This year may mark the transition when wearable computing becomes fully mainstream. Early wearable computing research demonstrated how on-body computers could be used for entertainment, location-based information services, personal productivity, and industrial applications such as inventory control and maintenance. Now smart phones have much of this functionality, incorporating MP3 players, email readers, web browsers, AR games, and map-based search features. A wide array of wearable computers is now offered for industrial needs as well. Yet these wearable computers have mostly been confined to the user’s pocket or consisted of armbands hardened for industrial environments.

Currently, we are seeing a breakout of new form factors in consumer electronics that enables computing to be more a part of everyday life. Health-centered devices such as the Fitbit or Jawbone’s UP are designed to be worn continually and provide the user feedback on their activity levels. WIMM Lab’s One, Motorola’s ACTV, and many other wristwatches are bringing much of a smartphone’s functionality to the wrist, where it can be accessed more quickly. Recon Instruments is selling an Android-powered head-up display for alpine ski goggles that shows users live telemetry on their runs. Finally, Google’s Project Glass has sparked consumer imagination with videos and demonstrations of a context aware head-up display and integrated camera (in the interest of full disclosure, the author is one of the technical leads on Project Glass).

Our IEEE Technical Committee on Wearable Information Systems (TC WIS) continues to oversee ISWC, our website (iswc.net), and interactions with other organizations. As a community, we would like to thank the organizers of ISWC 2012 and Pervasive 2012 for all their hard work in bringing the conferences to Newcastle. We also thank our outgoing chair Asim Smailagic for all his help over the years and welcome incoming vice chair Tom Martin. In an effort to continue to unify the community and build on the success led by Kent Lyons last year, ISWC will be co-located with Ubicomp and Pervasive in Zurich, Switzerland in the Fall of 2013. TC WIS is working with the Personal and Ubiquitous Computing journal to publish extended versions of the top papers from ISWC and the field. As a TC that helped start IEEE Pervasive magazine, we encourage members of our community to continue contributing to this venue as well. The TC also co-sponsors conferences such as the International Symposium on Mixed and Augmented Reality (ISMAR) and continues to support workshops and special issues in journals as appropriate.
Here is where you, as a member of the community, can help. If you have suggestions on events TC WIS might sponsor, would like to help with ISWC, or have ideas on how TC WIS might better serve its members, please tell either Tom Martin or me, or raise the topic during the business meeting held at the end of the conference. Even better, please join the technical committee and help make the decisions that steer the community!

Thad Starner
Georgia Institute of Technology
Technical Committee Chair