can relate to. If we can, this information will be posted to the website. Please don’t be shy. We have seen the beneficial effects of new ideas over the past year. The Council will benefit and you will be surprised at how good it feels to serve.

Remember to keep your inventing skills on alert for new opportunities and new possibilities to solve real problems.

George Mouzakis

Handwritten signature of George Mouzakis.

Next Speakers

July 14, 2004

In our meeting on July 14th, we have Mark Fitzgerald as our speaker. Our members with e-mail addresses will recognize him from the newsletters we have forwarded. Mr. Fitzgerald is a very motivational man. He teaches Sales Training in Tampa and holds classes and bootcamps there on a regular basis. This should prove to be a very interesting presentation. If you will look on Page 11 of this newsletter, you will find his, shall we say, "fun-filled" bio that should give some hints as to his skills as an interesting speaker.

July 28, 2004

About our next speaker... sort of.

We were supposed to be hearing from Mr. Niro. He is a Lawyer out of Chicago that specializes in Patent infringement law. Something came up and he can't make it, but he is sending his colleague, Mr. Laney, in his place. He has worked with Mr. Niro in the firm for four years. He's very knowledgeable and will be presenting the materials and information that Mr. Niro had planned to discuss.

We are told about Mr. Niro from one of our members, David Norton. You might remember him from his relationship with Mr. Landrum who founded Chuck-E-Cheese. He seems to rub elbows with some pretty interesting people. David explained to me how he found Mr. Niro and how he thought he could be of service to us. I asked that he re-tell his story to all the members so we might better understand and know what we can expect if we ever need his help. David writes:

When Ray Niro Jr. spoke at a TBIC meeting a few years back I thought it might be a good idea to have him help me with some legal work I needed done.

Ray is a partner at a law firm that specializes in Patent Infringement law and he drew up the contract agreement I now took to this company. After approving of my prototype I had taken there, 'Barry' the company president said "let's go into my office and talk", I felt some measure of confidence as we sat down.

Once in his office the first thing he said was "do you have some kind of agreement with you?"

I pulled out two copies of my agreement out of my briefcase so that we could go over it together to make whatever notes and changes that were needed. "This is from a Chicago law firm, how did you find them?" he said. I told him about Ray speaking at TBIC and handed him a clipping from the Chicago Tribune about his firm. After reading to the part where Ray won a megabucks lawsuit for a man who invented a better pizza oven he commented, "Hmm, my man here in Green Bay isn't in their category".

Line by line we went over the agreement with Barry making a few comments, notes, a few word and sentence changes and a couple of strike-outs and then he asked "what next"?

Next, we call Ray and tell him of the changes we made. I was offered a private line but didn't need it since we were in agreement.

"Just tell me the changes you've made" he said. After going through each line, Ray said "I think I know what you want, we'll fax you the new agreement shortly."

After talking to Barry about another project I was working on and getting his interest, the agreement arrived and it was letter perfect. We signed it and I called Ray to thank him for his quick service.

He told me that the two hours spent on the agreement was quite fast, most people take two days to come to terms. Some of you might think this too good to be true and some might think that I dished out too much money since the bill was \$1300.00 but the agreement was superb and the time it took to revise was amazing. I went to Green Bay by myself but when it came to the agreement I was not alone.

This kind of firm is hard to come by and I obviously recommend them highly to our members if they need someone to draw up their contracts.

 --David Norton

Our Last Meeting

At our last meeting, Chris Barrs wowed us with a few of his methods and materials used for making home made prototypes. Chris showed us how to use some simple and very economical materials found around the house or picked up from the home stores.

If you missed this presentation or would just like a copy of it, contact Wayne Rasenen for a copy of the tape and remember that all our meetings are taped and available for \$8.00.

Archive Tapes

We will be doing an Archives Tape on the day we show to Idea Village. We will have a place and camera set in the back area that you will do your Archive Presentation to the camera and then you will go to the front to do your presentation to Idea Village. (So you get sort of a practice session.) This Tape will be used for sending to Catalog Companies and other helpful venues. This is a voluntary thing.

Would you like to contribute an article or editorial message to this newsletter? Just write up your contribution and email it to admin@tbic.us or fax it to 727-547-5490.

Material must be received no later than the last day of the month prior to the next publication.

PAT ON THE BACK

Well it seems that it's mainly these very people who get mentioned in this column month after month, but they are the ones stepping up and helping out. With all that's going on in TBIC's life, we can use all the volunteers we can get.

I would like to give a big Thank You as well as a 'Pat On The Back' to **Greg Carbonaro**. He is still working diligently to get us in front of every major company possible and so far so good! Thanks Greg!

Dale Hoskins was given a budget of \$50.00 to buy library bookcases. He shopped around and found us a twin set of very nice cases with glass fronts for exactly his budget amount that are a perfect start to our library. Now if we could only find someone to volunteer to man the library!

Doris and John Gundrum have been keeping us refreshed for weeks now. They travel from Sun City every time we have a meeting, bringing us our goodies that they shop for on more of their own time. Thanks for all the extra touches too, Doris.

Robert Aiken can always be counted on to be there for us. He mans the table and the Presentation List on our show days, he looks around to see what needs attention and then gives it. I noticed that he made our restroom presentable for our last showing. Thank you for all you do for us, Robert.

Irene Petree and her vibrant personality come all the way from Venice, and when she can make it here, she welcomes our new faces. She answers their questions and makes them feel like they're in the right place. This is very important to them.

Rick Marshall is a fairly new member that has been spending a lot of his time lately looking for a reputable firm to supply us with liability insurance. This is something a few of us will need and, as some already know, it's not easy finding someone reputable or one that doesn't charge you an arm & leg. I'll be telling you more about this in coming letters.

Paula Davis is our Volunteer Treasurer and most of us know her as that, but she also keeps our website updated on her own time. I have heard from quite a few people that we have probably THE best Inventor Council site out there! Good job, Paula!

Gary Simmons is hardly ever seen, unless you need your badge picture taken, but you wouldn't be reading this if it weren't for him. He is paid to do the newsletter, but Gary does so much more than anyone knows and he does it on his own time.

All these people do different things, but each job is important because it all ties together to make TBIC what it is. I see what it takes to make things run around here, and sometimes it can be a little overwhelming, but when there's someone willing to make the load a little lighter, it's a big help. From me to those who help, I appreciate you!

 --jk

What are you doing?

We want to use this column to update everyone on the progress of our inventors. If you have some news about yourself and the progress of your product, send it to us. If you've made a breakthrough and you have something to share, please don't be shy. We are all in this together -- your success is our success.

We would like to congratulate the people who have gotten calls back from the companies with whom we have had showings..

Once TBIC sets up wonderful opportunities like this for you, we step out of the picture, so after you have shown to them, we have no way of knowing of your success unless you tell us.

This is what it's all about; when you succeed we all succeed, so provide us all with a little inspiration and let us know how good we're doing!

I Found This Helpful...

(Column suggested by our President)

We want to hear from our members about anything they find that might help other members in any way. This can be a person, place or thing. It can be a Web site or information from an Article that you read. Whatever you think would be helpful to our members will be posted here. You can send it to or to Jennifer by snail mail to our headquarters.

 --jk

And for example, we received this:

I came across an interesting web site a few weeks ago that I think would be helpful to fellow TBIC members. The web site is: www.pat2pdf.com

It is a free web site that generates a PDF file from a patent number or published application number. There are no watermarks or anything on the PDF's that are produced. You can enter the patent number directly on the web site. Also, the site offers a neat feature called Quick Patent. Quick Patent is a feature that allows you to convert Patents to PDF files while browsing the USPTO web site. Quick Patent eliminates the need to go to the site and enter the number each time you want a patent. You simply add a button to the browser tool bar by dragging and dropping. I haven't used Quick Patent yet, but the regular sites works great. I use it daily.

 --Steve Aycock
Sustaining Member
Patent Agent

Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.

DRAFTING

WHERE DO YOU GO TO GET THE DRAWINGS
DONE FOR YOUR PATENT OR TRADEMARK?

AND WHERE MIGHT YOU FIND SOMEONE TO
MAKE THE DRAWINGS FOR THE
MANUFACTURER'S PERUSAL?



*My advice is free and my drafting skills are
only slightly more. (However my wife says
that's too cheap.)
We should negotiate.*

RICHARD HUMPHREY
(727) 935-2017

EMAIL: HUMPHREYRH@PNGUSANET

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Call Earl Cram 393-3025

Ps. 107.2 "Let the Redeemed of the Lord say so."

Members are invited to write letters for inclusion in the newsletter.

Email to gem@alumni.uchicago.edu, fax to 727-547-5490 or mail to TBIC at our office address.

Letters should be brief, to the point, and be accompanied by member name, email address . and phone number. Letters can be edited for clarity, taste and length. Letters will be printed as room permits.

We hope that those of you who have taken advantage of our Affiliate Program had a good experience. We hope that you will continue to make your purchases this way. For those who haven't tried the program or don't know how to use it can go to the TBIC web site, www.tbic.us and click on 'General Information'.

Just A Note

We would like to remind our members that our board meetings are open to you if you would like to sit in on them. We usually meet at 6:00 on regular meeting nights in the conference room of ICTT. If there are more people than chairs, we will move to the meeting room.

GENERAL MEETINGS CALENDAR

Monthly Meetings

July 14, 2004 7:30 pm

July 28, 2004 7:30 pm

Presentations

July 14, 2004 2:00-4:00pm

July 21, 2004 4:00 pm- ??

Next Monthly Meetings

Aug. 11, 2004 7:30 pm

Aug. 25, 2004 7:30 pm

Membership

Make your inventing process more effective and more fun !

A few benefits you will enjoy:

- *Monthly Newsletters*
- *Free Workshops*
- *Updates on Legislation affecting the industry*
- *Current Industry News*

Bring a Friend !

Membership Director:
Jennifer Knoepp

WANTED

MEMBERS WITHOUT PICTURES

**IF YOU ARE A NEW MEMBER,
OR NEVER HAD YOUR PICTURE TAKEN
FOR AN I.D. BADGE**

REWARD

**YOU WILL BE ABLE TO KNOW THE NAME OF THE
PERSONS YOU MEET AND CONVERSE WITH
AT MEETINGS**

ASK AT THE FRONT DESK FOR GARY

**ANYONE ELSE WITHOUT AN I.D. BADGE
WILL BE SHOT(digitally) ON SIGHT !!!**

BY THE WAY . . .

If you have any business to be taken care of on the night of our meetings, please plan to arrive by 6:30 to give us plenty of time to take care of your needs before the meeting starts. We would like to start our meetings promptly at 7:30 as planned. So, if you need to renew or upgrade your membership, or if you have any other inquiries about your membership, newsletter, badges, etc., just plan to come in plenty of time to attend to it before meeting time.

NEED SOME HELP ?

Would you like to have help in doing some patent or trademark searches, or to get some advice from an expert? John Blue is making himself available here at TBIC before each meeting at 6:00 pm. He will help in any way he can to see if your idea, logo, trademark, etc. is already in use. Here is some further contact information for him:

JOHN D. BLUE the INVENTORS MENTORSM

USF #30132

4202 E. Fowler Avenue

Tampa FL 33620

Phone/Fax: 813-972-3815

Email: finjb@yahoo.com

Please email him or go to his Website for further details at:
www.finjb.com

BULLETIN BOARDS

All items to be placed on our bulletin boards should be given or sent to Jennifer Knoepp, our TBIC secretary. These items will be dated to stay on the Board for two months, after which they may be resubmitted, if there is room. Otherwise, that item will have a one-month waiting period.

TBIC reserves the right to determine the suitability of all items posted. TBIC neither investigates, promotes, endorses nor profits from the information provided and will govern themselves accordingly.

Invention Assessment

Part 1: What is the purpose of a marketability evaluation.

by Mary Bellis

An invention assessment, also called an invention evaluation or marketability research, means looking at your idea for a new invention to find out what its market worthiness is. Would anyone buy your invention? Getting an invention assessment serves two main purposes: one, you find out if it is worthwhile to put more money into a certain idea and two, when you are trying to raise venture capital, sell or license your ideas, you will be ready with the hard facts that can impress a potential investor or buyer.

Only a tiny percentage of patents ever make a profit and it is better for the independent inventor to understand that fact and act upon it. You are a very creative person by nature, maybe one idea does will not work out but another one might. In a very competitive market, you need to be able to objectively decide if your new invention will be able to do all of the following:

- Can fulfill a consumer's needs or desires
- Can be manufactured and sold at the right price, sold at no more than five times what it costs to make.
- Can be delivered to market, a way to distribute your product is in place and the market opportunity is established.
- Can pass safety, legal, environmental and performance expectations or standards.

If your new invention cannot pass all of the above criteria and your intention is to make money, you would be better off moving on to your next idea. It is an excellent idea to evaluate your new invention early in the development stage. You can start with your own opinion and that of close friends, but it is unlikely that you or your friends have an objective opinion or the research ability to understand and determine if your new invention can meet the above criteria.

Many invention promotion firms offer invention or market evaluations, but they cannot give you an objective opinion since they have a stake in the fees they are going to charge you for their services. These companies fail to tell you that only a small percentage of new inventions make money. They charge you an arm and a leg to patent and market your invention and they do not want you to think your invention could possible fail.

Before hiring anyone to make an invention assessment for you, you must first sign a non-disclosure agreement if you have no patent protection. A non-disclosure agreement (also known as a Confidentiality Agreement) is used when someone with an unpatented idea shows it to another party, and wants that party to maintain as confidential any information.

A few reputable companies do provide honest Assessment Services for an up-front fee. Fees for these services range about \$175 to \$500 and up, some will include a preliminary patent search, some will market your product if they think it is superior. I have compiled a list of companies that come with good recommendations from successful independent inventors and inventor groups. One example company on my list is The Innovation Assessment Program at Washington State University. They will evaluate your new invention and provide you with a report that covers: environmental impact, potential market, usage learning, service, new competition, production feasibility, investment costs, product line potential, promotion, price, payback period, marketing research, stability of demand, consumer/user compatibility, perceived function, potential sales, safety, societal impact, product life cycle, product viability, durability, functional feasibility, development status, trend of demand, need, appearance, protection, profitability, research and development, distribution, product interdependence and existing competition. The other companies on the list will provide similar material and all of them will let you know what you buying for your money upfront.

That brings us back to point two of why you should conduct an invention assessment, "when you are trying to raise venture capital, sell or license your ideas, you will be ready with the hard facts that can impress a potential investor or buyer." Can you answer all of the questions by yourself that a professional report answers? Do you want to be left speechless at a business meeting? Do you want to appear naive? You can also use an invention evaluation report as a starting place to improve your new invention's marketability. You will have your invention's weaknesses listed and you can try to change them.

A professional invention assessment is invaluable, however, you can do a preliminary self-assessment or self-evaluation by yourself.

A New Monthly Feature
Invention Trivia

Information contained herein was obtained from general public information found at
<http://www.coolquiz.com/trivia/directory/directory.asp?dir=Inventions>

- Carbonated beverages became popular in 1832 after John Mathews invented an apparatus for charging water with carbon dioxide gas.
- Charles Ginsberg is credited with inventing videotape in 1956.
- Chester Greenwood from the United States was 15 years old in 1873 when he invented earmuffs.
- Colgate was the first toothpaste sold in metal tubes rather than jars.
- Compact discs, or CDs, were co-founded by a Japanese and a Dutch company in 1979.
- Cornelius Swarthout patented the first waffle iron in Troy, New York, in 1869.
- Credit for the invention of the parachute goes to Sebastian Lenormand in 1783. In 1495, Leonardo da Vinci designed a pyramid-shaped chute. J. P. Blanchard (1753-1809), a Frenchman, is said to have been the first to use a parachute. In 1785, he dropped a dog in a basket, to which a parachute was attached, from a balloon high in the air. Blanchard claimed to have descended from a balloon in a parachute in 1793.
- Denver, Colorado lays claim to the invention of the cheeseburger. The trademark for the name "cheeseburger" was awarded in 1935 to Louis Ballast of the Humpty Dumpty Drive-In. Ballast claimed to have come up with the idea while testing hamburger toppings.
- Designer Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel introduced her first perfume in 1921. She gave it the name "Chanel No. 5." According to Chanel, she jumped straight to number five because it was her lucky number. To add luck to the fragrance, she introduced it on the fifth day of May, the fifth month. Chanel No. 5 became the world's best selling perfume.
- Did Thomas Edison really invent the light bulb? Did you ever wonder?
- Did you ever wonder what the "WD" in WD-40® stands for? Per the company, the product's full name is WD-40® Water Displacer, which was perfected on the fortieth attempt. (Some trivia sources erroneously state the WD is an abbreviation for Water Displacement).
- In the year 1886, Herman Hollerith had the idea of using punched cards to keep and transport information, a technology used up to the late 1970s. This device was originally constructed to allow the 1890 census to be tabulated. In 1896, the Tabulating Machine Company was founded by Hollerith. Twenty-eight years later in 1924, after several take-overs, the company became known as International Business Machines (IBM).
- Incan soldiers invented the process of freeze-drying food. The process was primitive but effective – potatoes would be left outside to freeze overnight, then thawed and stomped on to remove excess water.
- Invented in the 1940s, an atomic clock is constant to within a few seconds every 100,000 years.
- Inventor Gail Borden, Jr. invented condensed milk in the 1850s and later the popular Lazy Susan table aid, but he struck out with one other invention: the poorly-received "meat biscuit."
- Inventor Hugh Moore's paper cup factory was located next door to the Dixie Doll Company in the same downtown loft building. The word Dixie printed on the company's door reminded Moore of the story he had heard as a boy about "dixies," the ten-dollar bank notes printed with the French word dix in big letters across the face of the bill by a New Orleans bank renowned for its strong currency in the early 1800s. The "dixies," Moore decided, had the qualities he wanted people to associate with his paper cups, and with permission from his neighbor, he used the name for his cups: "Dixie Cups."
- Inventor Thomas Edison averaged six new patents a month during one four-year period.
- It has been determined that less than one patented invention in a hundred makes any money for the inventor.
- It is recorded that the Babylonians were making soap around 2800 B.C., and that it was known to the Phoenicians around 600 B.C. These early references to soap and soap making were for the use of soap in the cleaning of textile fibers such as wool and cotton in preparation for weaving into cloth.

Wacky Patent of the Month

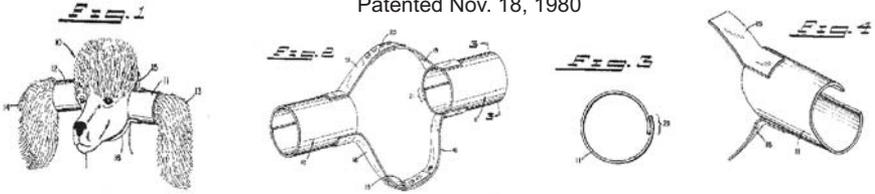
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Animal Ear Protection

Inventor:

James Williams

Patented Nov. 18, 1980



ABSTRACT

This invention provides a device for protecting the ears of animals, especially long-haired dogs, from becoming soiled by the animal's food while the animal is eating. The device provides a generally tubular shaped member for containing and protecting each ear of the animal, and a member to position the tubular member and animal ears away from the mouth and food of the animal while it is eating.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

These and other objectives are provided for by a device which provides a generally tubular shaped protector for each ear of the animal. Each protector may be formed of a self biasing plastic sheet which forms a tube, yet can be opened to allow easy insertion of the animals ear. The ear protectors and animal's ears are held away from the head of the animal by two straps, one passing above, one below the head of the animal. The straps are adjustable to accommodate various sizes of animal heads and animal ears, and to allow for the comfortable consumption of food and drink by the animal while wearing the device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the device while it is being worn by a long eared dog.

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view of the device.

FIG. 3 is partial sectional view of one ear protector, illustrating the self biasing tubular shape of the ear protector.

FIG. 4 is partial perspective view of one ear protector while it is opened to allow insertion of an animal's ear.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

FIG. 1 illustrates a long eared poodle wearing the herein described invention. The invention should not be viewed as limited to use only on poodles, since it is equally useful for any animal having long ears which may dangle into its food or drink while it is eating. The poodle 10 has its left ear 13 partially enclosed by a left ear protector 11. The left ear protector 11 is generally tubular shaped and allows for the containment of that portion of the animal's ear nearest its skull. The right ear 14 of the animal is similarly partially contained within the right ear protector 12. Both ear protectors 11, 12 are held in such a position as to project away from the sides of the animal's skull. Such positioning is accomplished via two positioning straps, best illustrated in FIG. 2.

The upper positioning strap which passes above the head of the animal 10 is composed of a left upper strap 15, a right upper strap 17, and a fastener 20. The left upper strap is attached to the left ear protector 11. It should be noted that the description of the ear protectors as left or right is based upon which ear of the animal is contained within the ear protector.

Accordingly, in FIG. 2 the left ear protector is on the right hand side of the drawing. The right upper strap 17 is similarly attached to the right ear protector 12. The fastener 20 between the left 15, and right 17 upper straps may consist of a snap assembly, buckel assembly, hook and hole, or any similar attachment means. In fact, it is not even necessary to have a fastener 20 if the left 15 and right 17 upper straps are permanently attached together into a unitary upper strap which is suitably elastic. The herein disclosed invention should not be limited to a particular means for fastening the left 15 and right 17 upper straps together since the teachings of the invention is met by any upper strap means which accommodates itself to the particular animal wearing in the device.

The left ear protector 11 also has attached to it a left lower strap 16. Similarly, the right ear protector 12 has attached to it a right lower strap 18. The left 16 and right 18 lower strap are fastened to each other via a fastener assembly 19. As was previously discussed with the upper strap assembly, the means for fastening the left 16 and right 18 lower straps to each other are not critical to the teachings of the invention. What is critical is that neither the upper nor lower strap assemblies provide for discomfort to the animal, and that they position the left 11 and right 12 ear protectors to project outwardly from the side of the animal's skull. Additionally, the lower strap assembly should be sufficiently loose for the animal to comfortably swallow.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of the left ear protector when viewed in a plane perpendicular to the axis of the generally tubular shape of the ear protectors. Although the ear protectors 11, 12 have a generally tubular shape, in one embodiment of the invention, the ear protectors 11, 12 have been formed from a sheet of material which tends to form itself into a tube. The ends of the sheet overlap as at 21, thereby completely enclosing a portion of the animal's ear.

FIG. 4 is a partial perspective view of the left ear protector 11. In FIG. 4, the left ear protector 11 is opened, creating a gap within the generally tubular shaped of the ear protector 11 to allow for easy insertion of the animal's ear. After the animal's ear has been inserted, the self biasing nature of the ear protector 11 causes the ear to be completely encircled by the ear protector 11. In this manner, the ear is firmly yet comfortably positioned away from its mouth and from its food.

We claim:

1. A device for protecting animal ears comprising:

a pair of generally tubular protectors each of which is formed of a sheet of self-biasing material which in their free state tend to form themselves into said generally tubular protectors; each of said protectors being longitudinally openable to allow easy insertion of one of said animal ears; and positioning means for flexibly joining one end of one protector in spaced apart relationship with one end of the other protector and for securing said device to the head of said animal such that the longitudinal axis of each protector and a portion of each ear of said animal, are held generally horizontally and approximately perpendicularly to the head of said animal whereby the ends of said animal ears are separated by a distance greater than the width of the head of said animal.

Board Minutes 06-09-04

In attendance were George, Earl, Dan, Greg, Wayne, Jennifer.

First item of business was the discussion of dues to long distance members. We discussed whether or not the Sustaining membership dues were too high for those who are out of state. We came to the conclusion that for the services that TBIC offers to those members, it is satisfactory and we will continue to charge the same membership for all.

We discussed the buying of a dial card for the council to be able to notify many of the members in one call about upcoming events. There was a budget passed for \$200.00 to purchase it.

Greg brought up the subject of putting an ad in Popular Science. After discussing pricing we all passed the motion to go ahead and apply before the cut off date.

Paula gave her Treasurers report and informed the Board that Quicken had been purchased and is being used.

We briefly discussed the raffle for the bike. Jennifer is going to inquire about places to set up a raffle date.

This concluded the meeting.

Board Minutes from June 23rd

In attendance were George, Greg, Dan, Earl, Wayne and Jennifer. First order of business was the approving of the last minutes.

The Board then approved the letter that is to be presented to the companies that we present to, telling them that any deals made between them and one of our inventors will in no way include TBIC in which the inventor is only a member. All approved. We discussed getting a Call Card to use for making bulk message calls. Greg will be getting more details to present to the board at the next meeting.

Wayne suggested advertising TBIC on E-Bay. He will be talking with Bruce Elliott to get more details on this. Earl has accepted the duty of asking churches if we might continue our Raffle there. Details to come.

Our ad in Popular Science is to start in September.

At this point, the voting in of a Vice President was put on the agenda for the next meeting.

We discussed the members making an Archives Tape on the same day we present to Idea Village. Jennifer is to include details in next Newsletter.

Paula gave her Treasurers report and announced there would be \$100.00 put into a petty Cash Fund.

Greg read a contract that he drew up for companies that we present to, to promise not to disclose, mutilate or do other negative things to our prototypes sent to them. We discussed this but agreed to continue discussion later. Meeting was adjourned.

A Note to Members New and Old !!!

We hold Focus Groups for our Sustaining Members' Products. And even if you have done one on your product, and you would like to do it again for any reason, you are more than welcome to do so.

This is an opportunity to show your product to the 'Public' in the best forum possible.

You will gain experience to show your product at presentations such as those we have had during the past two months.

This is a service to our Sustaining members that you would otherwise pay good money to have done so take advantage of it!

Information on upcoming Focus Groups will be posted on this page of the newsletter each month. Watch for it.

Sign up to be a presenter or a member of the panel. You will gain experience by participating, no matter what.

ATTENTION

I.D. Badges are to be worn on the TBIC premises during meetings to allow us to identify and learn the names of our fellow members. Badges should be deposited back in the designated area for use next time. If you have taken your badge home, please remember to bring it back so that you will have it to wear at our meetings.

Thanks.

Featured Speaker

July 14th, 2004

The Legend of **Mark Fitzgerald**

The Business Stuff

Mark Fitzgerald is the owner of Sales Training Institute, Inc., an affiliate of the Sandler Sales Institute in Tampa Florida. Mark graduated from the University of Florida in 1976 with a B.A. in philosophy and has been in professional sales, sales management, and sales training ever since. He frequently presents to national associations and trade groups such as the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations and the American Institute of Appraisers. He conducts an ongoing school called the Entrepreneur's Club for business owners and professional salespeople and travels to deliver shorter sales and management training programs and speeches around the country. He specializes in teaching companies how to shorten their selling cycle and raise their margins. In addition to conducting training sessions Mark also screens prospective sales candidates and evaluates existing sales force members for his clients. He has been featured in both local as well as national publications, television and radio. He has hosted a weekly radio program devoted to sales and sales related issues. He has worked with both large companies such as IKON Technology Systems, GTE and NationsBank, and many other firms, both large and small

Contact Mark

by e-mail at: mark@saleskills.com

by phone at: (813) 831-5555

by fax at: (813) 831-0552



The Fun Stuff

- Hitchhiked alone across Europe
- Lived on sailboat in Virgin Islands for seven years.
- Held Florida Massage License.
- Accomplished Juggler. (I teach juggling as part of team building training.)
- Featured in national magazines, radio, and TV as author of *the Art of Flirting* seminar.
- Pilot.
- Military service: U.S. Army, Thailand.
- Motorcycle rider.
- Unicycle rider.
- Concerned parent of four cats.
- Rotarian.
- Good tennis player.
- Bad singer.
- Once performed Elvis wedding: couple is still married.

Been there done that!

Seeing that we are a little behind schedule with this newsletter, I was able to fit this in before printing. I am so glad, because our long distance members can get an idea of what we saw and experienced at the Seminar. There were about twenty members representing TBIC, which made up the majority of the group. As you see the picture below shows the magnificent Studio inside Universal Studios, where we sat for the Seminar and went back to later for our Presentations.

The Studio is owned by Reliant, who hosted the Seminar for the ERA. This is where they film their Infomercials. Very impressive! Reliant made our experience very nice by providing us with both breakfast and lunch. Thank you Reliant.

Miss Eileen Simms was the speaker for this Seminar. Eileen was there also to act as one of the four people on the panel that looked at our presentations. She explained to us that she is a member of the ERA and that the ERA is made up of members from the industry that are expected to work on the behalf of the Independent Inventor. Their goal is providing us with education and opportunity to get in front of some of the hard to reach people in the Industry.

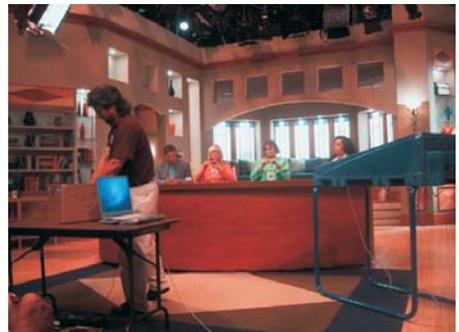
She told us many things about inventing that most of our group already knew, like making sure you have your invention protected and some of the many ways your invention can get to the market, such as with groups like Reliant and Sharper Image. As I listened to her, I felt that our group is definitely on the right track because we've already been in front of some of the people she was mentioning and we help each other make sure that we have protection on our inventions and so much more.



This Seminar was informative, and in my opinion, it was well worth the \$35.00. It would have been even more valuable if I weren't a member of TBIC and didn't have all the inventing knowledge that I've obtained from being a member. It was a good feeling knowing that we are all sharing the right information that will lead us to the right places. The presentation part of the day went very well. It really shows that we've had practice showing our products. The panel gave a couple pointers such as not telling what you think your retail price should be, and they told a couple of us that they didn't think that our product met the infomercial category, but they seemed to like everything they saw and how it was presented. Over half of the presenters were chosen to go to the Showcase in Las Vegas in September.

This event is a pretty big deal in the invention world and I hope that those who were chosen will find the funds to get themselves to the Show, because this could be the big break we've been waiting for. All the industry's top people will be attending this show from companies like HSN, QVC, Sharper Image, Shop NBC, and even Guthy-Renker. These companies will be competing with each other to sign inventors so they can be the first to get these ideas on the market, so having your invention in front of all at the same time is, needless to say, a priceless situation!

This second picture below is of the panel that viewed our products in Orlando. Eileen Simms, the New Product Committee Chair person of Infotainment Media, Mel Arthur, a partner with Reliant, Wendy Cooper of C Spot Run Productions, who often serves HSN, and Carrion Heldmen, whose company often serves QVC. If you would like more information on the Las Vegas Showcase go to <http://www.inventionshowcase.com>.



VOLUNTEERS

We could use some help here!! We are asking that those of you who could spare a little time before the meetings, please come in and help welcome people. Tell them what you know about TBIC. Help them with filling out a new visitor form so that we can all welcome them to the meeting and introduce them to the membership. We could also use help with running the popcorn machine and serving the bags of popcorn.

Membership Report July 2004

These are members who have joined, renewed or upgraded since 06-01-04.

Membership as of 07-05-04
146 Members

New -- Sustaining

Steve Aycock
Everett Bollard
Paul Geradiello
Garwood Platt
Dale Ellis

Renewals -- Sustaining

Chris Salter
James Edwards

Renewals -- Active

Fred Barlow
Bill Haines

We would like to say a fond farewell to those who didn't renew their membership for whatever reason. We hope you enjoyed your time with TBIC. Remember us if that next million dollar idea pops into your head!

Did you join or renew during this time period and your name isn't listed? Please email George Mouzakis at gem@alumni.uchicago.edu or call him at 727-251-4056.

Promotional Opportunities

TBIC publishes a monthly newsletter for both existing and prospective members including copies to 61 Inventors Councils and Associations around the world. The newsletter will be accessible on the website, where members and other interested parties can find both current and archived issues.

THE SCHEDULE OF ADVERTISING RATES:
(note there is a discounted rate for an annual prepaid subscription):

Full page	\$100.00/issue	\$1000.00/yr.
½ page	\$60.00/issue	\$600.00/yr.
¼ page	\$35.00/issue	\$350.00/yr.

Submit copy in any text format, such as *.doc, *.wpd, *.txt, *.rtf, or in *.PDF format. Limited graphic arts assistance will be provided by TBIC.

Payment is to be submitted with your copy. Copy must be approved in writing prior to issue deadline.

All ads for selling products must include price and phone number.

Classified space will be available in four categories for 60 cents per word, 20-word minimum.

Categories are:

- 001 Articles for sale
- 002 Articles wanted
- 003 Service for Inventors.
- 004 Misc

Proof approval Deadlines are 3 weeks prior to publishing date.

- Dec issue Nov 15, 2003
- Jan issue Dec 10, 2004
- Feb issue Jan 10, 2004
- Mar issue Feb 10, 2004
- Apr issue Mar 10, 2004
- May issue Apr 10, 2004
- June issue May 10, 2004
- July issue June 10, 2004
- Aug issue July 10, 2004
- Sept issue Aug 10, 2004
- Oct issue Sept 10, 2004
- Nov issue Oct 10, 2004

TBIC has the option to refuse ads if the Board considers them inappropriate for the furthering of TBIC's overall goals. Council members may bring small for sale items which are advertised to TBIC Headquarters where the article may be viewed for one week following the publication of said ad.

**2003-2004
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Visit our web site for information on current and past happenings. You can download current and past newsletters in *.pdf format. You will need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer. If you don't already have it, go to www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html to download this free document viewer.

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To submit articles, send emails to:
jknoepp8@hotmail.com *or*
garys@ammeds.com

Articles and other items must be received by the first Tuesday of each month.

DUES DESCRIPTIONS

A **Student Member** at the \$25.00 rate must be an active student. They may attend meetings and receive the Newsletter.

An **Active Member** (\$45.00) enjoys the benefit of attending meetings, seminars, socializing and networking with the other members, receiving the Newsletter and participating as a reviewer in our Focus Groups.

A **Sustaining Member** (\$120.00) has the same privileges described above and others such as being allowed to present their protected product to all of the various companies that come to TBIC to find new products for the market such as Sharper Image, Reliant and Idea Village as well as many Catalog companies. Sustaining members are allowed to utilize our prototyping shops here at the TBIC headquarters. Members usually find other members with the prototyping knowledge that they need, pay that member for their time and also for prototyping materials used. Sustaining members also may ask to have a free Focus Group done on their product, be allowed to display their product in our designated display areas and receive a free Science Notebook, (valued at \$15.00) to log progress on their invention.

Corporate Membership of \$250.00 will allow your corporation to elect up to 3 Corporate members to sit in on meetings as well as all of the above. Also this membership will allow said corporation to have access to new products before they are introduced to the open market.

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, educational 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 150 active members willing to share their expertise and experiences with fellow inventors.

Membership Application/Renewal

Please Send Your Dues to:

TBIC

7441 114th Ave. N., Suite 607

Largo FL 33773

Make Check or Money Order to:

Tampa Bay Inventors Council

PLEASE FILL IN ALL THE BLANKS BELOW

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

SPONSOR: _____

Check One:

Student Member \$25

Active Member \$45

Sustaining Member \$120

Corporate Member \$250



TAMPA BAY INVENTORS COUNCIL

7441 114TH AVENUE NORTH • SUITE 607 • LARGO FL 33773-5124

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