

## DECEMBER 2006 MEETING:

### 2006 Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Awards

This month's meeting is the Branch's 2006 Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement (OCEA) Award program. The OCEA Award honors a local project that best illustrates superior civil engineering skills and represents a significant contribution to civil engineering progress and society. The program will contain short presentations for each of the entries, with the OCEA Award announced at the end. The competition was fierce and we had three worthy projects nominated this year. Make sure to mark your calendar and join us at AJ Spurs for this exciting event!

#### **Water Treatment Plant - Filter Addition Project, City of Lompoc**

The \$3,000,000 project included design and construction of new equipment and facilities to double the filtration capacity at the existing water treatment plant from 7.5 MGD to 15.0 MGD. Numerous challenges were met from conception through design and construction, resulting in the successful integration of the new equipment and systems with no unanticipated disruptions to the existing facility or operations. Owner: City of Lompoc; Nominated by: Jim Garing, Garing, Taylor & Associates.

#### **Wastewater Treatment Facility, City of Pismo Beach**

With a total construction cost of approximately \$12 million, the project was the largest the City had undertaken in its history. The project faced numerous design and construction

challenges and site constraints, including odor and visual impacts, 100-year floodplain issues, permit compliance reliability, life cycle costs, etc. Owner: City of Pismo Beach; Nominated by: Dennis Delzeit, City of Pismo Beach.

#### **Library Parking Structure, City of Santa Maria**

The \$5.6 million project included construction of a two-tiered, 150-space concrete parking structure, as well as overlay or reconstruction of adjacent streets, including construction of pedestrian and landscaped median improvements on South McClelland and East Cook Streets. Numerous site and aesthetic/visual constraints required creative design and construction solutions. Owner: City of Santa Maria; Nominated by: David Whitehead, City of Santa Maria.

## PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE:

### *Increasing ASCE's Political Involvement*

Last week, a few of you may have received a "Key Alert" email from the ASCE Government Relations Staff regarding possible changes in direction and emphasis for ASCE's involvement in national politics. According to a discussion provided on the ASCE national website, a Task Force on Political Involvement was formed by the ASCE Executive Committee to evaluate our Society's effectiveness in impacting public policy in issues that directly affect our profession and ways to increase our influence. The Task Force is apparently preparing to recommend to the Executive Committee that organizational changes be implemented which would allow ASCE greater flexibility in lobbying and the ability to form a Political Action Committee (PAC).

According to our existing organizational structure, ASCE has nonprofit status under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS regulations. As such, IRS rules provide strict limits on lobbying and political involvement by ASCE, including a \$1 million limit for spending on lobbying activities. The Task Force is proposing that ASCE establish a new parallel organization under section 501(c)(6) of the IRS regulations. That parallel organization would not be subject to the \$1 million limit for lobbying and would be authorized to form a PAC. According to the national website, formation of a PAC would allow ASCE to acknowledge and support candidates for national offices that support our core issues, including publishing voter's guides for the engineering community. There are a number of details that would need to be worked out, but the current thinking is that a portion of our dues

*(Continued on page 2)*

## DECEMBER 2006 MEETING

### LOCATION:

#### **AJ Spurs**

1760 El Camino Real  
Grover Beach, CA

### DATE & TIME:

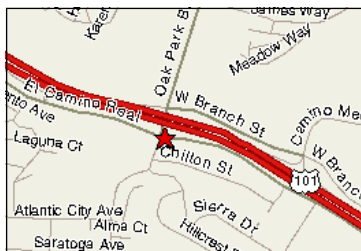
Thursday, Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>  
12:00 pm (Noon)

### MENU:

Food will be your choice of Tip Serlion, BBQ Chicken or Vegetarian Plate and will include a beverage, soup, beans, salsa, salad, rice pilaf, bread and a rootbeer float for desert.

### RESERVATIONS:

Please sign up by 1:00 pm Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, at the Branch web site [www.ASCESLO.org](http://www.ASCESLO.org). For questions, contact Nola Engelskirger at 805-788-2100 or by email at [nengelskirger@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:nengelskirger@co.slo.ca.us). The cost is \$15 for members or guests and \$6 for student members.



**MEET THE MEMBER - JILL (MCPEEK) PETERSON**

Jill (McPeeK) Peterson grew up in Lompoc and was exposed to engineering in high school, working as a student aid at Vandenberg AFB. She landed a full-time job at Martin Marietta, but soon realized she wanted to “build things – not just analyze data.” So she

enrolled at Hancock College, transferred to Cal Poly, and ended up working as Civil Engineer for RBF in Orange County.

She loved the “big city life” in the OC and met her future husband, but then realized “I was spending all day sitting in my car in traffic, and then at my job I would draw more roads to sit on.” Family connections suggested two options – California’s Central Coast or Idaho. As Jill puts it, “If you’re thinking about moving to Idaho, spend a full winter there before making a final decision.” She’s happy to live in Nipomo with her husband Bob and her large collection of pets, including a French poodle

ranch dog.

She’s been with the Wallace Group for ten years. Before that she worked with the City of Grover Beach, and before that with SLOCOG. She’s handled a lot of public agency administration work over the years, and now does a lot of work for winery development – full civil as well as process wastewater treatment. Typically the process wastewater can be treated with a small-footprint package plant, a Swanson AIPS ponding system, or with her personal favorite – a small constructed wetland.

She gets a laugh when she thinks back on one of her more unusual projects – developing a transportation master plan to allow the use of golf carts on public streets in Palm Desert, California.

She laughs because during the project she was teased incessantly by co-workers and colleagues who were more experienced with large freeway projects, and then the project won two awards for transportation excellence, one from Caltrans and one from CELSOC. It is still featured proudly on the RBF website. (<http://www.rbf.com/services/projects.asp?id=635>)

Her background with administration of public improvement projects is giving her the patience to deal with her longest-running, and most challenging, project – the Brisco Road/101 Interchange in Arroyo Grande. The project has been 14 years in the planning, faces significant geometric and funding challenges, and “there’s just no easy solution, and not for a lack of dedicated people trying.”

**PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE (CONT)**

*(Continued from page 1)*

would be directed to the 501(c)(6) organization and that any funds given to candidates through the PAC would be raised solely from voluntary personal contributions by individual ASCE members. While the Task Force has indicated that there would be no noticeable change in current services or benefits for members, the portion of the dues paid to the 501(c)(6) would not be considered a charitable contribution and for tax purposes could instead be deducted as an unreimbursed business expense.

Would the benefits derived justify the effort necessary for such organizational changes to our Society? The Task Force seems to think so. In their view, the competition for attention to issues in Washington is fierce and we “need to take advantage of as many tools as we can to maximize our efforts and achieve the best results for our membership.” The recommendations will be taken to the Executive Board in 2007 and input is being solicited from ASCE’s general membership through the Government Relations Department (202-789-7850 or e-mail: [govwash@asce.org](mailto:govwash@asce.org)). More information is available in the form of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at the following website: [www.asce.org/govrel/politicalinvl.cfm](http://www.asce.org/govrel/politicalinvl.cfm)

~ Jeff Werst



Every year Jill likes to return to Palm Desert (often in disguise) to attend the Golf Cart Parade. (Next scheduled parade: 1:00 PM, Sunday, January 14th, 2007.)

MEMBER CORNER

*GTA Announces New Owner - Jeff Emrick*

Garing Taylor & Associates, a local engineering firm with a long history in SLO County, was recently purchased by Jeff Emrick. Jeff brings his background with residential and commercial development to a firm well respected for its experience in municipal infrastructure and private sector projects.



Jeff Emrick & Jim Garing

Invite you to

"Catch a Wave & Hang Ten with Us"

at our Christmas Open House

Wednesday, December 20, 2006

from 5:00 pm until 7:00 pm

at Garing, Taylor & Associates

141 South Elm Street, Arroyo Grande

Serving Hors d'Oeuvres & Holiday Cheer

RSVP (805) 489-1321

ASCE CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINARS

ASCE has been committed to providing top quality continuing education for civil engineers and related professionals for more than 33 years. The Society holds more than 275 seminars and computer workshops each year on a wide variety of technical, management, and regulatory topics. These seminars are held in more than 45 cities across the U.S. In addition, ASCE offers customized on-site training and many distance learning programs, including live interactive web /teleconference seminars, online courses, and courses on CD, videotape, and audiotape.

A list of upcoming seminars in your area and detailed descriptions of the seminars (by title) are available on ASCE's national website at [www.ASCE.org/conted/seminars](http://www.ASCE.org/conted/seminars).

OTHER LOCAL EVENTS

*If you have an event you would like posted at no cost, contact Syllas Cranor at 781-5260 or at [scrantor@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:scrantor@co.slo.ca.us).*

The local chapter of the **American Public Works Association** meets every other month on the Wednesday before ASCE. For details, contact Jay Walter at [jwalter@slocity.org](mailto:jwalter@slocity.org).

The Central Coast Branch of the **Institute of Transportation Engineers** holds monthly meetings throughout the tri-county area. Contact Richard Marshall at 781-5252 or [Rmarshall@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:Rmarshall@co.slo.ca.us) for details.

The Central Coast Branch of the **California Land Surveyors Association** usually meets the second Thursday of each month. Contact Rochelle Vierra at 549-3461 or [Rochelle\\_Vierra@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Rochelle_Vierra@dot.ca.gov) for more information.

Cal Poly's **Society of Civil Engineers (SCE)** welcomes local professionals to its regular meetings held alternate Wednesdays at 7:00 pm in Room 13-118. For further information, contact Greg Ray ([gray@pismobeach.org](mailto:gray@pismobeach.org)) or Kari Wagner ([kariw@WallaceGroup.us](mailto:kariw@WallaceGroup.us)).

The Central Coast Chapter of the **International Code Council** meets the first Thursday of the month at Margie's Dinner. Contact Sylvia Aldana at 781-4671 for information.

The **American Institute of Architects** meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Vista Grande Restaurant (Cal Poly). For information, call Jeff Emrick at 549-8658.

The **Central Coast Geological Society** meets every second Tuesday. For information, contact Lou Blanck at 542-4626.

ASCE BRANCH OFFICERS

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Visit The ASCE Central Coast Website at:

[www.ASCESLO.org](http://www.ASCESLO.org)

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