



ASCE American Society of Civil Engineers

WISCONSIN SECTION NEWSLETTER

June 2009

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008 – 2009

President

Gary M. Amel, P.E.
GAmel@foth.com

President Elect

Richard A. Schneider, P.E.
raschneider3@matcmadison.edu

Vice President

William J. Meyer, P.E.
Bill.Meyer@aecom.com

Secretary

Peter Nilles, P.E.
peter.nilles@meadhunt.com

Treasurer

William W. Wuellner, P.E.
bwuellner@ccqinc.net

Past President

John G. Burgan, P.E.
jburgan@arnoldandosherridan.com

Directors-at-Large

Michelle M Snyder-Lambrecht, P.E.
mlambrecht@bloomcos.com

Jeffrey C. Gerbensky, P.E.
jeffg@berghammer.com

Brian Udovich, P.E.
brian.udovich@rasmithnational.com

John Bainter, P.E.

jbainter@emcsinc.com

Fox River Valley Branch Director

Joel A. Ehrfurth, P.E.
jehrfurth@mach-iv.com

Southwest Branch Director

Jon H. Lindert, P.E.
jon.lindert@strand.com

Northwest Branch Director

Brian Schroeder, P.E.
schroederb@AyresAssociates.com

Southeast Branch Director

Uriah Wolfe
uriah.j.wolfe@gasai.com

Webmaster

Martin J. Hanson, P.E.
HansonM@AyresAssociates.com

Newsletter Editor

William Meyer, P.E.
Bill.Meyer@aecom.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings.

I hope this finds you all ready for the summer that finally seems to have arrived. I'd like to tell you about the Sister Section Program that ASCE has launched. What sort of images does a Sister Section bring to your mind? Does it conjure up images of a bond between a brother and sister? In my personal case, it was less like a bond and more like bondage when, as a child, my older sisters tied a rope around my waist and forced me to pull them around on their roller skates like some beast of burden. That's not the image ASCE is promoting. Perhaps it's more like a relationship between two sisters, sharing a common ancestry and upbringing... Once again, in my case, there was little of this commonality. One of my sisters is blond, a strict conservative, likes dogs, and her favorite musician is John Denver. The other is a red head, a political liberal, owns two cats, and thinks Bob Dylan should receive the Nobel Peace Prize.



No, the true goal of the Sister Section Program is to establish a relationship between domestic Sections in Regions 1 through 9 with the international Sections in Region 10. There are currently 16 Sections in Region 10 that are interested in a Sister Section relationship with a domestic Section. If you're interested in representing the Wisconsin Section in this pioneering program, please contact me (email address below), or get in touch with Ms. Meggan Maughan-Brown (mmaughan-brown@asce.org) or Ms. Nancy Ibanez (nibanez@asce.org). Your involvement can be as complex as sharing best practices and solutions with our colleagues from Region 10, or as simple as an occasional e-mail message. Maybe you can even share stories about your siblings...

Have a great summer!

Gary (GAmel@foth.com)

This Newsletter has an awards theme. All of these awards are important for their celebration of the contributions we as civil engineers make to our society.

SECTION AWARDS NOMINATIONS

We are running late in requesting nominations for Section Awards this year. Usually, nominations are due June 1. The Newsletter Editor, being administratively deficient, accepts responsibility for neglecting to include this in a prior Newsletter. He did not intend to put the judges under a time crunch, but that will be the sad consequence. **The new deadline for submittals will be Wednesday, July 8.** Here are the awards for which nominations are sought:

Four Engineering Achievement Award Categories, based on the following project construction costs:

- A. Less than \$2 Million
- B. \$2 Million—\$10 Million
- C. \$10 Million—\$20 Million
- D. Greater than \$20 Million

Six Individual Merit Awards, based on the following categories:

- Distinguished Service Award
- Young Civil Engineer Award
- Engineer in Education
- Engineer in Consulting
- Engineer in Government
- Engineer in Private Practice

Detailed descriptions of the award criteria, submittal requirements, and nomination forms are on the Wisconsin Section's website at http://sections.asce.org/wisconsin/wi_asce.html. At that website, first click on the "Current Events" box on the left side of the web page, then on the "Section Awards" link that then becomes visible below Current Events. Scroll down the page past the announcements of 2006 awards (yes the website is out of date—we're working on it!) and you will find links to information about each award. **Again, nominations are due July 8, 2009. Submit nominations to Section Secretary Peter Nilles at peter.nilles@meadhunt.com.**

Award recipients will be announced at the Section Annual Meeting and Conference at the Olympia Resort in Oconomowoc, on Friday September 11, 2009. Winners will be advised in advance, of course, and invited to the September 11 Annual Meeting.

BALLOTS COMING SOON!

ASCE WISCONSIN OFFICER ELECTIONS
WILL SOON BE UNDER WAY. BALLOTS
AND BIOS OF CANDIDATES WILL BE
MAILED SOON !

UW-MADISON'S JEFFREY S. RUSSELL ELEVATED TO DISTINGUISHED MEMBER

In late April, the ASCE National Board of Direction voted to elevate Wisconsin Section member Jeffrey S. Russell, PhD., P.E., to the grade of Distinguished Member of ASCE. Under ASCE rules, no more than 1 member per 7,500 voting members may be elected as Distinguished Member during any one year so the potential number of candidates is very small. Lest you say, "So what?", consider the rarity with which this status is given. Of the current ASCE worldwide membership of about 144,000, there are less than 200 living Distinguished Members and fewer than 600 members have held this grade in the 156 year history of ASCE. While Dr Russell may not want us to bow down to him, we should certainly tip our hats to this leader among leaders.

NATIONAL YOUNGER MEMBER EMPLOYER RECOGNITION AWARD

The ASCE National Committee on Younger Members is seeking nominations for the 2009 Younger Member Employer Recognition Award.

The Employer Recognition Award was created to recognize **employers** who support young engineers and assist with their personal development. CYM also awards two Superior Employer Recognition Awards (one public, one private) to the nominees who best display exemplary support of young engineers in their organizations. A list of winning organizations will be submitted for publication in ASCE News and included in the Younger Member Newsletter.

Nominations must be postmarked by August 1, 2009. The nomination form, which describes the award in detail, is available for download on the Committee on Younger Members Awards page <http://www.asce.org/files/doc/pressroom/honors/2009EmployerRecognitionApplication.doc>.

No, this is not intended as a way for younger members to curry favor with their bosses, but if it has that side benefit, so be it! ASCE recognizes the importance of employers in encouraging young civil engineers to develop their technical and leadership abilities. This is one way of doing so.

SECTION WEBSITE UPDATE

The Section Board is still in the process of updating this resource to provide more current information on events, newsletters, contacts, email addresses, and board meeting minutes. We'll get there! Our webmaster has gone through an extended illness, and we are grateful that he is recovering. He has put together a draft layout for a new site, and the Board is creating procedures for keeping the content current. What a concept!

Website Address:

http://sections.asce.org/wisconsin/wi_asce.html

PRESENTERS WANTED!

Are you interested in presenting a technical or project talk at the 2009 Annual Meeting on Friday, September 11 at the Olympia Resort & Conference Center in Oconomowoc? If interested, please contact Kevin Wood at kevin.wood@graef-usa.com or (414)266-9144—the sooner the better! Speakers can attend the meeting and eat lunch for free.

Who says there is no such thing as a free lunch? Here is a way to get a free lunch and share (or show off) your knowledge, lessons learned, or any other item of professional interest to civil engineers.

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

Past Wisconsin Section Treasurer, Van E. Komurka, P.E., recently received the Professional Engineer's Service Award from the Pile Driving Contractors Association ("PDCA"). The award was presented in recognition of outstanding contributions to the PDCA and the driven pile industry. Mr. Komurka's work has promoted better understanding of soil/pile set-up and deep-foundations' costs, while his publications and presentations have enhanced the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of driven piles. Congratulations, Van!

MORE NOMINATIONS WANTED! **SECTION AND BRANCH NEWSLETTERS**

It's time to submit for the 2009 Outstanding Section and Branch Newsletter Award. The Committee on Geographic Units selects Outstanding Newsletters from the following categories: Very large Sections and Branches >2,500; Large Sections and Branches 1,001-2500; Medium Sections and Branches 501-1,000; Small Sections and Branches <501.

The Judging Committee is attached for your use. Please enter your newsletter by mailing a hard copy to the committee member judging your newsletter category. You are permitted to mail as many issues as you desire, but a minimum of three issues must be submitted for eligibility to compete. The deadline for entries is November 1, 2009.

The overall evaluation categories are based on newsletter format, newsletter content, and special features.

The award in each category will be presented to the recipients at their respective 2010 Multi Region Leadership Conference. Additional Section and Branch Newsletter Award information and the contact information for the judges may be found at ASCE's web site at http://www.asce.org/inside/sec_brnch.cfm. Toward the bottom of this web page you'll find a link to the newsletter awards

When you submit your Newsletter, it is recommended that you email your respective judge on the attached roster to verify receipt of your newsletter.

NOMINATION OF ASCE REGION 3 GOVERNOR

Later this summer, the Region 3 Board of Governors will elect a person to fill the position of Region 3 Governor at Large (Governor No. 1). The term will begin in the fall of 2009 and end in the fall of 2012. Amy Thorsen of the Duluth Section, the current Governor 1 representing the various Sections and Branches of the Region was elected in 2006. Although eligible to serve one more 3-year elected term, Governor Thorsen has indicated that she does not wish to do so.

Section or Branch Boards are encouraged to submit nominees for the position of Region 3 Governor at Large. Under ASCE National Bylaw Section 6.2, the minimum qualifications to serve as a Region Governor are:

- A Society member in good standing.
- Have an address of record within Region 3.
- Must have served as a Section or Branch officer OR as a member of a Section or Branch committee OR as a member of a national committee of the Society.
- Cannot be serving or pursuing a nomination as a Technical Region Governor.

Additionally, a Governor “should have professional credibility with leadership skills, management experience, and significant career accomplishments; should be a confident communicator and presenter, a visionary planner, and a motivator; and possess the ability to work in teams, be a negotiator, conflict manager and consensus builder”. Additionally, Governors shall have “skills in communicating with members and the public, in government relations and advocacy, and in conducting events that will engage and serve members.”

Candidates for the Region 3 Board of Governors shall be either:

- Proposed to the Region 3 Board of Direction by an Organizational Entity; OR
- Any member meeting the minimum qualifications may self-declare direct to the Region 3 Board of Directors.

No more than 1 candidate may be put forward by any Organizational Entity.

Individual members wishing to see a specific person nominated should contact Section or Branch leaders and identify the potential candidate.

Nominations must be received by ASCE National Director Thomas Walther no later than July 15, 2009. Since the next Section Board meeting is July 21, the Board will consider any suggested nominees via email. Please do not hesitate to suggest qualified individuals (with their consent of course). If you have someone in mind, please contact either Gary Amel at GAmel@foth.com or Bill Meyer at Bill.Meyer@aecom.com soon. Information needed to support the nomination includes: a nomination letter from the nominating entity (e.g. Section); a one-page letter from the candidate indicating a commitment to serve; a resume documenting that the minimum qualifications are met; and a passport-type photo for publication (hopefully looking better than most passport photos seen by the Newsletter Editor).

EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

SECTION AWARD NOMINATION

There are some excellent journalists covering our engineering projects, and ASCE wishes to encourage them in their endeavor to accurately report on technical and professional issues. To that end, ASCE has created the "Excellence in Journalism" award. This annual award is given to an author or coauthors of a news story worthy of recognition. The news story must:

- A. Cover all sides of the civil engineering issues fairly
- B. Accurately describe the engineering project or issues
- C. Advance public knowledge and understanding of civil engineering in Wisconsin
- D. Effectively explain how the outcome of an issue benefits the community or the state
- E. Clearly describe the civil engineer's role
- F. Include professionals knowledgeable of civil engineering

Detailed descriptions of the award criteria, submittal requirements, and nomination forms are on the Wisconsin Section's website at http://sections.asce.org/wisconsin/wi_asce.html. At that website, first click on the "Current Events" box on the left side of the web page, then on the "Section Awards" link that then becomes visible below Current Events. Scroll down the page past the announcements of 2006 awards (yes the website is out of date—we're working on it!) and you will find links to information about each award. **Again, nominations are due July 8, 2009.** Submit nominations to Section Secretary Peter Nilles at peter.nilles@meadhunt.com.

Articles from general (non-trade) print media are eligible. However, TV, motion picture, books, photo-journalism, and similar journalistic activities may also be considered. Stories must appear between March 31 of the current year and April 1 of the previous year. Stories must appear in English and have a Wisconsin context or connection. Single stories or series are eligible. A series counts as a single entry.

QUALIFICATIONS BASED SELECTION

UNDER ATTACK AGAIN (OR YET)

In Texas and in West Virginia, recent legislative efforts have been put forth to eliminate Qualifications-Based Selection procedures from procurement of professional services. This is a subject that arises frequently and in varying jurisdictions. It's OK that the subject arises—it presents us with an opportunity to explain yet again why engineering services (and individual hires) should be based on qualifications and not whoever will claim to be cheapest. You get what you pay for! The engineer's role has a huge impact on overall project cost. If cost becomes the basis for selection of engineers, overall project costs will in many cases increase as engineering effort or expertise on the project decreases due to fee-based selection.

ASCE believes that the selection of professional engineers as prime consultants and subconsultants should be based on the qualifications of the engineering firm. Qualifications including training, experience, capabilities, personnel and workloads should be evaluated when selecting an engineering firm. Cost of engineering services, while important and meriting careful negotiations, is related to work to be performed, which often is not clearly defined at the time the engineer is selected. Therefore, selecting consultants based on cost is not recommended. (ASCE Policy Statement 304).

MEYER'S MUSINGS

(Thoughts by Newsletter Editor William Meyer, who bears full responsibility for their insightfulness or lack thereof.)

This Newsletter features many articles related to awards—solicitation for nominations and also recognition of awards given. It is important that we as civil engineers take some time and think about the benefits civil engineers have brought to the world. This is not for purposes of boasting, as we are only developing and using abilities given to us, and in circumstances largely out of our control. The reasons for stepping out of ourselves to think about benefits we bring are nonetheless numerous.

One such benefit, and I believe the most important, is that it stimulates our motivation. We've heard a lot about stimulus packages lately, but nothing is so stimulating as to recognize that what we do MATTERS. Civil engineering is the application of physical science in such a way as to affect society. It is up to society to decide which affects are beneficial and which are detrimental. There are many necessary debates these days (and there always have been) about the tradeoffs between cost and benefits of various types of project undertakings. Civil engineers should be a part of those debates, of course, as we are often the ones implementing the decisions. Sometime we won't agree with the standards of benefit and detriment that society applies to the development and maintenance of civil works. Nonetheless, as we work within the confines of current societal expectations (as expressed through regulatory agencies, project funding, and consumer spending habits), what we do has long term affect on society.

This imposes a responsibility upon us. It also gives us reason to think about and celebrate what we do. These awards, which often come across as "tooting one's own horn", might have some element of that. But our pride in what we do is what keeps us going. We matter! When someone else's project gets an award, celebrate not only their success. But know at the same time you are also celebrating your own success as a dedicated, civil engineering professional. At the Section Awards during September Annual Meeting, I will, Lord willing, be there celebrating each of you!

REMINDER TO SAVE THE DATE!

ASCE WISCONSIN SECTION ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2009 AT THE OLYMPIA RESORT IN OCONOMOWOC. MORE INFORMATION WILL BE SENT BY MAIL. *BUT MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!*

Wisconsin Section
ASCE **American Society**
of Civil Engineers

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Madison, WI
PERMIT NO. 304

Wisconsin Section—ASCE

Addressed to an Important ASCE Member

c/o: William J. Meyer, P.E.
AECOM
3909 Concord Avenue
Weston, WI 54476