Chairman of the International Committee

T he International Committee (IC) of IOI met in Athens March 18-20 to do our annual review of the venue for the upcoming IOI. It was a special treat to tour the building we will be using while it is being built. As you may know, this year, the housing, the dining, and the competition itself will be in one large four storey building that will serve as the Media Village for the 2004 Olympics. What impressed me most about this building was the use of marble throughout - floors, hallways, steps, everywhere. And since it is being built for the Olympic media people, the rooms come in pairs with a shared bathroom between them. This means each contestant, team leader, deputy leader, and guest will have his/her own room and share a bathroom with one person. Once the IOI is over, the partitions between the rooms are coming down and the building will be converted to offices. So the facilities this year will be as good at it gets - brand new, marble floors, and very private.

During our three-day stay, we had the pleasure of a guided tour to the most famous "Sacred Rock" in all of Greece - The Acropolis. Having seen the Parthenon only in pictures and post cards it was a dramatic moment, after climbing many stone steps, to emerge and see this magnificent building, perched on the highest point of the Acropolis. No person with a camera can resist capturing this moment. It will certainly be one the highlights of IOI 2004 in Athens.

We had many opportunities to sample Greek food during our stay. Every morning we had a breakfast buffet in the hotel which was just amazing in its variety and quality. We ended our last day with dinner at a classical Greek restaurant picked out by our host Spyros and his wife and daughter. As you can imagine, it was a marvelous dining experience with four exquisite courses plus wine and music.

I am looking forward to returning to Athens in September along with you, the IOI community, where we can all enjoy a classic Greek IOI 2004.

Thank you George Doucas, George Pofantis, Katerina Georgouli, Michael Hatzopoulos, and Spyros Bakogiannis for all the work you are doing getting ready for IOI 2004.

Don Piele

THE INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

Due to the technical developments, it was felt necessary within IOI to provide technical support for organisers of IOI's and National and Regional competitions. A large part of the know-how collected for each IOI seems to be wasted and new organisations are learning the same things over and over again.

At IOI 2003 it was decided that an International Technical Working Group would be created to provide technical support in various IOI-related areas. I was chosen to run the group for the first three years.

The IOI International Technical Working Group (ITWG) aims to give this necessary support and also aims to keep up information on technical developments. The ITWG has no power to decide on the new developments and technical issues, but it will try to support technically sound development of IOI bearing the goals of IOI in mind.

The group is still small, but I hope that more people will feel a need to join it. The current members (with their special areas) are:
- Rob Kolstad, - grading systems
- Kunsoo Park - grading systems
- Ahto Truu - Linux programming environments
- Jyrki Nummenmaa - Windows programming environments, IOI administrational data management.

In addition to support in installing and using the central IOI-related tools, there are plans to create a more complete and unified IOI information system, which is to contain information on people and documents on the IOI's. Currently each host builds a new minimal system for the IOI administration, and old systems and old data are usually lost.

A small group will be working on a proposal for a new system for presentation at IOI 2004.

Any suggestions and ideas are welcome, and can be sent to me at jyrki@cs.uta.fi.

A major unsolved technical problem is the automatic installation and re-installation of Windows XP. Any inputs towards solutions that are fast, flexible and reliable, will be warmly welcomed.

It is my hope that the International Technical Working Group will be able to contribute and become a useful and valuable part of the IOI organisation.

Jyrki Nummenmaa

If you want any further information please go to http://www.cs.uta.fi/~jyrki/itwg

From the desk of the Executive Director

This issue of IOI News contains the outcomes of a very successful meeting of the International Committee that took place in Athens. For me it was one of the most constructive yet. In many ways it can be said that our organisation is moving forward. I want to highlight one issue that I believe indicates this. Since 2000 when the position of Executive Director was first established, we have asked participating countries to contribute to the running of the affairs of IOI. This has been most successful and has enabled us to put in place systems and structures to provide regular and efficient service to a wide range of our members.

At the most recent meeting we discussed the way ahead and it was agreed that greater emphasis needs to be placed on using our resources to develop IOI. One of the ways to do this would be to call on you - the family of IOI - to tell us what you want from us. How we can be of greater assisance to you? Here is an opportunity for each and every one of you to give serious thought to this issue and come forward with an idea or a firm proposal. I wait to hear from you.

The other burning issue is that of Fundraising. Our commitment, since October 2000, has been to assist our current participating countries and to extend the benefits of IOI to those who are not able to be involved. This will require funding beyond that contributed by the Registration fees and my appeal to all of you is to assist by identifying those individuals in your countries who could be invited to become members of our Board of Patrons. This select group will be limited to 10 Individuals who have made a contribution in the field of Information Technology and would like to be associated with the ideals of IOI. You can help us by giving me the contact information. I will follow up and do the rest.

Look forward to hearing from any of you who can assist.
Lionel Hartmann - Executive Director of IOI

Chairman of IOI 2004, Spyros Bakogiannis, his daughter Maria and wife Vassiliki are part of the team waiting to welcome you to IOI 2004 this year.

To find out out more visit
www.ioi2004.org

IOI RECOGNITION PROGRAMME

It is once again time to recognize those individuals who have made an invaluable contribution to the growth and development of IOI over the years.

In launching this initiative, Chairman of IC Don Piele, said " we want to recognize those individuals who have made invaluable contributions to the organization over many years. We are looking for the unsung heroes and heroines who have helped us make IOI the wonderful event it has become. To encourage greater participation we have changed the criteria this year."

Nominations are called for individuals who meet the following criteria:

Should have (not compulsory):
attended IOI for at least 5 years
been at least a Deputy or Team leader
made a significant contribution to the development of IOI

Current members of IC, ITWG and ISC are NOT eligible for nomination. Individuals who have passed away may be nominated

The Closing date for nominations is 31 May 2004 and can be E-mailed to lhartman@iafrica.com. All nominations received will be circulated to IC members to select a recipient/s

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IC AND ISC NEEDS LEADERS

Each year at IOI members vote to elect at least ONE new representative to the International Committee and International Scientific Committee to replace one individual who has served his or her 3 year term. This is the most effective way for General Assembly to have a say in the running of the affairs of IOI with the elected members of IC and ISC playing an invaluable role in the future of IOI.

Now is the time to start planning who you want to represent you on IOI and as in the past nominations can be submitted before IOI2004 but will be kept open until at least the second or third day of IOI. All nominations received by 30 June 2004 will be announced in the next Newsletter and will give members of GA a chance to consider their choice of candidate.

All candidates will be asked to address GA for not more than 3 minutes before the voting takes place.

IC and ISC needs energetic and qualified individuals to run the organization. Please give this your serious consideration.

South Africa to host Regional Olympiad

Donald Cook of Cape Town., South Africa has advised that the next Arab/African Olympiad in Informatics will take place in Cape Town in January 2005. The first AOI was hosted by Egypt in 2002.

Egypt announces plans

Yasser Abdel Ghany has announced that Egypt will be bidding to host IOI2008 in Alexandria. The decision to select the country to host IOI2008 will be made at this year's IOI in Athens.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

The Baltic Olympiad in Informatics took place from 21 to 25 April in Ventspils, Latvia. Teams from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia (2 teams),Lithuania, Norway and Poland took part. The overall winner with 511 out of a possible 600 points was Filip Wolski of Poland. Congratulations!!!.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

IC approved an interesting proposal at its meeting in Athens. It was accepted that while the official language of IOI is English, there are many who have difficulty in following proceedings at times.

To assist, it has been agreed that GA Agendas, Minutes of the previous meeting and other documentation prepared for GA will be sent out at least 4 weeks before IOI.

Volunteers are required to translate these documents into any of the languages used at IOI and these translations will be posted on the website www.ioinformatics.org

If you are prepared and able to assist us please let the Executive Director know.