

Jan. '12

Happy New Year to All!

# Los Angeles Section

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John C. Hogan, P.E.  
Los Angeles Section President



### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*The world makes way for the man who knows where he is going.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

The New Year is here! 2011 is gone and 2012 is underway. It's time to set those New Year's resolutions. What do you plan to accomplish this year? Did you make resolutions or set goals at the start of 2011? How did you do? Did you accomplish your goals for 2011? Making resolutions and setting goals are part of the New Years tradition. This makes it a good time to devote a column to the subject of goal-setting, especially since goals are essential to success.

I'm sure most every ASCE member would agree that goal-setting is good. Goals are powerful motivators. Goals focus our attention. Goals give us purpose. Research studies have found that the most common factor among those over 100 years of age wasn't diet or exercise habits, it was their view toward the future: they all had goals. Setting goals may not enable you to live to 100, but it will greatly increase the chances of you being successful. I like what Earl Nightingale said: "To achieve happiness, we should make certain that we are never without an important goal."

But it isn't only goal setting that's important; it is attaining those goals that is the key to success. In fact, a good definition for success is this: "Success is the progressive realization of a worthwhile, predetermined goal." This definition works for everyone, no matter what their focus. The bottom line is this: Successful people set goals and accomplish them.

We all know the track record for New Year's resolutions is pretty dismal. First of all, many people never get around to setting goals. Of those who do, most forget or abandon their goals a short time later. Why do so many people start out with such good intentions, but give up and revert to their old ways? On the other hand, why are there people who set goals and attain them, despite the odds? What do they do differently?

There are many good books on the subject of success. Three that I like are: *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*, by Steven Covey; *Strategies for Success*, by James Dornan; and *Success is a Choice*, by Rick Pitino. I am borrowing liberally from these books as I attempt to answer the questions above.

The common denominator among those who attain their goals is that they have the right foundation for their goals. Just like a solid foundation is important to a building or bridge, so it is to a goal. We know that foundations for buildings are made of concrete and steel, but what makes the foundation for goal attainment? People who are successful in attaining their goals seem to have three qualities in common: 1) they practice positive thinking; 2) they know how to overcome failure; and, 3) they possess vision (they know where they are going). Let's look at each of these.

Positive Thinking: A former business partner of mine had this sign in his office: "Your attitude, not your aptitude, is what determines your altitude." Many people claim that others

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## It's Time to Celebrate!

By Richard Haller, P.E., M. ASCE  
Region 9 Governor, rhaller@sawpa.org



Happy New Year!! It's a great time to be a civil engineer with lots of opportunities to solve the ever increasing infrastructure problems. Region 9 of ASCE serves California members working to coordinate the efforts of the four state Sections and advancing the Society's Vision 2025. Region 9 is led by a Board of Governors (BOG) that consists of seven members: six governors—one each representing the four sections in California (San Diego Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento), two "at-large," and the society's director). The Society Director is the Region's representative on the society's board.

The Region has been busy implementing several key elements of Vision 2025, including engaging in legislative activities, advancing the profession, and recognizing our greatest achievements. In FY 2011, the region conducted a number of activities and events including Legislative Day, meeting the majority of State Assembly representatives and senators. During these meetings, legislators were asked to support infrastructure funding, provided information on current conditions and funding needs and educated about ASCE and using civil engineers as a resource. Legislators asked for ideas on how to pay for the funding shortfall. We would welcome your thoughts. Region 9 conducted an infrastructure symposium offering a suite of speakers on transportation and water issues. In conjunction with the symposium, the region conducted an awards program recognizing outstanding projects and individuals. Finally, the BOG evaluated proposed legislation of interest to the civil engineering community and suitability of adopting a "support" or "oppose" position. Seventy-four measures were deemed of interest and tracked. The BOG did take positions on several bills; these positions can be found at the Region 9 website ([www.asce.org/region9/](http://www.asce.org/region9/)) at the "Region 9 Issues and Advocacy" link. Legislative positions were made known and advocated for by the region's lobbyist, Richard Markuson, who provided a voice for ASCE in the legislature. Of particular interest was Senate Bill (SB) 424, "Mechanics Liens, Design Professionals" which was approved by the legislature and governor, and Assembly Bill (AB) 1210, Water Quality: Stormwater Discharge: Civil Engineering Activities which was approved by the legislature but vetoed by the governor.

In 2012, the region will once again conduct several important events including the Infrastructure Symposium and Awards Banquet on February 28th. The symposium will present the latest information on state-wide water and transportation issues. The awards banquet will honor the most outstanding civil engineering projects and recognize individuals in the state, representing the best of the section award winners. Legislative Day will be conducted February 29th, during which nearly every of the over 100 state legislative offices will be visited and provided with information on California's infrastructure. Finally, the region is preparing a California Infrastructure Report Card which will be released in the spring. The report card will summarize current conditions and estimate annual spending requirements to raise the grades. Look for exciting details of this release. For more information go to [www.asce.org/region9/](http://www.asce.org/region9/).

## A New Year (Again)

We look with interest to this new year as we enter an election year. We have a lot to look forward to, with the hope that we could get out of the economic rut we have been over the past four years. Have our lives changed since the beginning of the Great Recession? Most of us would most likely answer on the negative to this question that despite positive signs that we are coming out of the doldrums, we most likely do not feel so. But that depends.

Our Los Angeles Section President John Hogan, P.E. have some words of wisdom for all of us, well fitting for these times. While most people around us feed their anxieties and their fears with more negative thoughts, he encourages us to be positive. Resiliency is a rare trait in an environment that is used to immediate gratification. Moreover, a lot of us only look into the next day, we do not have a vision of where we want to go. Maybe an artifact of our society, but also maybe just an artifact of the economic times.

We welcome comments on the articles that we write. Beginning in this issue, we will occasionally post those letters to the LA Section President or the Editor. Just a heads-up—in the interest of space, we may have to reduce the content of your letter, but we will keep the intent and ideas intact.

Thanks for reading through. We hope you had a great holiday season!

—Dr. Cris B. Liban, P.E.

### FEEDBACK

## Letter to the President

We will begin featuring letters we receive from some of our members starting in this issue. If you would like any of your comments heard, please address them either to John Hogan ([JHogan@hfinc.com](mailto:JHogan@hfinc.com)) or myself ([cliban@UCLAlumni.net](mailto:cliban@UCLAlumni.net)). We may need to edit the letter for space considerations.

Mr. Hogan,

I enjoyed reading your article in the November newsletter for the Los Angeles ASCE Section. I understand you have a personal point of view regarding Keynes that personally I do not share. Recently I went on the U.S. Treasury Department's website and downloaded all of the monthly treasury statements that go back to 1997 and also found some historical data back through 1983. I came up with a spreadsheet summarizing all of the documents (you can see I had too much time on my hands on that day). My only point is that you will see that compared to recent downturns in the early 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, we never increased spending that corresponds to a reduced income anywhere near to the extent that we have done this downturn. If the first stimulus package had only focused on infrastructure, I think we might have seen benefits like you suggest. But now that we have increased our debt by approximately \$4 trillion in 3 years, I think the opportunity has passed and we have no choice. Furthermore, from the limited amount I have read, the infrastructure spending in the 1930s did not have much of an impact in ending the Depression, and in fact the nation sunk into a second downturn in the late 1930s. I believe it was World War II that finally ended the Depression, but I admit that I am not fully knowledgeable about that time period.

Bob Kuhn

have made them who they are, or that their circumstances have dictated their place in life. They might even say they can't help how they feel. Wrong! Each of us is responsible for the way we look at life. As Victor Frankl wrote in *Man's Search for Meaning*, his account of a Nazi prison camp, "the last of the human freedoms is the ability to choose one's attitude no matter what the circumstances." We create our own environments by the attitudes we develop. Positive thinking can be learned by anyone regardless of the inclinations they were born with or grew up with. Having a positive attitude may not guarantee success, but it sure puts you on the road that leads to success. Whether or not you arrive there depends on what you do along the way. You will not attain many goals unless you first adopt a positive outlook and believe that you can do it. There aren't many consistently successful people who have bad attitudes. You gotta believe to succeed!

**Overcoming failure:** It's unrealistic to expect the path to attainment of a worthwhile goal will not have a few obstacles and failures along the way. The key to overcoming these obstacles is to avoid discouragement and to develop persistence. Sometimes people get discouraged when success is not immediate. The fact is most "overnight successes" have spent years getting to where they are. Some thought Tiger Woods was an overnight success when he burst upon the professional golf circuit some years back. Actually, the twenty-something Tiger had devoted his life to the game starting before the age of 3! In reality this "overnight sensation" had put in a lifetime of preparation. I suspect there were a few tournaments along the way that he failed to win. Yet he continued to persevere.

**Vision:** Simply stated, vision is determining what you want. You have to know what you want in order to attain it. When you develop vision, you're able to see what you want to accomplish. With vision, you create a drive that will propel you through bad times, as well as good. Going on a diet to lose weight is a common goal, especially at New Year's. But unless the dieter has envisioned a better quality of life once the pounds are gone, and is committed to that dream, the temptations along the way to give up may be too much to overcome.

There is a pattern here. The whole concept of achieving success begins with the individual: how positively you think and your determination to overcome failure. Those attitudes open your eyes to the possibilities and opportunities around you. You can then begin to develop the vision for your life that will empower you in your day to day activities. You realize that you can control your own destiny. What a liberating thought!

It's upon this foundation of thinking that success is built. In order to achieve success, goals must be developed. Goals can involve any area of one's life: personal development, physical development, finances, professional accomplishment, etc. They also will have different time horizons. Some goals are lifelong, others might be three to five years, and others might be one year. There should also be day-to-day, weekly and monthly goals.

Goals are not necessarily about an end result. They also help along the way by providing measurable milestones. As you make progress, you gain a sense of accomplishment.

I'm sure that I am preaching to the choir. After all, you all are Civil Engineers. You have a vision for your life's pursuits, a desire to create, to build, to contribute to a better world. This vision together with a can-do attitude helped you to persevere and persist through a difficult college curriculum. The new year reminds us that goal setting is not a one-time activity. Goals need to be identified, planned, acted upon, and evaluated on an ongoing basis. As you grow and change, so will your goals. Ultimately, what happens inside of you as you progress is more important than just achieving a preset goal.

As you make your New Year's resolutions, remember ASCE. Your involvement in ASCE can play an important part in helping you attain your professional and personal development goals. I can certainly attest to that. Best wishes for a successful 2012!



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**A Great Idea from the Life Members**

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.

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**Reminder:**

*Copy deadline for the Feb. 2012 issue is Jan. 1, 2012; copy deadline for the March 2012 issue is Feb. 1, 2012.*

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**ASCE Region 9**  
**Announces the Sixth Annual**  
**California Infrastructure Symposium**  
**Awards Dinner**  
**Legislative Day**

***SAVE THE DATE***  
**February 28 and 29, 2012**

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) realizes that critical infrastructure systems are facilities and assets so vital that their destruction or incapacitation would disrupt the security, economy, safety, health, or welfare of the public. One of ASCE's top priorities is to raise the grades on California's infrastructure.

ASCE Region 9 is taking the lead by presenting the **Sixth Annual California Infrastructure Symposium** to be held on **Tuesday, February 28, 2012**, in Sacramento. The Infrastructure Symposium will include topics such as: Water Infrastructure Funding, New Stormwater Permits and Implications, Major Water/Recycled Water Projects, Federal and State Transportation Funding-Where's the Money?, Project Funding Acceleration-Doing more with less!, and Environmental Clearance Acceleration-Reducing the hurdle! You will also be the first to hear about California's new Statewide Report Card which will identify and bring attention for infrastructure support and renewal in California.

The Keynote Speaker will address "California's Fiscal Picture for the Future" by Bill Lockyer, State Treasurer (invited). Other speakers include Ellen Hanak, Joe Grindstaff, Dan Cloak, Derrick Whitehead, Bruce Wolfe, Frank Belock, Marsi Steirer, Eric Mische, Yaz Emrani, Mike Kincaid, Rock Miller, Brian Pallasch, Jessica Peters, Doug Failing, Will Kempton, and ASCE President-Elect, Greg DiLoreto.

Following the Infrastructure Symposium, you may also register for an evening to help celebrate excellence in California Civil Engineering projects and honor the outstanding accomplishments of individuals at the **ASCE Region 9 Awards Dinner**.

Please mark your calendar to join us on **Tuesday, February 28, 2012**, at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento at Capitol Park, 1209 L Street, Sacramento, California for current information on California's infrastructure, continuing education, networking, and social events you will not want to miss. Look for more information as it becomes available at [www.asce.org/region9](http://www.asce.org/region9).

The **ASCE Region 9 Legislative Day** will take place on **Wednesday, February 29, 2012** at the California State Capitol in Sacramento. Please join us as we unveil the new ASCE Region 9 Report Card.

For additional information, please contact Lori Campbell, Administrator, [lkc.consulting@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lkc.consulting@sbcglobal.net), or by telephone at 916.965.1536.



*ASCE Region 9 represents more than 18,000 ASCE members in the State of California.*

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## Congratulations! New ASCE Life Members

Life Members are those who have made a lifetime commitment to ASCE and the civil engineering profession by remaining members for the full length of their professional career. The following Los Angeles Section ASCE Members will attain the rank of Life Member in 2012:

Nelson Acosta  
Nathaniel Adam  
Shahnawaz Ahmad  
Ahmed Ali  
E Allen  
G Hossein Bahmanyar  
Louis Bayne  
Mark Beizer  
William Bloom  
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Ramakrishna Boppana  
Stuart Brehm III  
Charles Burton  
Vincent Chee  
Raphael Hing-Ho Cheng  
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J Christopher Clark  
Richard Corneille  
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Mahendra Desai  
Richard Doolittle  
George Dore  
John Dutton  
Bruce Eisenbise  
Hiroshi Emoto  
Steven Esmond  
Joseph Evelyn  
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J Michael Sims  
Erling Smith  
John Spiess  
Pore-Feng Sun  
Craig Sundgren  
Jens Thielmann  
Jalaleddin Vakili-Mirzamani  
Stanley Vander Mey  
William Whittenberg  
Henry T Yang  
Kwok To Yeung  
Robert Zinser

An ASCE member achieves Life Member status when upon reaching the age of 65, he or she has been a dues-paying ASCE member for at least 30 years, including continuous membership during the most recent 10 years. This is a significant achievement for any ASCE member and hopefully is something to which all members aspire. The LA Section Life Member Class of 2012 will be formally recognized and inducted during ceremonies to be held on March 3, 2012 in Monterey Park

Congratulations to all of the new Life Members. We wish you all good health and happiness, and many more years of fruitful ASCE membership.



## **ASCE's P.E. Environmental Exam Review Course A Live Interactive Webinar Series**

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