

MAY 2007 MEETING:

Annual Combined ASCE/SCE Meeting

The Cal Poly ASCE student chapter will be co-hosting the May meeting, and they have a great presentation in store for you! You will be hearing from three outstanding Cal Poly civil engineering students that comprise the group "SLOMobility". They will present on the design of a futuristic transportation system in downtown Los Angeles. In the year 2106, major cities will be revolutionized to meet the substantial population growth our world is witnessing. This impressive presentation places perspective on our population problem, while providing an antidote to solve it.

The SLOMobility team traveled to Los Angeles to compete in a national competition sponsored by The History Channel and IBM. Competing against other university teams, our own Cal Poly students came away with a first place finish. Their ingenuity and outside-the-box thinking produced ideas that you will find quite fascinating. Cal Poly is extremely pleased to be associated with such outstanding students. On May 17, 2007 at the Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo, you will witness the imagination and inspiration that is SLOMobility!

MAY 2007 MEETING

LOCATION:

Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road
San Luis Obispo, CA

DATE & TIME:

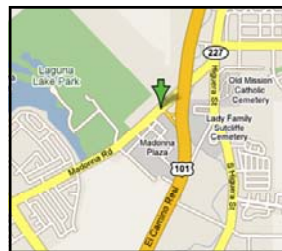
Thursday, May 17th
12:00 pm (Noon)

MENU:

Food will be your choice of Roast Sirloin of Beef with whipped potatoes served au jus, Boneless Chicken Breast stuffed with wild rice dressing served with whipped potatoes, or fresh Vegetarian pasta with marinara sauce. Entrees are served with green salad, homemade dinner rolls, and vegetables, along with coffee, iced tea, or milk, and a dessert from the bakery.

RESERVATIONS:

Please sign up by 1:00 pm Friday, May 11th, at the Branch web site www.ASCESLO.org. For questions, contact Nola Engelskirger at 805-788-2100 or by email at nengelskirger@co.slo.ca.us. The cost is \$15 for members or guests and \$6 for student members.



PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE:

Honoring Memories and Looking Forward

As I write this month's article, I and several fellow officers are busy working on details for our upcoming combined ASCE/SCE meeting. Our annual combined meetings provide a chance to reflect on our college days while celebrating the accomplishments of a new generation of students as they prepare to embark on their new careers. As with last year, we will be awarding our Branch scholarships. Events of the past several weeks have provided a somewhat somber backdrop to the planning and preparation for the upcoming meeting.

First, I was recently notified that John L. Merriam passed away at his home this past February at the age of 95. In addition to being a Fellow grade in ASCE (according to our records, he joined in 1938), Mr. Merriam was recognized as being an internationally known authority on irrigation and water systems who also taught at Cal Poly SLO for 20 years. Many of you may remember his presentation on the topic of agricultural irrigation system design in developing countries at our October 2002 luncheon. During his time at Cal Poly, he was recognized as Outstanding Professor and was honored by having a campus facility named after him, the J. L. Merriam Irrigation Practices Field, a state-of-the-art teaching and research facility. Among his many honors, Mr. Merriam received a Certificate of Appreciation by the California State Department of Water Resources for more than six decades of service to irrigation.

In addition to our local engineering community's loss of Mr. Merriam, the ASCE national website is highlighting an aspect of the recent Virginia Tech tragedy that largely escaped notice by the mainstream media. Among those killed on that day, Virginia Tech's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) and the worldwide civil engineering family lost a dedicated and seasoned professor, Dr. G.V. Loganathan, and eight promising young students. According to the website, Dr. Loganathan was a long-time ASCE member who took an active role in the Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI), and each of the students was dedicated to engineering, some having traveled across the world to receive a quality education at Virginia Tech. ASCE has developed a special tribute page and condolences book dedicated to Dr. Loganathan and the students which is accessible from the ASCE national home page. Friday, April 27, ASCE National President-Elect David Mongan participated in the memorial service conducted by Virginia Tech's Charles Edward Via, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) to honor and remember those lost in the tragedy. In his remarks, he said:

(Continued on page 3)

MEET THE MEMBER - CHRISTOPHER ALAKEL**CLIMBING THE PINNACLE OF PARENTHOOD**

Meet Christopher Alakel - Senior Engineer with Boyle Engineering in San Luis Obispo.

Like many local engineers, he's a graduate of Cal Poly, and like many others, he spent some time away before returning to the central coast.

Leaving CalPoly with a bachelors in Civil Engineering in 1997, he went to work for Bechtel - and started to travel. Work (groundwater remediation treatment trains, preliminary designs and cost estimates) took Christopher to Germany, Italy, and eventually Albania. While there Christopher was part of his most interesting engineering project - assisting the US Air Force in the construction of "Camp Hope" an Albanian refugee camp for 20,000 people. His efforts focused on the design and construction of water filtration systems used to ensure the safety of drinking water supplies.



Christopher climbing Tollhouse Cliff

Work brought travel, and travel brought his future wife Sigrid. And so traveling brought an end to traveling. Christopher settled down in the Bay area and worked for Silicon Graphics (SGI) as a manufacturing program manager. He remained connected to SGI throughout graduate school where he earned an MBA and an MS in Engineering Management. But the dot-com bust hit just as he finished grad school. Encouraged by a friend, he decided to accept a job offer from Boyle Engineering.

He enjoys his work. "Boyle will allow people as much responsibility as they can handle, but they won't just 'dump' it on you." He notes that Boyle has a huge pool of resources: "a depth of expertise that an engineer can call on when needed."

He enjoys mountain biking and rock climbing, and takes advantage of all the local resources for those pursuits. But the BIG NEWS is that he's a NEW DAD. (Of course Sigrid helped by bringing little Leila into the world, but he was there to take all the pictures.)

Christopher hopes to see the local ASCE chapter establish a stronger professional society, providing a venue for professional development and networking. He advises young engineers, "get as much design experience as you can early in your career, because as you advance and get more involved in project management, you'll do less and less design. The more you know about technical aspects, the better manager you'll be."

LUNCH MONEY - \$

The day has come to raise our luncheon fees from \$15 to \$20 per member, and from \$6 to \$10 per student members. The new fees will be implemented starting in June. For years now, there has been discussion amongst the officers on if we should raise the lunch fees and now we have no choice. All the restaurants that we frequent (Rosa's, AJ Spurs, and Marie Callender's) and the ones we don't, have raised their menu prices. The good ol' days are over and it is no longer possible to get a banquet lunch for less than \$15.

For several meetings now, our local branch has been subsidizing the extra cost of these luncheons, which we feel has been a good member benefit. However, since we do not differentiate between members and guests at our luncheons, the benefit is not provided to members only, but to all guests as well. Therefore, we would like to pursue a much better use of the branch funds that will benefit our local branch and/or our local community.

By raising the luncheon fees, we will significantly reduce the amount the branch is subsidizing lunches. This will increase the available branch funds so that we may continue to provide the annual SCE donation of \$500 and award the

annual student scholarship of \$1,500. We'll be able to continue providing an annual seminar on new technologies or job skills that are of interest to the branch members. In addition, we'll be able to continue presenting gifts to the volunteer lunch speakers and provide breakfast and refreshments for our Adopt-a-Highway clean-up volunteers. And in the future, to show appreciation for our participating members, the branch officers have goals to add an annual picnic or an evening banquet to our standard repertoire.

In order to ensure that we were in line with other branch lunch fees, we compared our proposed fees with those for San Joaquin (\$15/member), Santa Barbara (\$20/member), Los Angeles (\$30/member), and Orange County (\$40/member). Locally, our new lunch fees are comparable to those for the American Public Works Association (APWA) Central Coast Chapter at \$20 per member.

It may seem a little tough at first to swallow the new lunch fee, but in the end we'll all benefit from the improved use of our branch funds. The branch officers would like to thank you for your continued participation.

TORT LIABILITY WEBINAR - PART II
Tuesday, May 8, 2007 · 9:00 to 10:30 am

Location: County Government Center, Room 271
1055 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo

Cost: \$10 per day (Cash or Checks payable to ASCE will be taken at the door or can be mailed to Courtney Howard, c/o County Government Center, Room 207, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408)

PART II: THE CIVIL ENGINEER'S ROLE AS A WITNESS

This session examines the civil engineer's role in legal process involving lawsuits. Each step beginning with pre-trial discovery, responding to interrogatories, production of documents, giving depositions, the various forms of evidence and preparing for trial are discussed in detail.

PRESIDENTS PERSPECTIVE (CONT)

"The ASCE community holds the highest regard for the accomplished young people who are no longer with us, taken in the prime of their lives. It is difficult to fathom this tragedy and loss. We can only offer to their families, their friends and the entire Virginia Tech community the solace that they were pursuing the noblest of professions. They were about to dedicate their lives to serving mankind and improving the quality of life for humankind everywhere. We can honor their memory and spirit by doing no less."

In a common theme this month of honoring memories and looking forward, at the request of the SCE chapter we will also be having an Order of the Engineer Ring Ceremony at this month's luncheon. According to literature provided by the Program Coordinator at ASCE headquarters, The Order of the Engineer was initiated in the United States "to foster a spirit of pride and responsibility in the engineering profession, to bridge the gap between training and experience, and to present to the public a visible symbol identifying the engineer." Our Branch sponsored such a ceremony a few years ago which was well received, with numerous participants. Additional information regarding the Order and eligibility for participation is available at the ASCE national website: <http://www.asce.org/professional/orderengineer.cfm>. If you are interested in participating in the event, please send me an e-mail at jwerst@co.slo.ca.us.

~ Jeff Werst

UPCOMING ASCE CONTINUING ED. SEMINARS

- **Soil & Rock Slope Stability**
May 17-18 ~ San Diego
- **Seismic Design of Liquid Storage Tanks**
May 18 ~ San Diego
- **Bridge Rehabilitation**
June 28-29 ~ Los Angeles

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.

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.

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 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 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) or Kari Wagner (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.

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www.ASCESLO.org


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