

# Los Angeles Section

*Monthly: Est. 1913*

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SOUTHERN SAN\_JOAQUIN / METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES

## OFFICERS'S MESSAGE

Daniel Cronquist, P.E., P.L.S  
Los Angeles Section President

VOL. LX NO. 3

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## President's Message



One of the most interesting things that ASCE did in November was the "Happy ASCE Day" celebration in honor of our Society's 167th birthday with their own website at [asce.org/asceday](http://asce.org/asceday). What a wonderful and nerdy way to spend a Tuesday. My family made decorations and celebrated at dinner. I guess they are used to such strange and obscure holidays by now. We found this is a worthy companion for Pi Day (March 14th). Any excuse for extra dessert is worthwhile! How did you celebrate?

If you missed ASCE Day this year, there are still plenty of ways to get involved. The first is that the 2020 ASCE National Conference will be held in Southern California at the Disneyland Hotel next October. This is an exciting opportunity for the Los Angeles Section to showcase our local civil engineering achievements to the world. ASCE wants as many local technical presentations at the conference as possible. Instructions for how to apply are included in this edition of the newsletter.

ASCE is especially looking for people familiar with our own Historical Civil Engineering Landmarks and would be willing to give a presentation as an individual or as a team. Our local landmarks are:

- Arroyo Seco Parkway
- Colorado Aqueduct
- Los Angeles Aqueduct
- Tustin Blimp Hangers
- Tehachapi Loop

Mark your calendars to attend next year, it should be the best conference yet!

Another way to participate is a new Mentorship Program being started by the Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch. If you live or work near the area, MLAB would like you to be involved. They have a short article in the newsletter where you can get more information. Having a mentor, I believe, is essential to your development as a civil engineer. Likewise, being a mentor is a rewarding experience. I am grateful for my mentors and am privileged to be a mentor to others. I hope you will consider participating in MLAB's program.

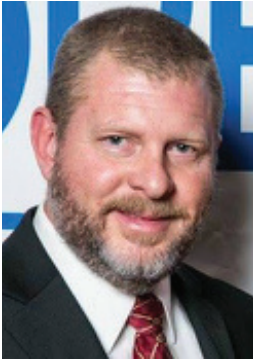
There are many other ways to be involved, so look at your Branch, YMF, and Institute event calendars. I hope that you and your families enjoy the holiday season.



# Cal OES Safety Assessment Program the Camp Fire, Butte County



by John Kilps, P.E., M.ASCE, Region 9 Disaster Preparedness Committee



ASCE members serve as evaluators in the California Office of Emergency Services Safety Assessment Program (SAP), to assist in assessment of homes, structures, and other infrastructure in the aftermath of disasters. ASCE is one of the primary professional societies that sponsor training courses, and provide experienced professionals to quickly evaluate damaged structures and determine if they are safe for occupancy.

The SAP program was formed initially for California earthquakes. The program has developed and expanded over the years, in addition to several earthquakes, was also used successfully in response to Hurricane Katrina.

While California is arguably in an “earthquake drought”, the SAP program is now being used in major California wildfires. There is an unmistakable trend of increasingly frequent and large wildfires in California over the past 20 years. One of those incidents was the 2018 Camp Fire in Butte County. Driven by high wind and dry conditions, the Camp Fire was an extremely rapid fire that started the morning of November 8, 2018, and destroyed the Town of Paradise within 6 hours. More than 18,800 buildings were destroyed, which is more than the previous 9 major California wildfires combined. The fire caused 85 civilian casualties, and was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history.

In the aftermath of the Camp Fire, an evacuation order remained in effect in Paradise. The evacuees were waiting, many camped outside a Walmart in Chico, waiting for assessment of their homes. Assessment of all structures in Paradise would be an extensive task. Requests for SAP evaluators were sent. Upon confirmation from Cal OES, volunteer evaluators deployed to the emergency operations center at the City of Chico. The City of Chico Building Inspector, Mr. Tony Lindsey, coordinated the assessment effort. Regrettably, Mr. Lindsey's home was lost in the fire.

Safety of SAP evaluators is a top priority. In safety briefings, evaluators were instructed to keep away from smoldering “hot

spots”, and carefully step through damage areas. Overhead hazards are a concern. Paradise is located within a forest of ponderosa pine trees more than 100 feet tall. Many of the trees were damaged by the fire and falling. Damaged trees near homes and structures were to be identified and reported.

There were a total of 20 evaluators in our group. Another group of evaluators had already completed assessment of thousands of structures a week before us. Our group was to pick-up where they left off. We formed teams of two and mobilized up the mountain to Paradise. As we arrived, burned-out cars were seen alongside the road. They had been caught in gridlock trying to evacuate the fire.



Paradise Town Hall was saved by firefighters, and we arrived there for a logistical meeting. The town hall had a generator for electricity. Tools and materials were distributed there, and maps of areas to be assessed were reviewed.

Each evaluator was given a tablet loaded with GIS software to record assessment reports. The tablets were user-friendly, and greatly increased the efficiency of completing large quantities of assessments. Rain the first day made it difficult to keep the tablets dry, and caused them to glitch. Cellular service was spotty, which also affected the tablets. The weather cleared up the next day, and cellular service was restored. The GIS database continually updated, allowing users to see assessment reports of other evaluators in real-time, helping to avoid redundant assessments.

Although rain slowed our progress the first day, it also helped extinguish what remained of the fire, and cleared the air of



smoke for improved breathing. A majority of homes and structures were completely burned to the ground. The fire was peculiar, leaving single homes seemingly untouched in the middle of completely destroyed neighborhoods. Homes and structures that were not destroyed required more extensive assessment to determine if they were safe for occupancy. Assessments were completed by our 4th day. Some Town of Paradise employees participated in assessments the last day for training purposes.

Local agencies and utilities are investigating the cause of the fire, and how prevention can be improved. As California deals with climate

change and its effects, the SAP program continues to adapt and improve to assist in all kinds of disasters. Thank you to ASCE Region 9 Disaster Preparedness Chair, Doug Taylor, and Cal OES, for continued progress and development of the SAP Program.



[www.ascelasection.org](http://www.ascelasection.org)

## ARTICLE

## MLAB Mentorship Program

by Dana Robertson



Mentorship is an important aspect of any career. Whether it be getting guidance from someone who has experienced some of the same challenges that you are going through, or sharing your knowledge with a new generation of engineers, being in a program can be highly rewarding for both mentors and mentees. It's benefits can extend far beyond what one may expect. This is why it's Metropolitan Los Angeles Branch has introduced its very own Mentorship

Program. This program will pair young working professionals with experienced engineers to provide guidance, broaden perspectives,

and build lasting one-on-one relationships. Every relationship will be unique, and therefore every successive mentor or mentee that you have is an opportunity to learn and grow in new ways. The program will aim to create suitable matches between a mentee (working professional with 0 - 10 years of experience) and a mentor (10+ years of experience) based on the participants' interests, geographic location, and engineering discipline. Mentor/mentee pairings will last approximately 12 months. Surveys completed by all participants will be used to determine the mentor and mentee assignments. Registration is now open. Enrollment is limited and is at the discretion of the Mentorship Committee. For those in the Los Angeles area that are interested, more details can be found at <https://www.mlab-ymf.org/mentorship>.

## ARTICLE

## Government Relations Workshop in DTLA

by Ruwanka Purasinghe



On Thursday, November 7th, the ASCE Metro LA Branch hosted ASCE's Infrastructure Initiatives Director, Anna

Denecke, for a National Government Relations Workshop at the Downtown Los Angeles AECOM office. The workshop was centered around discussion about the latest happening in DC with the Trump Infrastructure Plan, ASCE's goals and initiatives regarding public policy, and what



to expect here in California, including post-Prop 6 topics. Additionally, the National Infrastructure Report Card and 2019 California Infrastructure Report Card were discussed, including methods of using the Report Cards for ASCE events including the upcoming LA City Hall Drive In, Sacramento Fly In, and DC Legislative Fly In. In all, the event was well received and led to insightful, healthy discussions regarding America's Infrastructure and how ASCE is leading the way for the Civil Engineering discipline. Future Government Relation Workshops will be organized, and we hope you can join us in the future. Special thank you to AECOM for providing a venue for the event.





# State Investments and Legislative Update

by Richard Markuson, CA Region 9 Legislative Advocate



The Legislature is in recess until January 6. January will be a busy month for any two-year bills as they must clear their house of origin by January 31.

Status Report on ASCE's other Bills of Interest

AB 48 by O'Donnell (D – Long Beach) Authorizes \$15 billion for the construction and modernization of public preschool, K-12, California Community Colleges (CCC), University of California (UC), and

California State University (CSU) facilities to be placed on the March 3, 2020 primary ballot. Chaptered – Proposition 13 on the March 2020 ballot. **Support**

AB 695 by Medina (D – Riverside) Extends the sunset on community college districts' (CCDs') authority to enter into design-build public works contracts and adopts the same "skilled and trained workforce" requirements applicable to the design-build authority of state agencies and local governments. The bill contains provisions that allow a contractor under a project labor agreement to be presumed to meet the requirements of using a skilled and trained workforce. Chaptered. **Support**

AB 1522 by Low (D – Campbell) Extends the operation of the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists until January 1, 2024. Chaptered. **Support**

SB 127 by Wiener (D – San Francisco) This bill requires more pedestrian and bicycle facilities to be installed on state highways, subject to limitations and exceptions, when Caltrans is working on those highways. Vetoed. **OUA**

*To the Members of the California State Senate: I am returning Senate Bill 127 without my signature. This bill creates a process to require the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to add complete streets elements to certain projects on state highways. I fully support improving facilities to increase walking, biking and accessing public transit. However, this bill creates a prescriptive and costly approach to achieve these objectives. By implementing my Executive Order N-19-19, Caltrans is increasing and accelerating its investments in active transportation where appropriate and feasible. I am committed to holding the department accountable to deliver more alternatives to driving while continuing to maintain our state's highways and bridges. The new leadership we are putting in place at Caltrans will be key in implementing this vision and approach. Sincerely, Gavin Newsom*

SB 197 by Beall (D – San Jose) This bill removes the Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) sunset provision relative to withholding retention proceeds on public contracts. Chaptered. **Support**

## New Reports of Interest

**Delta Stewardship Council** releases 2019 update to report first issued in 2015 titled "State of the Estuary." It finds that since 2015 tidal marsh restoration is "proceeding at a brisk pace" and "urban water conservation continues to meet mandated benchmarks," however water flows "continue to be well below levels that could increase and restore ecosystem health" and fisheries in the brackish and freshwater areas of the Delta are in "poor condition."

## Governor's Appointments

As deputy secretary for climate policy and intergovernmental relations at the California Environmental Protection Agency: **Lauren Sanchez**, Oakland, international policy director at the California Air Resources Board since 2018.

## Submit an Abstract!



The ASCE 2019 Convention was a resounding success! This is your opportunity to be a part of this outstanding program. The ASCE 2020 Technical Program Subcommittee is currently accepting proposal for presentation at the Convention taking place in Anaheim, California, October 28 – 31, 2020.

Share your expertise, professional insights, and industry best practices by becoming a session presenter. Interact with the Industry's best and brightest civil engineers and engineering students while imparting your knowledge.

We encourage all Los Angeles Section members to participate so that we can show the world the great work that we are doing in Southern California.

All submissions are due January 9, 2020. See <https://www.asceconvention.org/> for more details.

# Licensing 101

by Chris Casey, IMEG Corporation



The conclusion of the 2019 Professional Engineers Exam cycle brings a good time to explain why we as engineers or aspiring engineers must endure the rigorous process to become licensed to practice engineering in the state of California.

The California Legislature created the Board of Registration for Civil Engineers in 1929, following the tragic failure of the St. Francis Dam in northern Los Angeles County. The tragedy occurred on March 12, 1928, when the dam suddenly gave way with little warning. Approximately 1.6 billion cubic feet of water flooded the narrow valley of the Santa Clara River, killing nearly 450 people and destroying 1,200 structures along with 10 bridges. At the time, this was the worst man-made disaster in California History. After the devastating event an inspection revealed that the failure occurred due to the saturated condition created by the reservoir which essentially re-activated a large landslide failure plane. The Legislature determined that the unregulated design of construction projects constituted a hazard to the public.

The design and construction of the St. Francis Dam was executed under the supervision of the Los Angeles Bureau of Waterworks & Supply chief engineer William Mulholland. William Mulholland was a "self-taught" engineer who had achieved national recognition and admiration for the design and construction of projects such as the Los Angeles-Owens River Aqueduct. Mulholland had also overseen the completion of numerous embankment dams however, Mulholland's experience in concrete dam design was lacking. The failure of the dam led the Board to impose restrictions on those who act in an engineering role to protect the safety of the public; ensuring that engineering projects in the State of California are designed and built safely by competent and qualified professionals.

Since 1929 the Engineering Legislature has been revised several times to include a broader range of engineering disciplines. Most recently, in 2009, legislation was enacted that eliminated the Board of Geologists and Geophysicists and transferred duties and jurisdiction of regulation of those practices to the Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. The Board then officially became the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (BPELSG) on January 1, 2011.

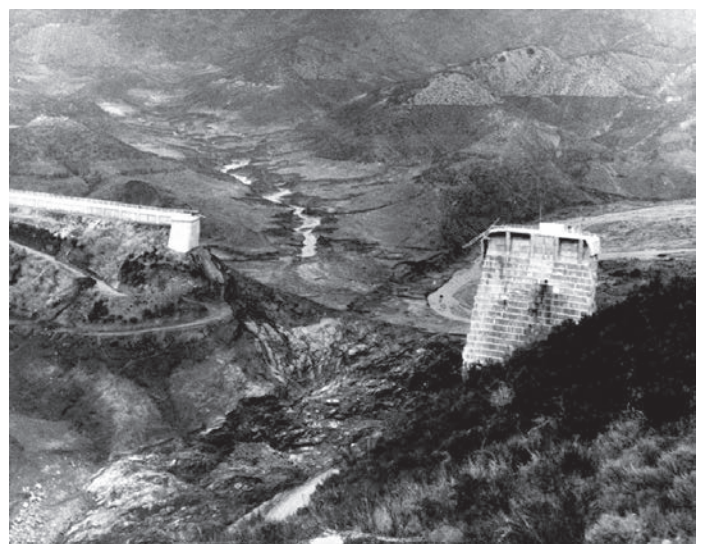
California currently regulates the use of the practice and the use of the title of Civil, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineer. These three are known as Practice Acts. Only those registered are authorized to use the title, practice, or offer to practice in that discipline. Two additional title Authorities are available for those who have attained Civil registration; Structural and Geotechnical. Only those registered as a Geotechnical Engineer or Structural Engineer may use these titles. The California Professional Engineers act has more detailed information regarding engineering titles.

The Board of Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists consists of 15 members (seven licensed members and eight public members) who are appointed to the Board for four-year terms. The seven licensed members represent various branches of engineering (civil, electrical, mechanical, structural, and any other branch), land surveying, and geology or geophysics. Board meetings are held monthly and in locations within the full state area, from San Diego, to the LA area, the Bay area and Sacramento. The meetings are open, and the public is invited to attend.

Engineers and aspiring engineers living in the state of California should be familiar with board website (<https://www.bpelsg.ca.gov>). The website contains its laws and regulations, forms for licensure, and a newsletter published on a quarterly basis noting things such as license violations, honoring recently deceased licensed individuals, and legislation news/updates.



St. Francis Dam Before—From LA Bureau of Power and Light



St. Francis Dam After— From Associated Press





# 2019 International Conference on Sustainable Infrastructure Report

by Mark R. Norton, P.E., LEED AP, ENV SP, Chair, ASCE Region 9 Sustainability Committee



On November 6th – 9th, Los Angeles was home to the International Conference on Sustainable Infrastructure (ICSI) that drew hundreds from across the world. Those who attended were treated to a vast array of plenary panels, technical sessions and sustainability themed tours and events. It was my privilege to serve as chair of this event working with a tremendous team of volunteers and supporters who worked together over the past year and a half to create a learning experience for those who attended that might be remembered for years to come.

The theme of the conference was “Leading Resilient Communities Through the 21st Century” recognizing the pivotal role that local communities and cities play in making change happen for the better. The event was planned as an event that would be open and welcome not just to ASCE civil engineers but also to architects, managers, contractors, suppliers, policy makers and the laymen. Registration reflected that a strong contingent of college students, younger members and public agency staff particularly found value and attended. The conference included over 100 presenters who gathered to showcase for the latest developments and advancements in design, construction, technology, policy and education related to sustainable and resilient infrastructure.

The conference started off with a special leadership summit held at the LA City Club where over 40 industry leaders, academic professors, and public agency heads gathered to discuss what practical solutions are needed to adapt our infrastructure, close the resilience gap, and breakdown barriers to action. The event included an introduction about ASCE’s very forward-thinking “Future World Vision” as described by Jerry Buckwalter, ASCE’s new chief operating and strategy officer. After in depth discussions and dialogue, the summit culminated in the signing of a pledge to work together to move forward in making sustainable and resilience infrastructure a reality. The pledge letter was then taken to the ASCE International Conference and was signed by over 150 participants who agreed to stay engaged and work together.

Concurrent with the Future World Vision Leadership Summit, three outstanding sustainability technical tours were held at the Port of LA, LA Cleantech Incubator and the LA River on Wednesday, Nov. 6th. All three were very well attended and enjoyed by all.

The formal conference kicked off on Nov. 7th with excellent talks by K.N. Gunalan, ASCE President 2020, Jerry Buckwalter, Chief Operating and Strategy Officer, Mark Pestrella, LA County Dept of Public Works, Gregor Robertson, former Mayor of Vancouver and Ambassador for the Global Covenant of Mayors, Debra Roberts,

IPCC panelist and Sustainable and Resilient City Initiatives and many others. Additional panels covered sustainability planning for big events such as the 2028 Olympics and Paralympics scheduled for the greater Los Angeles region and ways to better communicate and discuss infrastructure sustainability advances in the media and with the public. Throughout the day between sessions, attendees were exposed to a variety of local organizing events and activities such as a young member mixer, an urban heat island mapping tour, an interactive art exhibit, a special offsite event called “Girls to Green” in which over 100 underprivileged girls were bused in from local schools to this event to learn about the exciting careers available to them, and a Green Alley design contest.

On Friday, Nov. 8th, the conference’s keynote luncheon speaker Dr. Jared Diamond, UCLA Professor and Pulitzer Prize author of *Guns, Germs and Steel* and the internationally recognized book *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, provided a thought provoking and compelling talk about the “*The Crisis of World Sustainability*”. Dr. Diamond stayed at the conference to answer questions and work with ASCE Foundation to offer and sign copies of his most recent book, *Upheaval: How Nations Cope with Crisis and Change*. All proceeds from the book sales were generously donated to the ASCE Foundation by Dr. Diamond.

Another feature of the conference that was held to encourage sponsorship support was a unique feature called “Let’s Connect. in LA”. This outreach forum connected engineers, technical experts, policy makers, academia, developers, infrastructure investors, governments, asset managers, philanthropy, social impact investors, and the insurance industry. By bringing all minds to one room, Let’s Connect promoted discussion about specific business and partnership opportunities among owners (public/private), suppliers, consultants, designers, contractors, constructors, small businesses, and other interested parties.

The third day of conference continued the momentum of the event with talks by Anthony Kane, Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure CEO, about Envision sustainable infrastructure rating tool and it’s continued upward trend in use, Cris Liban, ASCE Committee Chair on Sustainability, on moving forward with our ASCE vision of sustainable infrastructure, and by Tom Smith, ASCE’s Executive Director. Tom introduced various awards program recognizing several sustainability awardees including the first Middle East ISI Envision Platinum Award project, the Sustainable Engineering Award for ASCE Innovation and Student Paper Award winners. The closing speakers were Carol Haddock, Houston Director Public Works and the ICSI 2021 Houston Conference Chair along with her Chief Resilience Officer for Houston, Marissa Aho, both who shared the exciting preparations underway in resiliency that Houston is going through particularly in response to recent hurricane and flooding events. A video was also shown to highlight preparations for next year’s ICSI to be held in Beirut,

Lebanon and then in Houston in 2021. These future conferences are expected to be great events that everyone should plan on attending to be a part of ASCE strategic initiative to support sustainability and resilience in all infrastructure.

As the ASCE Region 9 Sustainability Committee Chair, it is my privilege to continue the work of promoting sustainable and resiliency in all infrastructure we build in order to deal with the challenges that are upon us. I continue to be impressed by the passion and excitement of so many volunteers not just of this recent conference but also the many ASCE Section and Branch Sustainability Committees across the State of California who are working to promote and support sustainability in our profession and society. If you would like to be involved and want to learn more about sustainability committee events in your area, feel free to contact me, Mark Norton, Chair, ASCE Region 9 Sustainability Committee, at [mnorton@sawpa.org](mailto:mnorton@sawpa.org).



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FORWARD WITH INFRASTRUCTURE"**

**CA INFRASTRUCTURE  
SYMPOSIUM** **APRIL 3  
2020**  
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Hilton Sacramento Arden West

**SAVE THE DATE**

**ASCE** **ASCE**  
SACRAMENTO SECTION REGION 9

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:**

Barry Broome, CEO of the Greater Sacramento Economic Council  
Felicia Marcus, Former Chair, California State Water Resources Control Board  
Jean-Louis Briaud, Ph.D., PE, D.GE, DIST.M. ASCE, 2019-2020 ASCE President-Elect

*More information at [www.caisregion9.org](http://www.caisregion9.org)*



# CSULB Dream Big 2019 Event

by Victor Aguirre



On Saturday, October 19th, ASCE OC Branch/YMF K-12 collaborated with ASCE CSULB to assist in their 2nd annual Dream Big Event. The event consisted of 200 plus middle school and high school students from Orange County and Los Angeles County. Students were brought to the CSULB campus early in the morning where they received goodie bags with giveaways. The giveaways were provided by multiple civil engineering firms such as Huitt-Zollars, Inc., Michael

Baker International, Mark Thomas, Cordoba Corporation, Parsons, and Jacobs Engineering.

Students were formed into groups where various student chapters from CSULB and other campuses such as UCI, CSUF, CSUN, and CPP organized hands-on engineering presentations and activities. Each activity had an engineering professional that explained to the students, the science behind the activities and how similar concepts are applied to engineering design and construction.

The workshops hosted for the students were the following: pipelines workshop, soil mechanics activity, water filtration, popsicle stick bridge competition, safe landing egg drop, lab tour & liquefaction demo, design-build activity, LEGOman challenge, aluminum foil boat, traffic game, spaghetti towers, and the folding solar power activity.

After the students finished their activities, a panel of engineers from various branches of civil engineering and different ranges of work experience, had the opportunity to provide insights to the students,

in regards to pursuing an engineering degree, work-life balance, projects, challenges encountered as an engineer and much more. The panel speakers also made time to answer various questions from students that showed enthusiasm and curiosity for pursuing engineering as a profession.

After listening to the panel speakers, students finished off the day by watching the screening of Dream Big: Engineering Our World.

We want to thank the ASCE CSULB student chapter, CSULB Department of Civil Engineering, MESA, participating student chapters and professionals for hosting, organizing and volunteering for an event that has the potential to positively impact the lives of hundreds of students throughout the region. We also want to thank the civil engineering firm that provided sponsorship for the event: Michael Baker International.



## Bi-Monthly Board Meetings

Day:

First Thursday  
of every other month

Time:

6:00 pm

Location:

Gayle Stewart Enterprises  
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Everyone is welcome!



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Monthly: Est. 1913

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Typesetting, Layout & Printing: Apollo Printing & Graphics



Please send all copy to the Editor by  
the first of the month preceding publication.

### *Identification Statement*

ASCE Newsletter, (ISSN 0273-6233)  
is published monthly by ASCE,  
Los Angeles Section, 1405 Warner Ave.  
Tustin, California 92780. Subscription price  
included in Section dues of \$55.

### *Circulation*

Circulated monthly (except for a joint  
July/August issue) to the 5,000 subscribing  
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