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## President's Message

by Beth Meyer  
President



Happy National Ergonomics Month!

OK, so the annual celebration has not yet inspired its own line of greeting cards. Still, the *Please see President's Message, page 2*

# November Meeting: Exercise Equipment, the Good, the Bad, & the Ugly

On Thursday, November 3, 2005, Dr. Marc Rabinoff will present his experience and research involving exercise equipment -- some of which may have been as likely to send users to the hospital as keep them out of it! Try out the equipment whose ads had to be banned by the FCC (if you dare!)

Dr. Rabinoff is the chair of the Department of Human Performance, Sport and Leisure Studies at Metro State College. He has studied the use of exercise equipment both from an academic and forensic perspective.

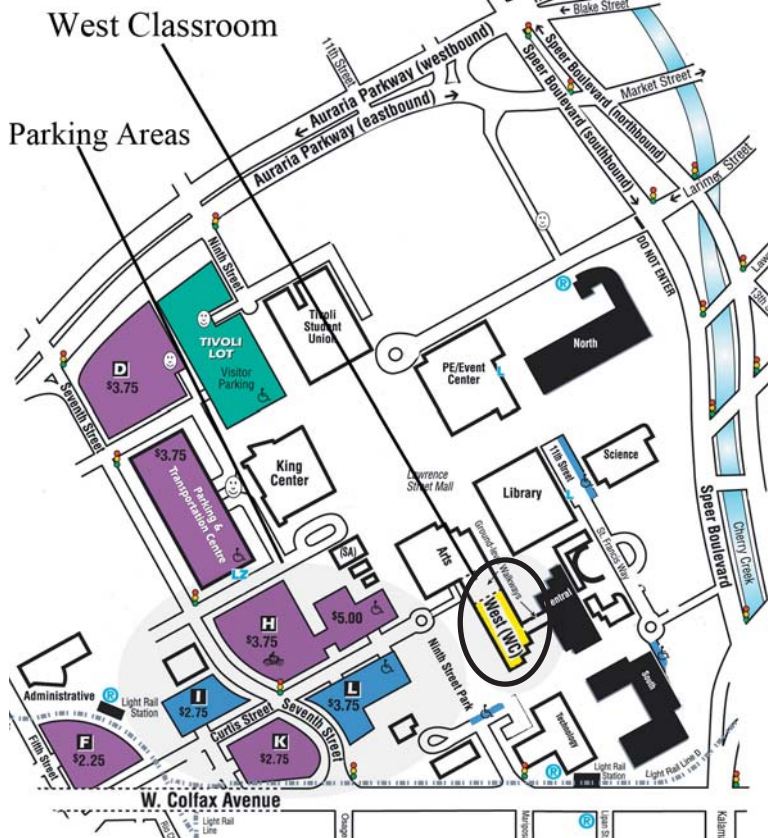
The meeting will be held in downtown Denver, in room 159 of the West Classroom building at the Auraria Higher Education Center.

Parking will be available at lots off of Seventh Street, at the intersection with Curtis Street (just north of Colfax and south of Auraria Parkway - see the parking map on this page, or refer to [www.ahec.edu/parking/index.htm](http://www.ahec.edu/parking/index.htm)).

The rough schedule for the evening is as follows:

- 5:30 pm Gather for social time
- 6:00 pm Dinner (Pizza, veggies and soft drinks)
- 6:30 pm Chapter business over dinner
- 7:00 pm Program with Marc Rabinoff

See you there!



# RMC September Panel Discusses Senior Drivers

On September 8, the Rocky Mountain HFES chapter meeting featured a panel discussion on performance, training and testing issues related to older drivers. The panel featured Joan Vecchi, of the Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles Driver Control Section; Lila Laux, whose research involving older drivers included work on the Texas Older Driver Task Force; and Beth Meyer, whose cognitive aging research at Georgia Tech included a broad focus group analysis of human factors challenges.

As the panelists noted, this topic is a difficult one because of the need to balance the safety

of the driving public with the transportation needs of older drivers (most of whom drive safely). They described problems to which older drivers are particularly prone, such as increased reaction time, difficulty multi-tasking, and determining speed. Detecting problems such as these is hard for the standard road test, which is designed to assess driving skill and knowledge rather than basic abilities.

It is possible for perceptual and simulator training to help older adults' driving performance. Well-designed autos can too - however, marketing of safety features can cause drivers to expect the car to save them.

## Save the Date!

January 26, 2006

Joint meeting of Rocky Mountain HFES and CHI chapters at Center for Lifelong Learning and Design, CU Boulder

## President's Message

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word about the utility of human factors and ergonomics is gradually spreading. Highly complex systems such as aircraft and military systems routinely benefit from the application of HF expertise or even detailed human performance simulation data. Software designers are increasingly attuned to usability issues in their products.

But there is more we can do, even in small ways. Our chapter, working together over time, can really raise the visibility of HF/E here in Colorado. Any of us can present our discipline to school groups, from second-grade cub scout troops to college engineering clubs -- perhaps starting in places where we have a personal connection. The materials available from the NEM web site (<http://hfesnem.org>) make it surprisingly easy. Tying in with school-based efforts, our chapter can reward outstanding projects related to HF/E at the state level science fair. Even community service projects can help spread the word (see page 3).

As I've heard from NEM leaders, outreach needn't be limited to October - but it is a good time to build momentum for year-round activity. So look around, and help spread the word about what we do!



*Joan Vecchi (left) and Lila Laux discuss their experiences and research with older drivers at the September HFES chapter meeting, held on Sept. 8 at the Denver Tech Center. Not pictured are Beth Meyer, panelist, and JP Purswell, discussant.*

# Quintus Usability Seminar

by Erika Noll Webb

Interested in usability issues? Join Quintus Design for our new seminar! Check out [www.quintusdesign.com](http://www.quintusdesign.com) for more information and to sign up:

Usability Base Camp: Jumpstarting Usability in Your Organization  
With Guest Speaker Ben Hansen, Sun Microsystems

October 21, 2005 in Boulder, CO

8:30 am - 5 pm

\$350 After October 7th

Improve your company's bottom line by implementing a successful usability process! Have you ever wanted to get Usability issues into your organization but just don't know how?

We all know that products that don't work the way users expect don't succeed in the marketplace for long. This seminar is designed to get you started. With practical, straightforward techniques and information, we can show you how to get usability integrated into your organization and your processes without adding time or expense!

Who should attend?

Engineers: You're on the hook for getting a usable product out on schedule.

Managers: You're at risk for poorly designed products.

Tech Writers: You often get charged with doing usability. Need to understand users to write documentation. Online documentation IS a product unto itself.

Anyone: Interested in usability and its value to your organization.

## Chapter Elections: Call for Nominations

As we move into our time of electing chapter officers for next year, please consider how you or a colleague might help to set our direction! If you wish to nominate yourself or someone else to chapter office, please contact any chapter officer. (Offices and current officeholders are listed in the box above right, except for the currently vacant office of program chair.) Contact information is available on the chapter web site: [www.rmhfes.org](http://www.rmhfes.org)

Let's keep the momentum going!



**RMC News**

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To share your ideas, publish your articles or announcements and comment on material in previous editions, please contact Beth Meyer at [bethmeyer@mindspring.com](mailto:bethmeyer@mindspring.com).

Beth Meyer, President

Carol Tolbert, Treasurer

Bonnie Hautamaki, Secretary

Ron Laughery, Director-at-Large

Andy Keller, Director-at-Large

Beth Meyer, *RMC News* Editor

Conne Bazley, Membership Chair

Fred Malmstrom, Nominations/Elections Chair



*Michael Rodriguez (foreground), Paula Messamer, Kim Monroe and Frank Eparvier pack boxes of food to go to local Hurricane Katrina evacuees on Saturday, October 8, for a chapter outreach project. So, does that work height look right?*