

Los Angeles Section

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John Morris, P.E.
Section President



We Are All Engineers At The Core

As fellow engineers, we mourn their loss. So many bright, intelligent engineers were lost on that day.

On behalf of the ASCE Los Angeles Section, our heartfelt condolences to the Virginia Tech civil engineering community, their friends and family, and to all who have been touched by the tragic events of April 16.

This unimaginable event has linked synagogues, mosques and churches in the pain that is felt by the loss of human life. At our mosque in Costa Mesa, California, a banner hung at the entrance on Sunday, April 29, simply stating, "The minds and prayers of the Muslim community are with the victims of the Virginia Tech tragedy."

We have many alumni here in the Los Angeles Section who attended Virginia Tech. They most certainly feel the senseless tragedy even more than we do, for they walked down those same hallways, sat in those same classrooms and, perhaps, learned from some of the same professors as the students who were gunned down.

It is important to remember that life is so very precious, and that as engineers we are part of a profession that not only improves the quality of life, but also protects human life.

Our technical groups are the lifeblood of engineering. Whether we have an extremely technical career or have moved into leading technical teams, the core of our being is our technical mind, and it must be continually nourished. Although the professional engineering requirements in California do not require us to meet annual continuing education requirements, it should be our own personal desire to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of our area of specialty.

Canon 7 of the ASCE Code of Ethics states: "Engineers shall continue their professional development throughout their careers, and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those engineers under their supervision.

1. Engineers should keep current in their specialty fields by engaging in professional practice, participating in continuing education courses, reading in the technical literature, and attending professional meetings and seminars.
2. Engineers should encourage their engineering employees to become registered at the earliest possible date.
3. Engineers should encourage engineering employees to attend and present papers at professional and technical society meetings.
4. Engineers shall uphold the principle of mutually satisfying relationships between employers and employees with respect to terms of employment including professional grade descriptions, salary ranges, and fringe benefits."

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Reminder:

Copy deadline for the July-August, 2007 issue is June 1, 2007; copy deadline for Sept., 2007 issue is Aug. 1, 2007.



Building a Platform of Strength

The tragedy that occurred at Virginia Tech remains fresh in everyone's mind. In this issue, we salute the brave souls who saved and offered their lives so others would live as well as mourn the loss of those who were innocently gunned down in this senseless act of violence. We share with the community the outpouring of support to resolve the issue of gun control, distribution, and use. Let your representatives in Congress hear your opinion on this very important matter.

We also celebrate in this issue the achievements of our new Life Members as well as those of two of the most prominent civil engineers who hail from our Section. I have personally known Mr. Robert Bein and Mr. Carl Blum through my association with ASCE. I can tell you that I have yet to see a more enthusiastic and supportive member that can outdo what these two gentlemen have done not only to our Section, but to our National organization as well. Bob and Carl, you are icons of our profession!

I also want to point out to you two featured training programs in this issue. One is the Disaster Training offered through the California Office of Emergency Services. We have been running this call for volunteers several times now, and despite the program's success, we still need engineers, geologists, and architects to voluntarily assist in the event of a major disaster. We cannot have enough. The more of us volunteering in this program, the better.

The other upcoming training program I wanted to highlight is that offered by the Section's Orange County Branch pertaining to the Stormwater Programs in Orange County. While the geographic relevance of the class may be limited, the technical content is universal. We encourage members to attend this seminar and learn more about the upcoming changes and new technologies that affect us, the regulated community.

How do all of these four seemingly unrelated items tie-in together. We mourn a loss, but celebrate lives and in between work to ensure that our world remains a good place to live. We build a platform of strength in this sense, for generations to enjoy our world as much as we enjoy it now. Maybe a stretch, but that's how I see it.

Enjoy this issue of your newsletter.

- Dr. Cris B. Liban, P.E.



ASCE – Los Angeles Section Honors New Life Members

On March 3, 2007, new Life Members in the Los Angeles Section were honored for their professional accomplishments and their dedication throughout their careers to ASCE. The Los Angeles Section believes it is important to publicly recognize the accomplishments of members who have reached "Life Member" status.

David G. Mongan, P.E., ASCE National President Elect addressed the new life members, their guests and other Los Angeles Section members including the Younger Member Forum and civil engineering students on the "Future of Civil Engineering". He stressed the need for civil engineers to be innovators and get credit for it. Also, he pointed out the need to gain and maintain the trust of the public. In addition, he stressed encouraging high school students to enter the civil engineering field.

In addition to honoring new life members, Robert W. Bein, P.E., former ASCE National President and Carl Blum, P.E., Past Director, Region 9, were given special awards. Robert Bein was presented with the Los Angeles Section Lifetime Achievement Award and Carl Blum was given the Annual Lifetime Achievement Award. These two also received letters of commendation from California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and U. S. Senator Diane Feinstein.

Robert Bein in 1991 was instrumental in starting the Los Angeles Section Life Member Forum. This life member group is one of the few if not the only active life member group in ASCE. The Los Angeles Life Member Forum is very active in supporting various public works projects, working with the State of California on disaster assistance, offering expertise when requested to Habitat for Humanity, and encouraging members to become involved in various community commissions and organizations that could benefit from an engineering perspective.

This annual event is always well attended and this year the attendance was the largest so far as reported by John Morris, P.E., President of the Los Angeles Section.

ANNOUNCEMENT

DISASTER TRAINING

Classes are being organized for volunteers to help in the event of a major disasters under the auspicious of the State of California, Office of Emergency Services (OES). Classes will be held in alternate ASCE Branch areas when there are sufficient requests. Qualified individuals are California Registered Civil, Structural, Geotechnical, Certified Engineering Geologists, or Architects. If you are interested in attending a class, or are interested in arranging a class, please contact the ASCE Disaster Preparedness Committee Chairman.

To register for the class submit your name along with your Telephone number, Fax number, zip code, and e-mail address. You will be contacted when sufficient number of applicants request a class.

If your Branch, or Firm would like to offer the use of its facilities for a class, please register and provide the contact person, phone, fax, and e-mail. You will be contacted to make arrangements.

Thank you for your support of the American Society of Civil Engineers

Jack W. Rolston, Chair,
Disaster Preparedness Committee, LA Section, ASCE
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A Tribute to Professor Librescu

I did not know Prof. Liviu Librescu. I had left Virginia Tech by the time he arrived to teach in the engineering mechanics department. But I remember well his department and the building where the sophomore level statics and dynamics courses were taught – 2nd floor Norris Hall. Then as today, these courses are so fundamental to the engineering education, they are not the province of the civil, mechanical, or structural departments but the responsibility of the little known field of Engineering Science and Mechanics.

I flunked statics the first time I took it. Good thing, probably. I re-took the class in the summer of 1968, earning a B the second time around. As a practicing structural engineer for 35 years, I dare say that statics and dynamics were the most important courses I ever took. Most structural failures attributed to design errors – large or small, minor or devastating – can be traced to a failure to understand statics and/or dynamics and the ramifications of such in the design. Perhaps the Kansas City Hyatt walkway collapse (1981) is the most prominent of such failures, killing 114 people and injuring more than 200 others.

A survivor of the Holocaust, Prof. Librescu later immigrated to Israel and then to the United States and Virginia Tech in 1985. The ES&M Department website lists Prof. Librescu still teaching the undergraduate course *Solid Mechanics* in the spring of 2007 as one of four courses he taught. He taught the sophomore class *Dynamics* in 2005. He taught future engineers to ensure the safety of the occupants of their designs.

Prof. Librescu was 76 years old when he took a bullet for his class on Monday April 16th, 2007 in his 2nd floor classroom in Norris Hall. According to eyewitness accounts, he blocked the doorway and delayed the shooter long enough so that his students could escape through the windows. "His work was his life in a sense," said his son Joe Librescu in an interview the following day. I could agree more. In death, as in his life, he provided for the safety of others.

Warren A. Stewart, SE, M.ASCE
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Halcrow HPA
Long Beach, California
Virginia Tech, BSCE '71 & MSCE '73

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.

**ASCE's 2007
Member-Get-A-Member
Drive Depends on You!**

Here at the Los Angeles Section we are blessed with numerous technical groups; last month's newsletter contained a complete listing of our nine active groups. Under the new arrangement, groups are assigned to a branch of the section in order to better oversee and help those technical groups that want assistance from the branch leadership and membership.

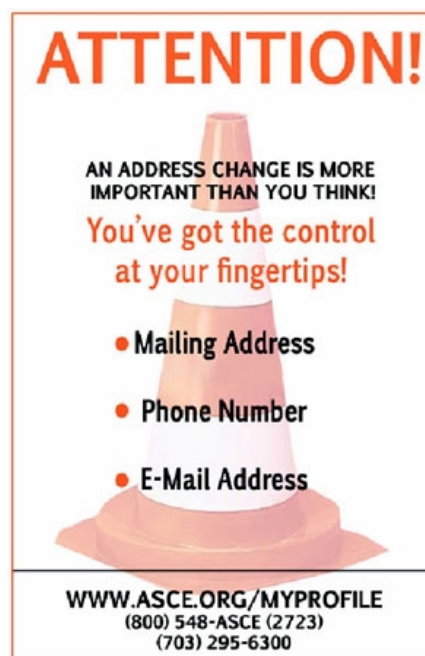
We have assigned to the Los Angeles Metro Branch the following groups: Airport Transport; Forensic Engineering; Geotechnical Engineering; Hydrology/Hydraulics; Water Resources; and Waterways, Harbors, and Coastal Engineering. At the Orange County Branch we have Hydrology and Hydraulics; and Transportation. And last but not least, the Storm Water/Water Resources & Environmental Group is with the San Bernardino/Riverside Branch.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting one of the engineers who was involved in trying to alert NASA on the problems with the o-ring on the Challenger mission. He reminded me why it was so important to keep current on technical matters. Although the o-ring posed a fairly simple problem that could have been corrected, it unnecessarily caused the loss of human life.

May we never have to live with the burden of knowing that something we did – or did not do – resulted in the loss of life. May every decision we make remind us that we want to be the kind of person our grandchildren will be proud of.

And may we always remember we are all engineers at the core and that we all have a responsibility to safeguard human life...and to keep current in our area of specialty.

Note: Virginia Tech is no longer accepting new entries to the website condolence book in order to allow their communications team to redirect its energies toward the university's recovery from this tragedy. As an alternative website for posting your message, they suggest the www.legacy.com. ASCE has also set up a condolence book at www.asce.org.





ASCE American Society of Civil Engineers

Orange County Branch ASCE Seminar Storm Water Program in Orange County Friday, June 22, 2007 8 AM to 12 PM

PRESENTERS:

Mike Loving, Water Quality Administrator

City of Irvine

Ken Susilo, P.E., D. WRE, CPSWQ

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Lisa Austin, P.E.

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- Regulatory Challenges Faced by Municipalities
- Fourth Term MS4 Permits for North/Central and South Orange County
- Proposed State General Permit for Construction and Land Disturbance Activities
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)
- Local Permits Associated with TMDLs
- Treatment and Construction BMPs
- Integrated Water Resources Management
- Lessons Learned

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, June 22, 2007

Where: Conference Training Center
City of Irvine
One Civic Center Plaza
Irvine, CA 92623

Cost: • \$100.00 per person with paid reservations by Monday, June 18
• \$110.00 after June 18, 2007

Get your reservations in early!
SPACE IS LIMITED!

The proceeds of the seminar will be donated to support the ASCE Student Chapters at CSULB, CSUF, and UCI, and to Student Scholarships

Storm Water Program in Orange County June 22, 2007

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