



TRANSFORMERS COMMITTEE



February 15, 2017

Dear Committee Members and Guests:

You and your companion are cordially invited to New Orleans, Louisiana, USA to attend the Spring 2017 meeting of the IEEE/PES Transformers Committee, to be held April 2-6. We look forward to welcoming you to the Crescent City! New Orleans is one of the world's most fascinating cities, home to a truly unique melting pot of people, cultures, spicy savory foods and music. New Orleans has something for everyone!

HOTEL INFORMATION: Our meeting will be held in the heart of downtown at the **Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel**, 739 Canal Street. Located at the Gateway to the French Quarter on the corner of Canal and Bourbon Streets, the hotel offers easy access to restaurants, galleries and shops. Our discounted guestroom rate at the hotel is US\$139 in the "more historic" Alexa Tower and US\$149 in the newly renovated Astor Tower. Both rates include complimentary fitness center use and wireless internet in guestrooms. Visit the Committee's website for a link to reserve a room, or if you call the hotel, mention "IEEE Transformers" to receive the group rate. The cut-off date for the group rate is Friday, March 10, 2017, but we expect the hotel to sell out well before this date. The hotel has a 72-hour cancellation policy, so plan accordingly.

GETTING THERE: The **Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel** is located approximately 30 minutes/17 miles (27 km) from Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY). Taxi fare is US\$36 one way from the airport for up to two (2) passengers and US\$15 per passenger for three (3) or more passengers. Taxis are required to accept credit card payments. Airport Shuttle service is available for US\$24 (per person, one way) or US\$44 (per person, round trip). Book in advance at www.airportshuttleneworleans.com or purchase tickets at the Airport Shuttle booth. Parking at the hotel is US\$42 for cars/night or US\$52 for SUVs/night which includes valet parking with in/out privileges.

MEETING REGISTRATION: Register on-line at www.transformerscommittee.org for social events, tours and the meeting. Register by **Friday, March 10, 2017**, to receive a US\$50 early registration discount. The on-line registration system will be disabled on Wednesday, March 29, to print name badges and finalize counts. The cost to register on-site is substantially higher than the advance registration price.

WEATHER: Spring in New Orleans is festival time, with an average high of 78°F/26°C and evening low of 59°F/15°C. Come prepared for all kinds of weather in the same day—hot, cool or humid showers. Most of our events are indoors, and we are hoping for great weather during your visit! Dress for the meeting is business casual.

SATURDAY EARLY BIRD EVENTS: If you arrive early, please join us for dinner, music and fun at BB King's Blues Club. Space is limited, and we expect this event to sell out quickly. See flyer for details and register early!

SUNDAY EVENING WELCOME RECEPTION: Renew old friendships and form new ones! This reception will be held in the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel's magnificent Grand Ballroom with a balcony overlooking the French Quarter. Cash bars and plenty of fabulous food and soft music will be provided. Registered meeting attendees and spouses/companions are welcome to attend. Please indicate whether you will attend this reception during the meeting registration process.

SPOUSE/COMPANION TOURS: Monday's excursion is the historic Plantation Bayou and Swamp Tour. Start your day by embracing the Crown Jewel of Louisiana's River Road at **Houmas House Plantation and Gardens**. Enjoy the house and 38 lush acres of gardens and ponds. Relax with a refreshing breeze off the Mississippi and navigate through the shadows of ancient oaks. Following a River Road buffet lunch at Cafe Burnside, native Cajun captains will take you back to the early days of Louisiana bayou and swamp explorations through the primitive beauty of moss-draped cypress trees. The **Cajun Pride Swamp** tour shows off the American alligator and abundant wildlife along with the unique history of Manchac Swamp.

Tuesday is the **Mardi Gras World Tour**. Your day begins by exploring the artistic side of Mardi Gras. Get an insider's view of how Mardi Gras is "made". Learn the history of Mardi Gras and experience Mardi Gras costumes. You will also have a chance to make your own mask. "Make Your Mouth Happy" in the afternoon at the **New Orleans School of Cooking** with a demonstration and tasting. Discover the fun, food and folklore of Louisiana while learning the basics of Louisiana cooking in a way you'll never forget. You will leave with a homemade praline and wonderful memories. Fun is the primary ingredient in this kitchen! See flyers for details

WEDNESDAY DINNER SOCIAL: We invite you to join us for an evening of brilliant colors, natural beauty and jazz at the **Audubon Aquarium of the Americas**. A Caribbean reef comes alive in a walk-through tunnel, while penguins and Southern sea otters enchant you with their antics. Marvel at gigantic sharks, tarpon and rays in the 400,000 gallon Gulf of Mexico exhibit and the Great Maya Reef while enjoying appetizers on Level 1 before partaking in a buffet dinner on Level 2 among wildlife native to the Amazon Rainforest. Geaux fish! See flyer for dinner menu and details.

ADDITIONAL MEETING INFORMATION: Along with this invitation letter, additional meeting information can be downloaded from the Committee's website at www.transformerscommittee.org:

- Registration Fee Summary – Use this as a guide to review the fees for each activity before you begin the on-line registration process.
- Meeting Schedule and General Sessions Agenda – If any noteworthy changes are made, an updated schedule will be posted on the Committee's website a few days prior to the meeting.
- Other informational flyers, including those for the Saturday Early Bird Event, Spouse/Companion Tours, Wednesday Dinner Social and technical presentations.

We look forward to seeing you at the Spring 2017 meeting. We are certain you will enjoy all of what New Orleans has to offer!

Marnie Roussel

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