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Presidents Message

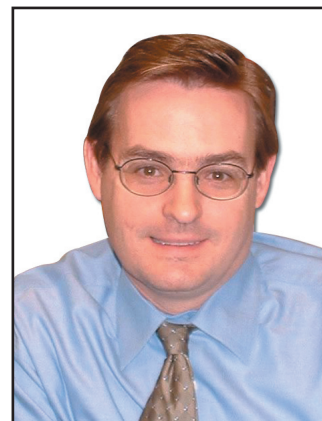
Jerry Burke

Hi, I'm Jerry Burke, President of your Branch of ASCE. Let me introduce you to the rest of your Board: Past President is Jay Higgins, Cung Nguyen is the President-Elect, Karen Foust is Vice President, Sam Nabbout is Treasurer and James Wei is Secretary. We work for you, the members.

One way we're working for you is by beginning a monthly luncheon series. Come and meet your peers and build a network of friends to build your professional development and hear a relevant talk by one of our prominent local leaders. Watch your email for announcements or check our website at www.metrolabranch.com.

Another opportunity your Branch offers is monthly tours or lectures. Recently we were given a tour of USC's Galen Center, currently under construction. These tours always provide an interesting behind the scenes look at a local construction project.

There are many more opportunities for our Branch to undertake, but they require involvement from members. Our local schools are full of opportunities to share engineering with elementary, middle and high school students. We have committees to get involved in shaping public policy and government affairs.



Right now with our limited involvement, we are focusing on monthly speakers and construction project tours. If you would like to see more public policy events or technical groups (pipeline, water, etc), we need you to do two things:

1. Let us know what you feel we could do to improve service to you.
2. Be willing to take part in making it happen.

Without your ideas and, most importantly, you, our Branch will probably stay the way it is. With you we can become a branch that serves, educates and prepares our membership to become better Civil Engineers.

Tours and Luncheons Boost MLAB Service to their Membership

Although it is the largest of seven Los Angeles Section Branches, MLAB is still a relatively young organization. One challenge of a large membership (over 3000) is service without years of volunteer leadership already in place. The Branch is so large our members falsely expect an unlimited source of volunteers. Unfortunately, this is not true. This situation is gradually improving. Members such as our new Program Co-Chairs Terri Grant and Monique Aguilar, are helping the Branch by volunteering their time and energy to this cause.

For example, this year's success with programs actually began last year, as success often comes from good preparation. Past President, Jay Higgins, assisted the Board during his term as President to clearly define the structure and expectations of each Committee Chair. Together the rest of the Board assisted the Chairmen in adding volunteers to their staff so that the workload is shared. This way the Chair can direct and delegate rather than handling everything alone.

The next step was to divide the Programs Committee into two parts: one that handles special events and tours, and one that coordinates a monthly luncheon. Terri is employed by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and chairs the tours, while Monique is from DMJM Harris and coordinates our monthly luncheons

In contrast to the tours, the goal of the monthly luncheon was to facilitate networking with leaders in local agencies. The Branch was very pleased that Councilman Tom La Bonge of the 4th District agreed to speak at the first luncheon in a six-month series for 2006. Mr. La Bonge briefed the group of more than 45 engineers on the history of Los Angeles and his vision to improve infrastructure in the future.

The keynote speaker at February's luncheon was Don Wolfe, Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, who gave an interesting speech to over 80 attendees. Mr. Wolfe shared the challenges of directing a large county organization. One challenge is to effectively reach the citizens of the unincorporated areas of the County. His vision is to create one-stop centers for public services in the area the County serves, similar to how local cities have staff and facilities accessible to their taxpayers. Mr. Wolfe believes that every citizen served by the County should have easy access to services offered. In addition, Mr. Wolfe spoke of the challenges in coordinating their efforts with the many cities within the County as well as allocating services based upon an annual budget of over \$1 billion dollars.

During the question and answer period, Shahram Vahdat, Associate Vice President at DMJM Harris, inquired as to whether Mr. Wolfe felt that Los Angeles County receives its "fair share" of the State's budget. Mr. Wolfe cited the confusion in even the minds of legislators regarding the difference between the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County DPW when it comes to fund distribution. He added that the County of Los Angeles and southern California do not always get its fair share of the state budget. He mentioned that southern California representatives must unify to use their power effectively. After the luncheon Mr. Wolfe graciously stayed and spoke with engineers and consultants. He answered numerous questions and made himself available for further discussion.

See TOURS, page 5

High School Mousetrap Racecar Competition



On December 13, 2005, the Bureau of Engineering and the Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch of ASCE hosted the Fifth Annual Mousetrap Racecar Competition at Belmont High School. The mousetrap racecar competition is one of a series of technical competitions the BOE and ASCE sponsors to reach out to students in Los Angeles High Schools. The objective is to encourage high school students to pursue careers in engineering, science, and mathematics.

During the past few months, the following volunteers from the BOE visited their assigned schools multiple times to mentor students: Ansar Mustafa, Hassan Masoud, Ignacio Villa, Kelvin Hoang, Kesavan Korand, Samuel Alvarado, Wanda Lam, Mina Azarnia, Sean Flynn, and Christine Keushguerian. During the visits, the mentors gave the students an overview of the competition and rules of the event. The mentors also presented the students with kits to build the mousetrap racecars and tips on designing the racecars to perform ideally.

The project manager for the contest was Vince Shavers, who did an outstanding job lining up the schools, coordinating the teachers and mentors, designing the contest, securing the contest site, etc., etc. Lauren Skinner of the Public Affairs Office handled numerous outreach activities, including the speakers, trophies, prizes, and refreshments.

On race day, two or three teams from the following high schools competed: Belmont, Dorsey, Jordan, Community Harvest Charter, Lewis Continuation, and Southeast High. Each team consisted of about two students with the racecar they had designed and built. The race competition consisted of multiple heats of a double elimination tournament. Each heat matched two teams racing across the floor of the auditorium - set up like a drag strip. The racecar that traveled the furthest was declared the winner of that heat. The winners advanced to the next round, while the losers were given a second chance in the losers' bracket. The student participation was outstanding, and the races were exciting! Jonathan Cuevas designed the tournament brackets and assigned the teams to participate in each race.

The first place trophy went to a team from Community Harvest Charter High School, mentored by Ansar Mustafa. The second place trophy was won by South East High School of South Gate, and the third place trophy went to a team from Belmont High, mentored by Wanda Lam and Mina Azarnia. In addition, a first place design-appearance trophy was awarded to a participant of Southeast High. The trophy winners also received a Target gift certificate and a medal. All of the participants were given gift bags, including pens and bags donated by ASCE.

See HIGH SCHOOL, page 4

Regional US&R Team Forming

Area "C" US&R Regional Task Force, including Glendale, Pasadena, Arcadia, Monrovia, San Gabriel, Alhambra, and several smaller cities, is recruiting civil and structural engineers for emergency incidents. Personnel for the 29 member teams will be trained in rescue systems, including: structure type and damages, shoring, trench rescue, and confined space rescues.

This is a rapid deployment team and personnel will be required to deploy within 45 minutes. It is important that you live within the close proximity of the Area "C" region.

It is preferred that applying CEs and SEs be familiar with general structures in concrete, masonry, steel, and wood. The position requires exterior evaluation and possible entry into damaged structures to assist and protect the rescue teams from dangerous conditions.

Those engineers needing information or interested in applying can contact:

Chief Martin Johnson
email:mjohnson@cityofpasadena.net
or
Rodney B. Spears, SE
email:rodneyspears@earthlink.net

High School

Continued from page 3

Prior to the contests, the following speakers gave words of encouragement to the students: Joseph Bernardo of CD-13, Carlos Alvarado of Mayor Villaraigosa's Office, Commissioner Valerie Shaw, Cung Nguyen, President Elect of ASCE Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch, and Gary Lee Moore, the City Engineer from the City of Los Angeles. John Saldin handled the speaker introductions and PA announcements.

The contest expenses were paid through generous contributions received from the following sponsors: Camp Dresser & McKee, Harris & Associates, and PBS&J. Contributions were also received from Black & Veatch, Cadstar, Inc., DMJM Harris, HDR Engineering, Inc., Jacobs Associates, MARRS Services, Inc., and URS Corporation.

Our next technical contest will be the Bridge Building contest, which will be held in late February or early March. If you would like to volunteer for upcoming contests please contact Vince Shavers at 213-847-9687, Shirish Mistry at 847-8952, or John Saldin at 213-847-8556.

WANTED

*Please send your papers, outstanding projects or interesting projects
to the newsletter editor for inclusion in the
MLAB newsletter.*

We appreciate your input.

ASCE Supports 'Mad Science' for Kids

By Susan Andriacchi

On February 23, 2006 over 400 students in grades pre-K through 2 at Cabrillo Elementary School in Hawthorne had some eye-opening experiences. "Mad Bob" from Mad Science of Los Angeles was the star of an assembly that introduced basic scientific concepts in an entertaining format. The assembly was co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch of ASCE and the Coastal Los Angeles Section of IEEE.

The students learned about Newton's Laws of Motion in language they could understand—objects at rest tend to stay at rest unless something moves them; the harder you throw something, the faster and farther it goes; and for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. These concepts were hilariously demonstrated with a punching bag named Rocky and "Newton's Rocket Car," a small cart propelled by a fire extinguisher.

Mad Bob also demonstrated centrifugal force with his "anti-gravity device" (a plate attached to three strings used to swing around cups of water), exothermic reactions using a "genie in a bottle" (hydrogen peroxide and manganese dioxide), and angular momentum with a "bungee-jumping flask."

The goal of the assembly was to spark kids' interest in science and mathematics, and judging by their reactions to Bob's experiments they were VERY interested. Even if the children do not remember Newton's laws or the definition of angular momentum, they will remember that science is cool and fun.

Tours

Continued from page 2

The first tour occurring earlier this year was a great success with over 100 attendees. With the help of Bruce Hamamoto, LADPW, a tour of USC's Galen Center was organized while it is still under construction. The Branch would like to thank Professor Hank Koffman, Director of USC's Construction Management Program, and Stan Westfall, Project Manager of USC's Capital Construction Development for arranging and leading the tour, respectively. The Galen Center will be the new home of USC's Men and Women Basketball and Volleyball teams with a seating capacity of 10,200. Its opening is scheduled for fall of 2007. For the month of February, Terri has arranged a tour of the LADPW's headquarters building seismic retrofit project.



MLAB is continuing to offer new opportunities for members. Today, there are more ways that ASCE can be an integral part of your personal and professional development. Although the monthly tours and events will vary in day and time, the luncheons are held every second Thursday of the month through June of this year. If you are interested in learning more about some of all these programs, or wish to volunteer, please send an e-mail to metrolabbranch@yahoo.com.

ASCE Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch Awards

Do you know of outstanding Civil Engineers that through their efforts further advance the field of civil engineering? What about civil engineering projects that showcase innovative ideas that improve the quality of life for the public? We all do and this is your opportunity to recognize these Civil Engineers and projects.

Each year the Branch awards outstanding Civil Engineers and projects for their contributions to ASCE, the civil engineering community, and the public. Nominations are now welcome for the 2005-06 Fiscal Year in the following categories:

- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Government
- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Private Sector
- Outstanding Civil Engineer in Community Service
- Outstanding Younger Civil Engineer
- Student Chapter Practitioner Advisor Award
- Student Chapter Faculty Advisor Award
- Awards for Technical Excellence
- Outstanding Government Civil Engineering Project
- Outstanding Private Sector Civil Engineering Project
- Outstanding Public/Private Sector Civil Engineering Project
- Life Member Achievement Award

Please note that nominees must be members of the Branch and that projects need to be located within Los Angeles County. You may submit your nominations to:

Hector J. Bordas
Chair, Awards Committee
LA County Dept. of Public Works
Programs Development Division, 11th Floor
900 S. Fremont Ave.
Alhambra, CA 91803

Nominations will be accepted through June 30, 2006. For information regarding the awards, please visit the Branch website at <http://www.metrolabbranch.com/default.htm> or you may contact Hector at 626/458-5947 or hbordas@ladpw.org.

We look forward to your nominations!

MLAB would like to say welcome to our new members who have recently joined ASCE and our branch

Sean Wilson	Tracy Takemura
Christopher Larson	Carrie Douangsitthi
Anna Gov	Isaac Gindi
Steven Dassler	Roshanak Varjavand
Richard Kunnath	Daniel Bobadilla
Maihan Noorzay	Jason Flood
Dylan Blackshear	Daniel De Leon
Amitbhai Patel	Ellen Phamduong
Jenni Tran	Chris Mielke
Ahmed Haider	Cesar Lopez
Joanna Rios	Shantha Kumar
Alma Fuentes	Belagodu Subbaraju
Angela George	Ashkon Nohroodi
Stacie Takeguchi	Robert Delgadillo
Fereidoun Jahani	Long Thai
Habib Charbel	Samuel Alvarado
Maria Lopez	Aaron Freidenberg
Jason Pereira	Martha Rincon
Tracy Takemura	Tamara Nikonova
	Bong Seog Jung

ASCE, METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES BRANCH NEEDS YOUR TALENTS

The Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch is looking for interested members to serve on the following Committees:

Awards	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Membership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recording Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify above)	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are interested in serving on a Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch committee, please check the appropriate box, fill in necessary information below, and return to:

Jerry Burke, President, MLAB
 Work: 951-736-2040
 Fax: 951-736-5292
 E-mail: jburke@pencoeng.com

Name: _____

Phone: _____ FAX: _____

E-Mail: _____

Calendar of Upcoming Events

March			
14	Branch Board Meeting	5:30 p.m	LACDPW
28	DPW Seismic Retrofit Tour	3:30 p.m	Alhambra Dining Room
30	Pacific Southeast Regional Conference	5:30 p.m	UCLA
April			
11	Branch Board Meeting	5:30 p.m	LACDPW
13	Monthly Luncheon (Jeff Kightlinger_MWD)	11:15 a.m	Monterey Hill Restaurant
May			
9	Branch Board Meeting	5:30 p.m	LACDPW
11	Monthly Luncheon (Cynthia Ruiz_Board of Public Works)	11:15 a.m.	Monterey Hill Restaurant
June			
6	Branch Board Meeting	5:30 p.m	LACDPW
7	Monthly Luncheon (Rick Thorpe_MTA)	11:15 a.m.	Monterey Hill Restaurant

Newsletter Information

Please send articles or advertising information to the editor.

Andy Duong
11444 W Olympic Blvd.
Suite. 750
West Los Angeles, CA 90064
aduong@psomas.com
310-954-3763

JOIN OUR E-MAIL LIST!

Keep up to date with all the current events and announcements. Join our e-mail list. Please contact our membership chair for details.

President	Jerry Burke	951-736-2040	jburke@pencoeng.com
President-Elect	Cung Nguyen	626-458-2562	cunguyen@ladpw.org
Past President	Jay Higgins	213-996-2506	jay_higgins@urscorp.com
Vice President	Karen Foust	213-593-8577	karen.foust@dmjmharris.com
Treasurer	Sam Nabbout	626-821-3456	snabbout@saccociates.net
Secretary	James Wei	213-896-5639	weij@pbworld.com
Awards	Hector Bordas	626-458-5118	hbordas@ladpw.org
Government Affairs	Edgar Dymally	213-217-5709	edymally@mwdh2o.com
Membership	Androush Danielians	213-593-8402	androush.danielians@dmjmharris.com
Newsletter Editor	Andy Duong	310-954-3763	aduong@psomas.com
Programs Co-Chair, Monthly luncheons	Monique Aguilar	213-593-8776	monique.aguilar@dmjmharris.com
Program Co-Chair, Tours and Events	Terri Grant	626-458-4309	tgrant@ladpw.org
Public Information	Amy So	213-482-0462	aso@lads.lacity.org
Student Activities	Julian Garcia	626-458-7958	jgarcia@ladpw.org

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.metrolabbranch.com

Membership Information

National Membership Rates (Please verify rates and grades at <http://www.asce.org/membership>)

Student Member:	Free
Associate Member:	\$50 year of baccalaureate degree and first year after, then incremental increases to \$180 over five years
Member:	\$180 annually
Affiliate Member:	\$180 annually
Fellow:	\$215 annually
Section (Branch) Dues:	\$45/year

- (1) National ASCE Student Membership is FREE! Contact your Student Chapter leaders or Faculty Advisor for additional information.
- (2) Online membership renewal available, go to www.asce.org/renewal. For non-members, dues for MLAB Newsletter only \$45/year

Please contact the Membership Chair for application forms, change of address and additional information. To update your information on-line, go to www.asce.org/myprofile

For questions on national ASCE membership contact member@asce.org

Advertising Rates

BUSINESS CARD: \$10/individual issue or \$50/6 issues

- Please send all business card Ads to the Newsletter Editor.
- Scanned business cards may be emailed to the editor at: aduong@psomas.com.
- Cards are due by the 15th of each month.
- Please send all checks (made payable to "ASCE Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch") to the Branch Newsletter Editor.

JOB LISTING: \$FREE\$

Please forward job listing to the editor through email to: aduong@psomas.com.

READY FOR A CHANGE, A CHALLENGE, A CAREER?

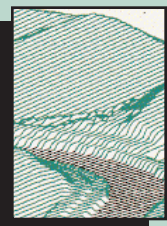
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