

Los Angeles Section

Monthly: Est. 1913

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Yazdan Emrani, P.E.
Los Angeles Section President



Transforming Civil Engineers into Political Leaders

Happy New Year! By now, most of us have finished celebrating the holidays and have started planning our goals and activities for the coming year.

As Civil Engineers we are doers. We like to “do” analysis, design, construction, etc. But, one thing that we are not too comfortable with doing is publicizing our work. We feel a well designed and constructed road, bridge, sewer line, etc. should speak for itself. Surely other people will see its beauty and application every time they utilize it. We feel that just because we live and breathe our work and can discuss the finer details of alternative design solutions with our colleagues for hours, that Non-Civil Engineers or Non-Engineers for that matter share our fascination as well.

Well, not to be a killjoy, but the reality is that most people drink clean water from their tap and drive on the roads and freeways without giving it a second thought. Furthermore, the topic of determining shear forces in a wall or setting up a perfect hydraulic model for a sewer or water network is usually not a conversation piece at the dinner table. Now, this may be fine in the context of having done an excellent job so people don't have to worry about your design. However, this does not bode well when it is time to appropriate funds for maintaining or rehabilitating our infrastructure. For that, we have to rely on “others”, namely politicians. But who are these mysterious politicians? A lot of you participate in your local legislative committees and/or do the annual ASCE legislators fly-in to Sacramento or Washington, D.C. You do the meet and greet with your local assembly member or state senator and in the case of DC Fly-in meet the staff of your local congressman or senator, and passionately discuss the need for continued investment in infrastructure. They politely listen and agree and promise to do the best they can. However, there are no guarantees that this will translate to action, because of the many different interest groups that are also competing for the same politician's attention.

The vast majority of politicians, from local to national level, are non-engineers, and many of them are not familiar with the direct relationship between infrastructure maintenance and renewal and the needed and on-going expenditures these systems require to continue making them tick. Even at the local level such as the city council or planning commission levels, you don't see many civil engineers who can be advocates for this cause.

And worse, civil engineers are a diminishing force in the top leadership posts of the state and federal agencies making critical decisions about our state and country's infrastructure. Perhaps this is because the skill set now required to guide major agencies has become increasingly complex, requiring political, fundraising, and business

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News From The Sacramento Section (First of a Series of Four)

Editor's Note: Beginning in the January 2014 issue, this Newsletter will feature one article selected by other Sections within the ASCE California Region.



CONSTRUCTION INSTITUTE

The ASCE Construction Institute (CI) Sacramento Section held its annual event on May 1, 2013 titled "Construction Forecast

and Outlook for 2013 and Beyond" at the Holiday Inn in Downtown Sacramento. Over 200 engineers, contractors, vendors, and local, state and federal officials attended the event to network and gather information related to future projects planned in the region.

The evening was kicked off with a Keynote address by the **Honorable Congresswoman Doris Matsui**. She indicated that although there are differences on Capitol Hill regarding spending, she is focusing to gain increased support of her fellow members of congress to understand the importance of funding infrastructure projects, especially those related to flood control in our region.

Congresswoman Matsui's address was followed with presentations by **Mr. Gary Bardini**, Deputy Director for the California Department of Water Resources, **Mr. Joe Calcara**, Director of Programs for the US Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division, and **Mr. Malcolm Dougherty**, Director of Caltrans. All three emphasized funding as a major challenge in navigating a project from inception to design and then to construction.

Mr. Bardini discussed the importance of the Bay-Delta program and the related projects regionally and statewide that are all tied together. Mr. Calcara illustrated how funding on infrastructure and defense has decreased over the past 75 years while spending on domestic entitlements has increased over the same period. He described projects related to flood control and infrastructure. Mr. Dougherty described California as a major transportation hub in traffic where it was essentially the gateway for commercial traffic to the interior states and presence of major metropolitan "megacities". He also highlighted the completion/near completion of complex projects in the region including the "Devils Slide", "Doyle Drive", "Caldecott Tunnel", and the iconic new span on the eastern segment of the "Bay Bridge".

The event was sponsored by Magnus Pacific Corporation, Construction Testing Services, Kiewit Construction, Granite Construction, Vali Cooper, The Dutra Group, Northstar Construction and Engineering, Sunbelt Rentals, Myers and Son Construction, and URS. All proceeds of the event will benefit the Scholarship fund.

If you are interested in finding out more information about the ASCE Construction Institute contact Louay Owaidat, the Sacramento Section CI chair, at LOwaidat@magnuspacific.com



Congresswoman Matsui speaking with the attendees.

management expertise to do an effective job. Yet these agencies are responsible for important decisions that require analytical skills and the ability to understand highly technical issues. In addition, a diverse public works agency is still grounded in the technical arena and its employees need a technically based leader they can respect and follow. Having civil engineers in top leadership posts helps to ensure sound technical decisions are made - decisions that render good policy, not just effective politics.

Now, back to my earlier question, who are these politicians? You may be surprised to find these are ordinary folks from many different backgrounds such as lawyers, doctors, business professional, social workers, but not many engineers. Well, why not?

Looking back in America's history, some of the greatest business and political leaders were engineers. The Panama Canal construction was managed entirely by engineers like John Frank Stevens. Thomas Edison is one of the most notable American engineers and businessman. Henry Ford, Jimmy Carter, Theodore Von Karman, Herbert Hoover, the list goes on. Herbert Hoover was a Civil Engineer who became our 31st President. Von Karman was an aerospace engineer who is responsible for many key advances in aerodynamics, notably his work at Caltech on supersonic and hypersonic airflow characterization. In fact the boundary between the atmosphere and space is named the Karman Line. Think about that next time you are driving on Von Karman Avenue in Irvine, which was also named after him.

Somewhere along the line, something changed. We went from electing engineers to higher office, even the presidency, to now, where even certain Public Works Director positions don't require an engineering degree. So what makes a good leader? According to Stephen Covey, there are four key ingredients that leaders must have including: inspiring trust, clarifying purpose, aligning systems and unleashing talent. Now, clarifying purpose, and aligning systems are rigorously taught and eventually become part of every engineer's DNA. Additionally, as engineers we like to think of ourselves as not only methodical but ethical individuals. Therefore, the key is to lead by example so that it inspires trust and confidence amongst our peers. Unleashing talent may not come as naturally to us but that is certainly something that can be learned. So, as a whole, not only do engineers have the basic ingredients for leadership but they have additional qualities such as being detail oriented, meticulous, and the ability to take calculated risks. Finally engineers are logical and realistic and rely on facts, not fiction or ideology to make everyday decisions. This provides them with a competitive advantage over other industry professionals. They lead by example and this ultimately helps them succeed.

Engineers are a talented bunch, so why is it that we don't have more engineers in local or national politics making decisions affecting our lives. According to Congressional Research Service, the profile of the current congress, known as the 113th Congress, includes Peace Corps volunteers, sheriffs, FBI agents, firefighters, physicists, radio talk show hosts, radio or television broadcasters, reporters, a radio station manager and a public television producer, accountants, software company executives, pilots, a screenwriter,

a comedian, and a documentary film maker, a professional football player, farmers, ranchers, social workers, car dealership owner, auto worker, insurance agent, rodeo announcer, union representative, stockbroker, welder, venture capitalist, and a funeral home owner. Would you like to know how many engineers made the list? A whopping six (6) engineers are amongst the list of 113th Congress. Engineers make up about 5 percent of the US workforce, so there are significantly fewer engineers in Congress than there are in the population as a whole.

One of these engineers is US Rep. David McKinley, P.E., earned his Bachelor's degree in civil engineering at Purdue in 1969. After graduating, he worked as an engineer for 12 years, eventually founding his own firm. A Republican, McKinley has represented West Virginia's 1st District since 2011. "The analytical skills and technological expertise developed as an engineer have been vital in Congress," says Rep. McKinley. "Engineers base decisions on facts, not ideology. That's the same approach taken in addressing issues and solving problems in Washington. It's my hope that more engineers will heed the call of public service and bring these problem-solving skills to Washington."

So how do we regain the leadership roles in areas impacting our profession? ASCE has many different tools and resources for those who do want to improve these skills. These include seminars, webinars, and publications. I would suggest that no matter what you focus on, learn how to communicate to motivate. Also, in my opinion, one of the best ways to learn is watching others who are in leadership positions, so start attending your city council or planning commission meeting, and attend your local county's board of supervisors meetings.

No matter what stage of your career you are at, I'd like to ask you to consider running for public office at some point in your life. There are a lot of local political offices that one can consider while maintaining their full-time engineering career. These include school boards, city councils, or even commissions such as planning commission, public works commission, which are usually appointed by the city council.

While we recognize that not all civil engineers have the broad perspective, experience, or even interest required to run for public office, we should, in my opinion, actively seek out, encourage, and support those civil engineers who do. Who knows, maybe the benefits of having more civil engineers in politics can only help make politics more civil.



2014 California Infrastructure Symposium and Awards Dinner

by Kwame A. Agyare, P.E., MBA, M. ASCE, Region 9 Governor – San Francisco Section



As the year 2013 draws to a close, it is always a good time to take stock of all the great work done being done in service to the civil engineering profession, by engineers all across the State. One of the many ways in which engineers may be recognized is through nomination or selection for an award at either the Section or Region level. ASCE Region 9 comprises the entire state of California, and consists of the four Sections (San Francisco, Sacramento,

San Diego and Los Angeles). I am honored to be the new Governor for Region 9 serving the San Francisco Geographic Region which spans from Monterey, Kings and Tulare Counties in the south, to Humboldt and Del Norte Counties in northern California. I am also pleased to be the current chair of the ASCE Region 9 Awards Committee whose task is to recognize engineers in fifteen individual awards categories, and twenty-one project awards categories, at the annual awards ceremony in 2014. The caliber of award nominations currently under review by the committee is a testament to the hard work and commitment that these engineers contribute on a daily basis, and I am thrilled that we have so many nominees worthy of being recognized at the Region level.

Next year's 2014 California Infrastructure Symposium and Awards Dinner will be held on Friday March 14, 2014 at the Delancey Street Foundation in San Francisco. The event is a partnership between the San Francisco Section, Section Institutes, and ASCE Region 9, and is generally envisioned to rotate through each of the Section's jurisdiction every four years. The San Francisco Section is pleased to be hosting next year's event, and efforts are well underway towards putting on a successful program in early Spring.

The Symposium will be an all-day event that is typically attended by engineers, educators, elected officials, professionals and the general public. I hope that many of you reading this will save the date and plan to attend this event that will primarily comprise two tracks:

Transportation track:

- Regional Transportation Projects including the Transbay Terminal and Bay Bridge
- New home to the 49ers, Levi Stadium – Transportation Plan
- Ports and Waterways "Goods Movement in the 22nd Century"
- Future Vision for Regional Transportation
- State Transportation Overview

Water track:

- California H2O The First 100 Years; How Did We Get Where We Are?

- California's Bay Delta Improvements: Continued Future Water Supply or Pipe Dream?
- Integrated Regional Water Management: A Path to Sustainability?
- Vision of Water for Next Century

The Symposium will be immediately followed by a networking reception that will precede the Annual Awards Banquet where outstanding Projects and Individuals in Region 9 will be presented with awards. These award recipients were selected by the Region 9 Awards Committee from almost 70 nominations received. Several past Region 9 Project Award nominees have gone on to be considered for, and win, the ASCE Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement (OCEA) award at the National level. In general, all engineers in Region 9 whether nominated or not, should be proud of the accomplishments they have achieved throughout the year, and Region 9 thanks you for your continuing commitment and service to the engineering profession.

For more information and to register for the Infrastructure Symposium or Awards Banquet, please bookmark the San Francisco Section website, www.asce-sf.org, or the Region 9 web site, <http://www.asce.org/region9>. We hope to see you in San Francisco on March 14!



2014 California Infrastructure Symposium

Important Info:

- **WHAT**
ASCE Region 9 8th Annual Infrastructure Symposium and Awards Dinner
- **WHEN**
Friday, March 14th, 2014
- **WHERE**
Delancey Street Foundation
600 The Embarcadero
San Francisco, CA 94107
- **MORE INFO**
For more info contact:
Brent Siemer, Symposium Chair
brent.siemer@gmail.com

Stay Tuned for more info and registration details!

2014 California Infrastructure Symposium & Awards Dinner

Transportation and Water Infrastructure in California – two broad and complex topics. Engineers, speakers and panelists will discuss the state and future of California's critical infrastructure. Topics include:

Transportation Track

- Regional Transportation Projects including the Transbay Terminal and Bay Bridge
- New home to the 49ers, Levi Stadium – Transportation Plan
- Ports and Waterways "Goods Movement in the 22nd Century"
- Future Vision for Regional Transportation
- State Transportation Overview

Water Track

- Regional Water Projects including Calaveras Dam and New Irvington Tunnel Project
- California Bay Delta Projects
- Water Sustainability
- Water Trends
- Public/Private Partnerships and the Park Presidio Project
- Regional Water Vision for the San Francisco area

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State Investments and Legislative Update

by Richard Markuson, CA Region 9 Legislative Advocate



November and December are traditionally slow months in the Capitol – with holidays, recess and FBI investigations occupying most of the time (not to mention media attention). The Legislature reconvenes on January 6, 2014 and the two houses must act on all two-year bills by the end of the month. February 21, 2014 is the tentative deadline for new bill introductions.

Appointments

Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. made the following Water Board appointments. These appointments may require Senate confirmation.

As deputy director of the California Department of Toxic Substances Control Safer Products and Workplaces Program: **Meredith Williams**, 51, San Francisco, Democrat, interim executive director at the San Francisco Estuary Institute-Aquatic Science Center.

As deputy secretary for environmental policy at California Environmental Protection Agency: **Grant Cope**, 43, Washington, D.C., Democrat, senior council for the US Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

As deputy secretary for transportation at California State Transportation Agency: **Chad Edison**, 41, University Park MD, Democrat, transportation industry analyst at US Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration.

Senate Rules Committee Appointments:

To California Environmental Contaminant Biomonitoring Program Scientific Guidance Panel: **Carl Cranor** (reappointed), Riverside,

Democrat, professor of philosophy and a faculty member of the environmental toxicology graduate program at UC Riverside. Term begins January 1 2014 and ends January 1 2017.

To San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority, Board of Directors: **Jeff DelBono** (reappointed), Pleasant Hill, Democrat, firefighter, City of Alameda. Term ends January 1, 2018.

Recent Reports

The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories release "Estimating Policy-Driven Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trajectories in California: The California Greenhouse Gas Inventory Spreadsheet (GHGIS) Model," found that currently California will be "able to meet the 2020 statewide [greenhouse gas] targets" but not the 2050 target.

California Research Bureau releases report, "California's Gender Gap in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Education and Employment," findings include female employment trails male employment in life/physical sciences 42% to 58%; in technology 24% to 76%; in engineering 15% to 85%; and in math 49% to 51%.

Caltrans Dir. Malcolm Dougherty has released annual "Project Delivery Report" for Fiscal Year 2012-13, says Caltrans "delivered a total of 450 projects valued at \$2.134 billion from all funding programs."

The California State Auditor has released its report, "Salton Sea Restoration Fund: The State Has Not Fully Funded a Restoration Plan and the State's Future Mitigation Costs Are Uncertain."

Caltrans has released an updated version of its "Main Street California" guide, outlines "concepts for the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of California highways that serve as a community's main street."

Bi-Monthly Board Meetings



Day: 1st Friday of February, April, June, August, October, and December

Time: 7:30 am – 10:00 am

Location: ASCE LA Section Office, 1405 Warner Ave., Ste B., Tustin, CA 92780

Everyone is welcome

Message From the Membership Committee

by Brad Dybel, PE, GE, CEG, Chair of Membership Committee, ASCE Los Angeles Section

Your Section Membership Committee is excited to begin a new year with the goal of instituting innovations that are unprecedented in ASCE. First, the Section Membership Committee is taking a leadership role in ASCE Region 9 by sharing our secrets of success in growing membership with other branches and sections. Second, we are collaborating with the Manager of Membership Champions, Marcia Boyd, at ASCE World Headquarters, to take advantage of as many available ASCE resources as possible to grow membership, including the ASCE webinar last October 30. Third, we are working more closely than ever with the local YMFs to grow membership. Your Section Membership Committee visited ASCE's booth at the PE exam on October 25, and was pleased to see a staff of great YMF volunteers led by San Bernardino-Riverside YMF President Melissa Barbosa and Orange County YMF President Gidti Ludesirishoti. The Committee also attended the Orange County YMF's technical field trip to the Tustin Ranch Bridge on November 1, which was led by Programs Chair Gyan Sinha. By instituting these and other innovations in the new year, the Section Membership Committee can and will grow membership by even more than the 270 new members that joined during the Section's remarkably successful Centennial year in 2013.



Colorado Street Bridge

California Historic Civil Engineering Landmark Designation

California has a very rich and diverse history, much of it reflected in our historic structures and civil engineering works. Many of these historic structures and projects are obscure or hidden, but some are still used every day. One of these prominent structures still serving the public is the Colorado Street Bridge in Pasadena.

The Colorado Street Bridge was nominated for California Historic Civil Engineering landmark status by the Los Angeles Section History & Heritage Committee (H&HC) with a comprehensive application full of interesting historic facts, plans and photographs prepared by LA Section H&HC Co-Chair Andrew Machen. The primary mission of the local and Society H&HCs is to enhance the appreciation of the civil engineering profession's history and heritage. This is done through the Historic Civil Engineering Landmark Program. Recognizing the Landmarks helps bring to the public a better understanding of the Civil Engineer's role in the development of society and helps the public become more aware of their own history and heritage. Historic Landmarks in California can receive recognition through the local ASCE Sections, statewide through Region 9, and nationally through the Society H&HC.

The Colorado Street Bridge was dedicated as a Los Angeles Section Historic Civil Engineering Landmark on September 23, 1975. To commemorate the bridge's 100 years of service, on December 7, 2013, the bridge was re-dedicated as a California Historic Civil Engineering landmark by ASCE Region 9. The re-dedication ceremony was attended by many local dignitaries including the Mayor of Pasadena. Additionally, many members of the ASCE LA Section including the History and Heritage Committee members, current and several past LA Section Presidents as well as ASCE's Region 9 Director also attended. The Colorado Street Bridge was built in 1913 by the City of Pasadena and the County of Los Angeles to cross Arroyo Seco and connect the cities of Pasadena and Glendale. This beautiful structure is a reinforced concrete open spandrel arch bridge with two ribs per span. It was designed by Waddell and Harrington Consulting Engineers from Kansas City, and constructed by Mercereau Bridge and Construction Company from Los Angeles. Total cost of the bridge in 1913 was \$240,000. When the bridge was opened on December 13, 1913 it was proclaimed the highest concrete bridge in the world.



THE COLORADO STREET BRIDGE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION PRESENTING SPONSOR



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Assistant Project Manager at HDR Named New Face of Civil Engineering



Ravi Shah who currently serves as the Past President of the Orange County Younger Member Forum and the Younger Member Liaison for the Los Angeles Section, was recently named one of 10 New Faces of Civil Engineering by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Ravi Shah, P.E., M.ASCE, is an assistant project manager with HDR, Inc. in Irvine, Calif. The New Faces recognition program promotes the achievement of young civil engineers by highlighting their contributions to and

impact on society. Shah, will be recognized for this honor at ASCE's annual Outstanding Projects and Leaders (OPAL) Gala on March 20, 2014, in Arlington, Va.

Shah has been active through the ASCE Orange County Branch Younger Member Forum where he led a group of 22 volunteers to triple the number of events for younger members within Orange County. While he is currently transitioning to past-president from his previous position as president, Shah is still active in his involvement with the Younger Member Forum as he serves as an advisor for the current Board and is currently seeking ways to ensure the Orange County Younger Member Group is recognized for their efforts over the last year. Shah is passionate about his involvement in professional organization, specifically ASCE, as he has not only developed his leadership and soft skills, but has made long lasting friendships along the way.

As an employee of HDR, Shah joined HDR's Riverside, Calif. office as an

intern his senior year of college. Upon graduation he joined the Irvine, Calif. office as a design engineer. Based on his professionalism and skillset, he was asked to work on the preliminary engineering through final design phases for a \$28 million interchange improvement project at the Port of Los Angeles. Throughout the assignment he gained more responsibility, eventually transitioning to the role of civil task lead. Based on the relationship he built with the client, his responsiveness to client needs and his involvement throughout the project, he was promoted to assistant project manager at HDR. The interchange improvement project begins construction early next year; Shah will be working closely with the client during the construction phase.

"Civil engineering is a relationship-based industry and these relationships you build will carry with you through your career. I also appreciate that as I do my job I'm enhancing the built environment and solving challenges while building friendships," said Shah about what he enjoys about his profession as a civil engineer.

A native of India, but raised in Orange County, California since the age of four, Shah holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, Calif.

ASCE names New Faces of Civil Engineering each year, some of whom will be submitted to the national New Faces of Engineering program run by DiscoverE, formerly the National Engineers Week Foundation. This program includes representatives from civil, mechanical, chemical, industrial and manufacturing engineering professions. Selected New Faces profiles will be featured in February 2014 in a USA TODAY ad during Engineers Week and profiled on the DiscoverE website.



While President of the Orange County Younger Member Forum, Ravi Shah did a presentation to the students at CSULB



An Invitation: ASCE's Congressional Fellow Program Accepting Applications

by Clark Barrineau, ASCE National Staff

"Democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried," said Winston Churchill. It's safe to say the man had a point.

For the past 18 years, ASCE has selected a member as part of ASCE's Congressional Fellow program and allowed them to work and learn on Capitol Hill. A year later, as most return to their lives as civil engineers, ASCE has gained a member who understands what Congress does, how it does it, and how it works (and why it sometimes does not). Congress, on the other hand, has gained a better understanding of real world issues and perhaps a better understanding of the impact – good and bad – of its actions.

Consider this is your invitation to leave the orderly world of engineering behind for a year and be immersed in the decidedly unordered world of the United States Congress. More plainly, in honor of the recent passing of Lou Reed, ASCE is looking for a member interested in taking a walk on the wild side.

ASCE's Congressional Fellow spends one year working as a Congressional staffer. To date, eighteen ASCE members have served as an ASCE Congressional Fellow; all emerged from the experience unscathed, and even, encouraged by their experience. The ASCE Fellows join with more than 30 colleagues from 22 other engineering and scientific organizations to bring engineering and scientific advice to members of Congress. Since its founding by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in 1973, the Congressional Fellows Program has had several objectives. First and foremost has been to create a cadre of Congressional staffers who understand science and engineering and enhance the capabilities of Congress to deal with those issues. A second



objective has been to develop a group of scientists and engineers who understand Congress and who will return to help the science and engineering community improve its ability to impact public policy. The third objective has been to expose members of Congress and their staffs to the ways of thinking in scientific and engineering fields. The final objective has been to make it easier for the general scientific

and engineering community to deliver messages to Congress.

The Congressional Fellowship is open to any ASCE member who is a U.S. citizen. Factors to be weighed by the selection committee include advanced degrees, registration as a Professional Engineer, involvement in ASCE, public policy experience and professional experience. Additionally, the selection committee must also be sensitive to possible conflicts of interest.

If you think you have what it takes, and want to see what Mr. Churchill was talking about, then please apply. It is said that Congress is where extremely smart people work to make something happen and equally smart people work to make sure it doesn't. As engineers, we like to think that the solution to the equation $1+1$ is not negotiable, no matter how hard some may try. So, if are you interested in watching the sausage being made and are ready to dive head first into the very epicenter of our 237 year old experiment in self-government, then you might be ready to be an ASCE Congressional Fellow.

The deadline for the 2014-2015 Fellowship is March 7, 2014. Please take the time to learn more about the Congressional Fellows program or contact Martin Hight, Senior Manager, Government Relations at mhight@asce.org.

Pay It Forward and make your gift today.

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The ASCE Life Members' Public Image Committee request that members take their (to be discarded) Civil Engineering magazines to their doctor's office or barber shop and merge them with the stack of magazines. We feel that this will be an effective way to make the general public more aware of what civil engineers do.

Reminder:

Copy deadline for the February 2014 issue is January 1, 2014; copy deadline for the March 2014 issue is February 1, 2014

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