

May 7 seminar to discuss trends in computing technology

Computers are getting smaller, more mobile and more prevalent. They are all around us, and will continue to affect and change our lives.

As part of the Community Science and Technology Seminar Series, David McGee, a computer scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, will present "Computing Everywhere: What's Next?" He will discuss trends in computing technology, the shift toward more pervasive information, and the impact this will have on the way we live. The seminar is scheduled for May 7 at 7 p.m. in the Columbia Basin College Theater in Pasco. The seminar is free and open to the public.

Computing devices are embedded in everything from automobiles to refrigerators, from barbecue forks and undershirts to unmanned airplanes and cockroaches. Almost like clockwork, computer hardware engineers are finding ways to rapidly diminish the size of computing processors while continuing to double the speed about every 18 months. Given today's advancements, even more amazing progress is soon to come. In spite of these advances, our ability to control computers, communicate with them and access information locked behind each display is limited almost exclusively to inventions from almost 50 years ago.

Researchers at PNNL are conducting research to break down these barriers, investigating how to develop Rich Interaction Environments that are capable of understanding people more naturally, adapting to individual users and groups of users and communicating with us.

McGee grew up in the Tri-Cities and has been a staff member at PNNL for 20 years. He is the acting chief scientist and leader of the Rich Interaction Environments effort. His research interests include multi-modal human-computer interaction, information and battlefield visualization, and multi-agent systems communication. McGee received his bachelor's degree from Washington State University Tri-Cities and a doctorate degree from the Oregon Graduate Institute School of Science and Engineering at the Oregon Health and Science University.

For more information about the seminar series, contact PNNL at 375-2599 or visit the Web site at <http://www.pnl.gov/speak/seminar/sem-index.html>.

The seminar is sponsored by PNNL and CBC with the support of the Columbia River Exhibition of History, Science and Technology and the local chapter of Sigma Xi, the international honor society of scientific and engineering research. ■



McGee