



Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists  
**California Central Coast Chapter**, Southern California Section

[www.aegsc.org/chapters/centralcoast](http://www.aegsc.org/chapters/centralcoast)

Robert J. Urban, Chair  
Anthony Schuetze, Vice Chair  
Darryl Berberi-Hill, Student Liaison

Andy Evans, Treasurer  
Natalie Williams, Secretary

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## JULY MEETING NOTICE

### Large California Tsunamis from Central Coast Historians And Central Coast Newspaper Records

Eugene (Lou) Blanck, PG, RG, CEG, CHg, REA  
EM: [earthdesign@charter.net](mailto:earthdesign@charter.net)

Earth Design, Inc., Cambria, CA, United States

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

**Round Table Pizza Parlor, Santa Maria**  
(RSVP/Directions below)

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM Social Hour/Dinner  
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM Presentation

The July meeting is sponsored by:



URS Corporation  
2625 S. Miller Street, Suite 104  
Santa Maria, California 93454  
805.349.7000

### Chapter Chair Message

*Greetings CA Central Coast Chapter:*

*We will be meeting in Santa Maria again this month, so please note meeting location. Based on positive response last month, we are planning to make this our permanent meeting location.*

*If you have not yet visited our Chapter website, please check it out at <http://www.aegsc.org/chapters/centralcoast/>*

*I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming meeting.*

*Best of regards,  
Robert J. Urban  
Chapter Chair  
AEG CA Central Coast Chapter*

## **Abstract**

### **Large California Tsunamis from Central Coast Historians And Central Coast Newspaper Records**

**Eugene (Lou) Blanck, PG, RG, CEG, CHg, REA  
EM: earthdesign@charter.net**

**Earth Design, Inc., Cambria, CA, United States**

Approximately, 1996, Unocal historian Darwin Sainz mentioned the newly built Union Oil "Oilport" refinery in what is now Shell Beach (between Pismo & Avila Beaches and at 50 to 100 feet elevation) was destroyed by a tsunami in the early 1900's. July 2009, George Plafker reported, "a bigger earthquake and a more destructive tsunami than the 1964 event are possible in the future". The 1812 Santa Barbara Channel earthquake produced 5 tsunami waves approximately 50 feet in height to the front of the Santa Barbara Presidio based on a Franciscan Father's journal. A book on "Shipwrecks, Smugglers, and Maritime Mysteries" by Wheeler & Kallman reports the largest wave was 48-50 feet estimated by the USGS west of Santa Barbara near Goleta. The "History of San Luis Obispo County, California" by Thompson & West (1883) reports 12 foot tsunamis occurred on August 13, 1868 (Peruvian earthquake) and April 16, 1877. On November 22, 1878, turbulent water in the absence of wind produced tsunamis that broke over the Morro Bay sand spit (current quad sheet high elevations 66 to 97 feet N to S), destroyed Avila & Pt. Sal piers, damaging Cayucos pier. A Japanese earthquake resulted in a tsunami at 12:40 PM December 9, 1907, near high tide and in already heavy seas, that stood out from the rest of the storm due to its' enormous height. It wrecked the Ventura pier (12-13-1907, SLO Tribune) and the Oilport pier (12-13-1907, SLO Tribune & 12-6-1976 also 12-14-1907, Santa Maria Times & 12-10-1907 SLO Telegram) at Shell beach and destroyed the Oilport refinery (Darwin Sainz, personal communication). Before 7 AM on November 26, 1913, tsunamis wrecked the Monterey area including waves 10 to 15 feet above the Del Monte wharf. At Seaside, "Immense domes of water and foam shot up above the general height" ... "appearing from here to be higher than the highest sandhills along the shore." (12-2-1913, SLO Tribune) Current quad sheet high elevations are 120 feet. These reports of historic tsunamis represent wave elevations significantly higher than the 1964 Alaska earthquake tsunami that is typically used for emergency planning for tsunami inundation in California. Since it appears 4 much larger tsunamis occurred in the Central Coast area in 1812, 1878, 1907 and 1913; it appears we may have become complacent during this recent period of tsunami quiescence. Emergency planning for Central Coast tsunamis should be anticipating tsunami waves in the 50 to 100 feet elevation range.

UR: [www.earthdesigninc.net](http://www.earthdesigninc.net)

DE: [0468] BIOGEOSCIENCES / Natural hazards

DE: [1916] INFORMATICS / Data and information discovery

DE: [4564] OCEANOGRAPHY: PHYSICAL / Tsunamis and storm surges

DE: [6334] POLICY SCIENCES / Regional planning

SC: Natural Hazards (NH)

MN: 2009 Fall Meeting

## Announcements

Please email announcements to [Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com](mailto:Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com), thank you.

### **AEG'S 53<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**

September 20 – 25, 2010 ~

Francis Marion Hotel  
Charleston, South Carolina

View a full list of topics and field trips at  
[www.aegweb.org](http://www.aegweb.org).

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### Directions to Meeting

This month's meeting will take place at Round Table Pizza Parlor in Santa Maria. Social hour begins at 6 pm; the meeting begins at 7 pm.

For more information or to be added to the CA Central Coast Chapter email list, please contact Natalie Williams via email at [Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com](mailto:Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com).

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### **Location:**

Round Table Pizza, 2508 South Broadway,  
Santa Maria, California

### Directions:

#### **Driving Northbound on Highway 101:**

1. Exit on Santa Maria Way;
2. Continue straight onto Santa Maria Way;
3. Turn right at South Broadway;
4. Round Table is in the shopping center on the right.

#### **Driving Southbound on Highway 101:**

1. Exit on Betteravia Rd;
2. Turn right on E Betteravia Rd;
3. Turn left on S Broadway Rd;
4. Turn left on McCoy Ln;
5. Take the first right into the shopping center; Round Table is located in the southeast corner.

**Please mark your calendar for our next upcoming Chapter Meeting:**

**August 25, 2010 – Speaker to be announced**

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### **Donation/Cost**

AEG members = \$15; non-AEG members = \$20; Students = \$5

**Please:** If you plan on attending the meeting, please email [Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com](mailto:Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com) a confirmation of your attendance by the Tuesday preceding the meeting date. This greatly helps in ordering the food for attendees. However, if you forget to email, please still do attend the meeting. Thank you.

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### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Interested in speaking to the Chapter? Please inquire with the Chapter Vice Chair, Anthony Schuetze.

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### **STUDENT NIGHT**

Please note that next April will be our annual Student Night.

Student night involves two aspects of recognizing and supporting the future of our profession: (1) awarding a deserving student the Chapter's Dr. John W. Williams Scholarship and (2) listening to students present their research projects in the form of short (15 to 20 minute) presentations.

Applications will be posted to our website a few months before Student Night.

## **CHAPTER SPONSORS**

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The Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists CA Central Coast Chapter is currently seeking monthly meeting sponsorship. Benefits of becoming a monthly meeting sponsor include:

- 1) Sponsor's name or logo placed on our Chapter website indicating the month of sponsorship;
- 2) Listing as a Corporate Sponsor in our monthly newsletter, and
- 3) Recognition at the monthly meeting.

Our Chapter is asking for a donation of \$150 for becoming a monthly meeting sponsor . . . a small price for the recognition that you contribute to the professional society that best embodies our professional practice.

## **JOB POSTINGS**

If you would like to place a job announcement, please email the listing to [Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com](mailto:Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com), thank you!

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### **AEG CA Central Coast Chapter** **Dr. John W. Williams** **Scholarship**

The scholarship is awarded to a deserving earth sciences student each year. To make a donation to the Dr. John W. Williams Scholarship fund, please contact Natalie Williams at [Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com](mailto:Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com). All scholarship donors will be recognized on our Chapter's website.

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### **AEG CA Central Coast Contact** **Information**

#### **Chapter Chair**

Robert J. Urban  
(805) 361-1109

[Robert\\_Urban@urscorp.com](mailto:Robert_Urban@urscorp.com)

#### **Vice Chair**

Anthony Schuetze  
(805) 361-1130

[Anthony\\_Schuetze@urscorp.com](mailto:Anthony_Schuetze@urscorp.com)

#### **Treasurer**

Andy Evans  
(805) 361-1111

[andrewariel@hotmail.com](mailto:andrewariel@hotmail.com)

#### **Secretary**

Natalie Williams  
(805)361-1115

[Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com](mailto:Nwilliams.geo@gmail.com)

#### **Student Liaison**

Darryl Berberi-Hill  
(805) 704-3518

[d.funcheon@gmail.com](mailto:d.funcheon@gmail.com)