

CIPScene

Canadian Information Processing Society, Calgary Section OCTOBER 2002

ICDL: Improved Productivity Levels with Standards and Certification

WHAT'S HOT



Over the last two decades, the economy-wide productivity gap between Canada and the US rose from about 14% in 1981 to a peak of 18% in 2000. In productivity, Canada's rank among G-7 countries has slipped from second to fourth since 1976.¹

Despite significant investment in research and development, the availability of generous tax credits for research expenditures, and a high level of participation in applied research by post-secondary institutions, productivity improvement remains a major challenge for Canadian industry.

Canadian firms are slow to adopt leading-edge innovations. "Historically, the biggest economic gains from a new technology have come not from its invention and production, but from its exploitation."² Innovation notwithstanding, major productivity gains will only be achieved through the strategic and widespread application of emerging technologies.

Organizations are now paying particular attention to ensuring that the appropriate resources are assigned to strategic initiatives.

One method for rapidly qualifying resources is through specialized certifications such as CIPS' Information Systems Professional (I.S.P.) designation. The I.S.P. is a nationally recognized standard for Information Systems professionals carrying a high degree of credibility, along with clearly defined standards of practice and ethics. IT executives know that they can rely on the knowledge and expertise of these professionals when allocating resources.

In addition to employing and using the services of certified IT professionals, companies are also turning their focus on a recognizable standard of computer literacy for end users. The license (ICDL) designation has been widely adopted as a reliable and cost-effective means of verifying a user's level of competency with common desktop applications. The Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC),

¹Presentation to the Public Policy Forum Atlantic Canada Roundtable, V. Peter Harder, Deputy Minister, Industry Canada October 4, 2001

²The Economist, Sept 2000

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CIPS welcomes articles or story ideas from readers. To submit an article, please contact the CIPS office.

Industry Pub Night!

Focus: Career Night
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2002
Venue: Brewsters Brewing Company
Eau Claire (Upper Level)
101 Barclay Parade SW
Calgary, Alberta
Time: 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Cost: Members – Free
Non-Members – \$5.00



Registration Options:
Online (preferred):
https://secure.nl2k.ab.ca/aplus/forms/cips_free.php
Email: calgary@cips.ca
Phone: (403) 244-4487
Registration Deadline: November 18, 2002
(Pre-registration is required for attendee numbers by venue. Walk-ins accepted only if space is available.)

ICDL: Improved Productivity Levels with Standards and Certification

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1..

Fédération de l'informatique du Québec (FIQ), and CIPS have endorsed the ICDL standard.

The ICDL is based upon the highly successful European Computer Driving License (ECDL) standard that was launched several years ago in the EU. European governments are now acknowledging it as a significant contributing factor in creating a better skilled, more adaptable, and more productive workforce.

The International Computer Driving License consists of seven modules in fundamental IT skills. Applicant knowledge and skills are put to the test by an automated test engine that simulates actual interactions with an operating system and word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and Internet software. The ECDL/ICDL certificate is awarded after passing scores are achieved in all seven modules.

The ICDL standard became a focus of the CIPS-sponsored Women in IT initiative, which promotes careers in information technology to young women throughout Canada. The number of women studying computer science at our post-secondary institutions and ultimately going on to work in IT has declined steadily over the past ten years. This initiative hopes to help to reverse this situation.

Metro Community College, the Edmonton Public School District's continuing education department, became an authorized testing centre (one of more than 8,000 worldwide) and began offering ICDL-approved curriculum to the more than 40,000 adult learners making use of its facilities each year.

In order to ensure productivity gains in Canada, it is important to continue developing a knowledge-based

economy. A key element in such an economy is a computing skills learning and certification framework, such as the ICDL/ECDL program.

In addition to its usefulness as a means of measuring the effectiveness of workforce training, companies have documented the following benefits and productivity improvements:

- The elimination/reduction of 'fear of the unknown';
- Improved efficiencies in the use of IT through better presentation and reporting of information;
- Better utilization of existing software;
- Less demand on the IT department to resolve mundane/simple problems; and
- Reduced costs for future software training and support.

ICDL ended 2001 with 1.8 million participants, a number that grew by 156 percent over 2000's growth. The program is now operating in 58 countries worldwide. 

*Bob MacDonald, Director Applied Science Programs
Simon Fraser University – CIPS Member*

In the November issue of CIPScene: Look for an interview with CIPS' first ICDL recipient. For additional information on the standard, you can contact ICDL through its website at www.ICDLCanada.com.

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Oct 2, 9-10

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The Benefits of Teaching and Mentoring

Blake Kanewischer
Publications



Teaching and mentoring are often cited as the difference between an average organization and a truly dynamic one. Peter Senge identified this in his book, *The Fifth Discipline*, several years ago, and numerous other authors concur.

Mentoring provides benefits on both sides of the relationship—the mentee learns from the knowledge of the mentor and the mentor's network; the mentor gains insight and a fresh perspective from the mentee.

Often, mentors comment that they learn more as mentors than they do by simply performing the tasks—as if explaining concepts to someone forces the concepts to crystallize in their own minds.

As organizations continually ask individuals to do more with less, it is critical to *grow* the people of the organization—to give them the capacity and the capability to actually *do* more with less. Cutting back

on training and development budgets will not likely help, nor will cutting back on hiring junior employees.

A key way to increase employee capacity is through mentoring.

By increasing the flow of junior staff into your organization, and developing both formal and informal mentoring programs, both the junior staff and the senior staff will benefit from each other's knowledge.

In short, productivity will increase, the total salary envelope will be reduced (by hiring junior staff instead of senior staff), and loyalty to the organization will be created.

Simply, companies that cut back on hiring and mentoring junior staff are demonstrating a dangerously short-sighted view that will come back to haunt them in the future. ☛

Member Feedback Required CIPS Members Only Website

The CIPS National office is beginning the process of redesigning the Members Only area of the website. CIPS National believes that members are looking for a more personalized, organized, and accessible experience with this portion of the website. Therefore, they need your input. The underlying goal of the site is to provide members with an opportunity to:

- Manage their membership;
- Manage their professionalism/career;
- Build relationships with other CIPS members; and
- Get involved with CIPS governance.

With this in mind, they would like to know what you would like to see in a redesigned site. What is there now that you like? Don't like? What new features would you like to see?

Although the deadline for initial comments was in September, National will be asking for further input, so please keep an eye on *News from National* for more opportunities to provide feedback. ☛

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CIPS and ARMA Joint Presentation

OCTOBER DINNER MEETING

"Knowledge Sharing and Networking"

What will we be Talking About in 2008?

Speaker

Dr. Tom Keenan,
University of Calgary

Date

Wednesday,
October 2, 2002

Time

5:30 pm

Registration and
Cocktails

6:00 pm

Dinner and
Presentation

Place

Calgary Chamber of
Commerce
4 Floor, 517 Centre
Street South

Cast your mind back to those happy days when Calgary hosted the 1988 Winter Olympics. The first real computer virus (Jerusalem, which struck every Friday the 13th) was just emerging into the public eye. Worms were still for fishing and gardens, not computers. The idea of "distributed denial of service attacks" was probably a twinkle in the eye of some grade school misfit. In 1988, most people felt that they still had some personal privacy and could do something to protect it.

Fast forward to 2008, as the Olympic Games open in Beijing. Will the concept of privacy make any sense? Will anonymity be a crime? Will artificially intelligent programs, doing deep data mining, watch our every move? Will we have traded freedom for security? Dr. Tom Keenan is hard at work on a CBC Radio documentary exploring many of these issues, and will give us a sneak preview.

Dr. Keenan has parallel careers as a university professor, Dean of the Faculty of Continuing Education at the University of Calgary, and broadcaster. An award winner in these roles, he serves as Technology Correspondent for CBC Radio and Television. At the University of Calgary, Dr. Keenan teaches a course in Computer Security and the Social Implications of Technology and has pioneered delivery of a graduate level course via the Internet.

A computer scientist by training, Dr. Keenan serves on the CIPS Certification Council, the board of the Software Human Resources Council, and on several other corporate institutional boards. With the Honourable Lorne Taylor, he is Honorary Co-Chair of the Alberta Science Literacy Association. In 1984, Dr. Keenan founded the Calgary Campus of the Shad Valley Program, a unique youth education experience that combines science, engineering, and entrepreneurship. He was educated at Columbia University, receiving BA, MSc, MA, and EdD degrees. In addition, Dr. Keenan has studied at Harvard University. He is an Adjunct Professor of Computer Science at both the University of Calgary and the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand.

Please join us for what will prove to be a thought-provoking session. ☎

Please register by noon on Friday, September 27, 2002 as seating is limited.

Register online at https://secure.nl2k.ab.ca/aplus/forms/cips_lunch.php or phone CIPS at (403) 244-4487. Prepayment by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express will be accepted over the phone. No-shows will be billed if a reservation has not been cancelled two days in advance of the luncheon. Alternatively, you may send a replacement if you cannot attend. **Prepaid seats will be guaranteed until 6:00 pm, at which time they may be released for general admission.**

PRICES - Pre-registered
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2002 I.S.P. Professional of the Year Finalists

On behalf of the Board of CIPS Alberta, it is my privilege and pleasure to announce that the following outstanding I.S.P. members have been selected as the finalists for the first annual CIPS Alberta I.S.P. Professional of the Year Award:

Helen Banks, I.S.P.

Ken Chapman, I.S.P.

Ron Sohnle, I.S.P.

We could not have hoped for a better slate of nominees from which to select the finalists for this award. It was very difficult to pare down the nominees to our three finalists. After extensive deliberation, an independent jury selected our winner.

On an interesting note, the candidates are outstanding representatives in academia, industry, and government. While it is impossible to adequately summarize their achievements within a

few lines, the following are brief summaries of their significant accomplishments.

Helen Banks is the Program Head for the Computer Technology Program at NAIT, and now serves as the team liaison for the International Education program. She has worked tirelessly to establish and promote the I.S.P. designation since its conception. She has encouraged the promotion of the I.S.P. beyond universities to include colleges, and is currently advocating the use of CIPS standards as a model when reviewing international initiatives. She served on the National Certification Council and participated in the representations to the Alberta Government to recognize the I.S.P. designation as a component of the formal criteria for the evidence of professionalism and competence within the IT industry. Helen was also involved in the establishment of the College Accreditation Council, which she served for ten years, three as its Chair. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Mathematics.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7...

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Speaker

Jeff Wallace, eXI solutions Inc.

Date

Thursday, October 17, 2002

Time

7:30 am

Registration and
breakfast buffet

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Presentation

9:00 am - 9:15 am

Question and answer period;
wrap-up

Location*

Calgary Petroleum Club,
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Project Collaboration:

How do we get opposing parties to reach a common goal?

There is a lot of hype these days about "partnering" in project delivery. Governments refer to this as Private Public Partnerships, or P3s. The reality is that competitors often find it difficult to work together due to conflicts in corporate cultures and business models. Governments and the private sector all too often end up in conflict with P3s due to each party wanting maximum dollars with minimum risk. But it can be done.

Jeff Wallace has more than 25 years experience in Information Technology and Business Management. His varied experience includes contract management, financial management, operations, programming, business unit management, and delivering very large projects with multiple delivery partners. Currently, he is the President and CEO of eXI Solutions Inc., as well as a major shareholder.

In addition to his practical business expertise and experience, Jeff was an international standard track athlete. Jeff attributes much of his understanding of what motivates people to his observations of the European track scene. Many lessons learned in sports provide practical insight into many business situations, including project partnerships and relationship management. The track relay really shows us how competitors can work together.

Jeff was the project director for Power Pool of Alberta's successful delivery of the Energy Trading System. This project had a budget over \$14 million, with many partner delivery organizations. It was brought in early and under budget, with all partners acknowledging the project as a success. ☛

CIPS CALGARY 2002-2003
SEMINAR SERIES

CIPS ALBERTA ACTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6...

Ken Chapman has held numerous senior industry positions and is currently the VP of Information Services for Calgary Laboratory Services. He has a Bachelors Degree in Mathematics and Computer Science and teaches at the University of Calgary in the areas of IT Management and Project Management. He sat on the CIPS National Board for six years and served as its President. Ken also served as CIPS VP for Professionalism and was involved in the College and University Accreditation Councils and CIPS Alberta as its first Past President. In 2001, Ken was a recipient of a CIPS National award as a result of his extensive contributions to the Society. Ken was also instrumental in advancing the creation of the Occupational Skills Profile Model, used as an industry standard.

Ron Sohnle is the Director of Planning and Resource Management with Alberta Health. He holds a Masters Degree and B.Sc. (Honors) in Computer

Science and received two awards for academic achievement. He has held teaching and research assistant positions and has conducted research for the Department of Communications. He has applied his significant experience in implementing numerous leading-edge technologies within the City of Edmonton, Alberta Education, and Alberta Health. He has been the recipient of the Premier's Award of Excellence, the Gold Premier's Award of Excellence, Alberta Education Award for Outstanding Performance (given by his peers), the Canadian Information Productivity Award (CIPA) for Best in Class and Best in Category. He has also served on NAIT's Computer Science and Technology Advisory Committee and is an ambassador in promoting the requirement for I.S.P. accreditation in job advertisements and selection criteria.

Please join me at the ICE 2002 CIPS Edmonton conference on October 24, 2002 to celebrate the announcement of the 2002 I.S.P. Professional of the Year Award. ☛



CIPS Calgary Section

Future Meeting Dates – 11:30 am

Wednesday, October 2, 2002*	Wednesday, February 5, 2003
Wednesday, November 6, 2002	Wednesday, March 5, 2003
Wednesday, December 4, 2002	Wednesday, April 2, 2003
Wednesday, January 8, 2003	Wednesday, May 7, 2003
<i>*Dinner meeting - 5:30 pm</i>	Wednesday, June 4, 2003

*All meetings are held at the
Calgary Chamber of Commerce
4 Floor, 517 Centre Street South*

CIPS Events

October 17, 2002	SEMINAR SERIES <i>Project Collaboration</i> 7:30 am - 9:15 am Calgary Petroleum Club 319 - 5 Avenue SW Please note new location
October 22, 2002	ALBERTA-BELGIUM BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY FORUM The Westin Hotel 320 - 4 Avenue SW Calgary, Alberta (See page 12 for more information)
November 20, 2002	INDUSTRY PUB NIGHT <i>Career Night</i> 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm Brewsters Brewing Company Eau Claire (Upper Level) 101 Barclay Parade SW
December 3, 2002	PROJECT MANAGEMENT SIG <i>VIPIR Project Update</i> 12:00 noon - 1:00 pm Fifth Avenue Place Conference Centre 2 Floor, West Tower 237 - 4 Avenue SW

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It's easy to tell when it's October in Calgary. There is the sudden realization that there are a limited amount of golfing days left in the season and it seems that I am already spending most of my spare time trailing the kids around hockey arenas.

Similarly, there are signs of October on the CIPS Board: we have finished our early season planning and are now into the business of execution. The luncheon and seminar season is in full swing; Pub Nights are back; there is a newsletter to compile and peruse; and the membership committee is working in the community to further build our Section.

At this early stage in the year, there is one portfolio in particular that is extremely busy and whose success is of huge importance to the Section – Sponsorship. Therefore, I want to highlight the work of our sponsorship portfolio and ask you to consider how you can help the CIPS Calgary continue to raise funds.

Each fiscal year, in order to operate the workings of the Section, we rely partly on our generous corporate sponsors for their kind patronage. Sponsorship helps ensure CIPS has a profile at technology events around the city. It enables membership drives and contributions to worthy projects, such as bringing the student population to lunches. You will see logos of the current CIPS sponsors throughout *CIPScene* and probably recall seeing sponsor representatives receive recognition plaques at the luncheons.

Our sponsorship director, Michelle Cariou, is hard at work searching the corporate IT community for new donations. Her role involves contacting companies in the IT marketplace who wish to contribute to the IT community by sponsoring CIPS Calgary. It is a time-consuming process and can be made much easier through your help.

There are a number of ways you can assist the Section in its sponsorship drive. For example, if you are a CIPS member and decision-maker in your company, we invite you to consider discussing sponsorship options with us. If you are a CIPS member who doesn't hold a

company chequebook, you could make enquiries of your manager to find out if your company would like to discuss sponsorship options. Michelle will certainly be happy to talk to your organization about the various levels of sponsorship offerings. She can be reached at mcariou@aplin.com.

In closing, I would like to officially thank our sponsors on behalf of the CIPS membership for their continued support in 2002/2003. We look forward to seeing our sponsor representatives at the upcoming luncheon series where we can present plaques to recognize their contributions and give them a much deserved round of applause. ☛

A CIPS Calgary **WELCOME**

CIPS Calgary would like to **WELCOME** the following new members who have recently joined our association. We trust your forthcoming experiences with our CIPS community will be fulfilling. The Membership Committee conducts orientations intermittently where you will have an opportunity to find out about all aspects of CIPS and ask any questions you might have. You will be contacted when the next orientation is scheduled. In the meantime, if you have any questions, you can email calgary@cips.ca or calgarydata@cips.ca. ☛

Mr. Paul Aston	Mr. Gaurav Sharma
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Project Management SIG

By the time this is published, we will have had our opening session, delivered by Robin Hornby, a senior IT consultant with Tempest Management Inc. Robin gave us a preview of the presentation that he

will be giving at the PMI Symposium in San Antonio this month entitled, *PMBOM! A Guide to the Project Management Body of Mistakes*. Knowing Robin, it will be an entertaining and insightful presentation!

Our next session will feature a return by Jim Nichols, Director of the Volumetric and Infrastructure Petroleum Information Registry (VIPIR) Project. The VIPIR Project involves the development of an electronic shared information registry and re-engineered business processes. The registry will facilitate the exchange of data between upstream oil and gas partners and between industry and the Alberta Ministry of Resource Development. The system is scheduled for implementation this month.

Jim first spoke to us in June 2001 about the Project Management challenges he faced with this complex initiative. He has agreed to come back to the PM SIG in December to give us an update on these challenges, now that he is on the other side of the implementation!

Topic: VIPIR Project Update
Speaker: Jim Nichols, VIPIR Director
Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2002
Time: 12:00 noon (sharp) to 1:00 pm
Location: Fifth Avenue Place Conference Center
 2 Floor, West Tower
 237 - 4 Avenue SW

To register, visit the CIPS SIG website at:
<http://www.associationsplus.ca/cipsig/>

Although the PM SIG events are free, we appreciate your taking the time to register so we can plan sufficient seating for the session.

Please note: If you would like to be on the PM SIG Membership list to receive emails about upcoming events, sign up by registering for the "SIG Membership" event listed first in the events section.

Should you wish further information please contact:

Karen Wright
 Partner, Ethier Associates
 Phone: (403) 234-8960
 Email: kwright@ethierassociates.ca

Ken Wiens
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Are you graduating from your post-secondary institution next year? If so, have you started looking for that "perfect" IT job? No? Well, now is the time to polish up that resume! Many future grads think that job searching can be put off until their last semester, when they have more time. The reality is that many IT companies in Calgary

start recruiting for new employees in September and October. These same companies conduct interviews in December and usually hire for full-time employment in January. This reality does not only apply to graduates. Future summer students should also start applying for positions in October and November.

The reason for the early deadlines is that many companies want to ensure the new employees they are hiring will be the right people for the job. I encourage future grads to check out annual career and job fairs at your post-secondary institutions this fall. Take the initiative to contact your future potential employers at these career fairs and through job postings on company websites. Don't forget that CIPS events are a great place to network with IT contacts and find out what Calgary companies are

looking for. The sooner you start networking, the better.

Upcoming CIPS events include another CIPS industry speaker night to be held at the University of Calgary in November. Due to popular demand, we are holding another Systems IT Panel Industry Night. Details as to the exact date and location of this exciting event will be posted on our website: www.cips.ca/calgary. If you would like to contact me, feel free to email me at leith@cpssc.ucalgary.ca.

CIPS Scholarships Awarded

CIPS Calgary congratulates Mr. William Henry Rosgen and Mr. Sonny Chan, who have been selected to receive CIPS Scholarships. Each student will receive \$500 each, plus a CIPS student membership. Good luck to both these students in your studies at the University of Calgary.

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To post your upcoming SIG events, contact Nguyen Tran by phone at (403) 514-4004 or email ntran@cips.ca.

The Government of Alberta is organizing a one-day conference to increase collaboration between Alberta and Belgium's high-tech industries. The **Alberta-Belgium Business & Technology Forum** will be held at the Westin Calgary in Calgary, Alberta on October 22, 2002.

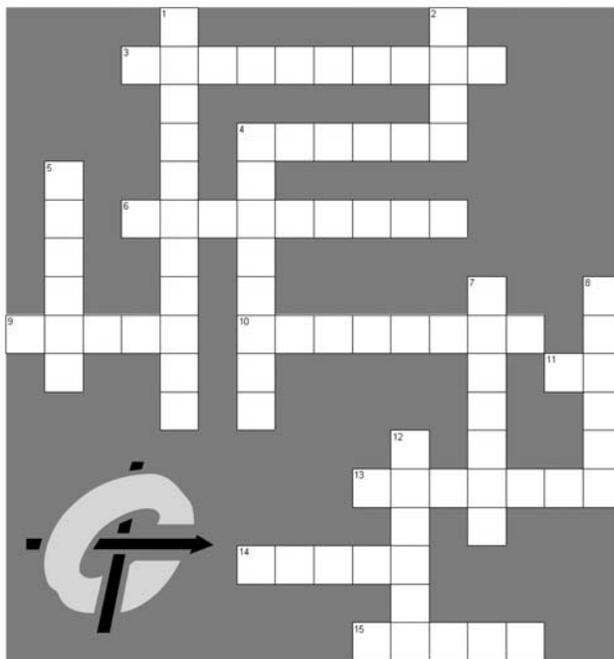
Research relationships founded at this forum could lead to researcher exchanges and other means of knowledge sharing, as well as greater access to advanced technology. Business relationships will mean foreign direct investment in Alberta and a gateway into the European Union for Alberta's capabilities and products.

"The Belgians - experts in wireless, nanotechnology, biotechnology, and technology commercialization - were attracted to Alberta because of our growing international reputation in their areas of focus," said Keith Scott, a Senior Manager at Alberta Innovation and Science. "The province has world-famous researchers and a fearless business community to thank for this praise. Now, the Alberta government is trying to give something back, because both Belgian and Albertan researchers and business representatives stand to benefit from the forum, sharing information, and collaboration."

To register or find out more about the forum visit www.innovation.gov.ab.ca, email Alberta.Belgium.Forum@gov.ab.ca or call Suzanne Tomljanovic at (780) 427-8866.



CIPS Puzzler



Across

3. He keeps an eye on CIPS' funds.
4. It's her job to keep the Board on topic. Good luck!
6. He's a Pool of Knowledge (& Networking).
9. A student and a board member. Where does he find the time?
10. She was your Pres. last year.
11. Know someone who's thinking of joining CIPS? Send them to this Director.
13. He kept Southern Alberta on Track.
14. If it involves beer chances are he organized it.
15. His role is to nurture relationships between IT Management and CIPS Calgary.

Down

1. Have an article of interest for your fellow CIPSters?
2. He has your Special Interests in mind.
4. CIPS Calgary's fearless leader.
5. He's brand new to the board. His (Marketing & Web) Presence is much appreciated.
7. Teja Vu?
8. He's responsible for bursaries and scholarships.
12. Speak with this Director if you would like to sponsor CIPS.

Do YOU know all the things your Board members do on behalf of CIPS?

Look for the puzzle solution to be published online in mid-October.

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COGNICASE

