

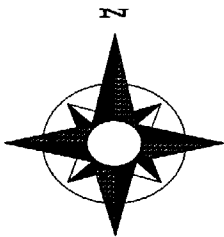
# ASSOCIATION OF ENGINEERING GEOLOGISTS

## Southern California Section

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### NEWSLETTER - MAY 1998

## MAY DINNER MEETING



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dave.ebersold  
@us.mw.com

##### VICE CHAIR

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818-376-6540

##### TREASURER

Wendy Schell  
(714) 250-1421

##### SECRETARY

Martin Lieurance  
805-499-5035

#### May Dinner Meeting

- 5:30 Social Hour & One-half
- 7:00 Dinner
- 7:30 Announcements
- 7:45 Program

**TUESDAY MAY 12, 1998**

#### Stevens Steak House

5332 Stevens Place, City of Commerce, California

#### Reservations

Call Nichole Harris at Montgomery Watson (626) 568-6041

*Cost \$20.00 per person*

Please make reservations by Friday May 8, 1998

*Students - \$10.00 with valid ID*

Reservations which are not canceled will be billed

**SPEAKER** Tim Lawson

**TOPIC** Pacific Coast Highway Bluff Stabilization, Colony Cove, San Clemente

\*\*\*\*\*

Tim Lawson is a Principal Geologist/Engineer and Managing Director at Leighton and Associates. He received his M. S. in Engineering Geology and Geotechnics from the University of Portsmouth, England in 1985. Mr. Lawson began his career at Leighton in 1989 as a staff geologist. Since then he has worked on a wide variety of projects from fault investigations and residential development, to landslide instrumentation and geotechnical hazard remediation.

Bluff retreat has jeopardized countless homes and infrastructures in southern California. Colony Cove in San Clemente is no exception. When several homes at the top of the bluff and Pacific Coast Highway at the toe of the bluff were threatened, the City of San Clemente hired Leighton and Associates to solve the problem. Several traditional slope stabilization techniques were adapted and combined to convert a large portion of the bluff into a sculpted concrete tieback wall. Construction was complicated by the confined, steep working area, and the necessity to keep Pacific Coast Highway open for the duration of the construction.

-INSIDE-  
Chairman's  
Message



## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By Dave Ebersold

On April 18 and 19, 1998, I attended my last AEG Board Meeting as Chairman of the Southern California Section. Here are some of the highlights.

In the days following Executive Director Norm Tilford's disappearance and death, Chris Mathewson was asked to assume the role of Acting Executive Director (ED) for the period of January 1 through June 30, 1998. In this role, Chris developed a transition plan ("Plan") to move AEG into the next century with a centralized business office and permanent staff. Here are the "Plan" highlights:

- The Sudbury office will be closed effective June 1 and central office functions transferred to Texas A&M University (TAMU) for an interim period. All publications will remain at TAMU for this interim period.
- During the transition period, the ED will develop a plan to relocate AEG Headquarters to its final location in the Denver area, consistent with the recommendations of the Relocation Committee. The transition period ends September 2001, at which time the Association expects to be fully operational with a new central office in Denver.
- The ED is charged with developing a strong central office which provides the business management to carry out the routine activities of AEG, provides services to the members that justify the member's payment of dues, and supports the development of service activities of the volunteers that make any society like ours a success.

I'm excited about the direction of AEG and the huge benefits which will accrue to each of us as a result of finally bringing the function of our central office under control with a qualified staff. This has been a long time coming!!

Enhanced member services included in the 1999 budget are:

1. AEG becomes the U.S. National Group of the International Association for Engineering Geology and the Environment (IAEG) with the IAEG Newsletter being a member benefit.
2. Increased visibility of our *Journal* Editors at professional meetings.
3. Increased Presidential travel and activities.
4. Enhanced AEG involvement in the national political arena.
5. Improved short course development and marketing to members and non-members.
6. Full-time meeting manager.
7. Half-time computer system manager, WEB Page operator, and data manager.
8. Half-time marketing manager.
9. Journalism staff to assist in the production of the Association publications.

At our April monthly meeting, I called two items to a vote. The first was whether or not our Section should join the California Council of Geoscience Organizations. This was approved overwhelmingly, with only two votes against (one via telephone preceding the meeting). The second item was whether or not the term of our Section Chairman should be changed from 1 year to 2 years, as it is in most other sections. This was also overwhelmingly approved, with only 1 vote against.

**ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION**  
There are two critical issues that I want to bring to your attention. The first is the ongoing "Standardization" of our industry by ASTM. Please see the article in this newsletter regarding recent developments on this issue. **YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION IS REQUIRED!** Second, Proposition 224 on the June ballot will adversely affect your business and significantly impact the consulting industry and general public in both California and across the country if it is allowed to pass. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**, please **ACT NOW!** See you at the May meeting.

## ASTM THREAT TO PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT INTENSIFIES

### By Betsy Mathieson, AEG San Francisco Section Chair

AEG is an active participant in Advocates for Professional Judgment in Geoprofessional Practice, which was established last year in response to ASTM's (formerly the American Society for Testing and Materials) entry into the business of preparing standards for activities that had previously been held within the realm of professional judgment. Advocates for Professional Judgment is spearheaded by ASFE, which deals heavily in risk management for member geotechnical firms. In ASFE's opinion, failure to follow an ASTM standard would be indefensible in court, even if the standard did not apply, was outdated, or cross referenced dozens of other ASTM standards.

An example of a recently settled case is ASFE Case History No. 71. An ASFE member firm was sued for failure to follow ASTM Standard D-2487, the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS). The firm's geotechnical report stated that the standard was the basis for their soil classification. The plaintiff's attorney discovered that D-2487 incorporates 15 other ASTM Standards by reference.

Not following the strict letter of the Standard in conjunction with the USCS cost the firm thousands of

dollars. When you reference the use of an ASTM Standard you certify that you followed it and all cross-referenced standards.

Recently the nation's geotechnical engineers were notified that they must abandon their professional judgment and comply with ASTM's upcoming "New Standard Guide for Preparation of Geotechnical Reports." This new Standard is more a guide for geotechnical engineering than it is for reports. The Standard makes no mention of observational methods, assumes services end with submission of the report, specifies what those services should entail, forces geotechnical engineers to assume responsibility for evaluating a site's environmental conditions, and states the report recommendations are final.

You may obtain a copy of D-18 "New Standard Guide for Preparation of Geotechnical Reports" (Reference Z7311Z) from ASTM at 100 Barr Harbor Drive, West Conshohocken, PA 19428. You may submit comments to the attention of Robert J. Morgan at the above address. The closing date for comments is May 8, 1998.

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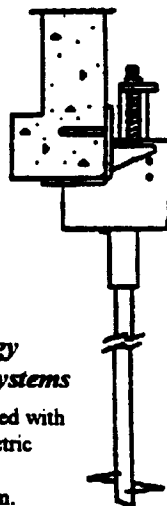
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## AEG SPECIAL PUBLICATION NO. 8

By Jim Borchers

AEG will soon receive AEG Special Publication No. 8 from the printer. The book has been in production for the past 2 years and will be available in early May.

Special Publication No. 8 is entitled "Land Subsidence Case Histories and Current Research: Proceedings of the Dr. Joseph F. Poland Symposium on Land Subsidence". The book, nicknamed the "Poland Volume", celebrates the career and scientific contributions of Dr. Joseph Fairchild Poland, an internationally renowned scientist with the U. S. Geological Survey, and a founding member of the California Association of Engineering Geologists, an organization that grew to become AEG.

This special publication of AEG comprises original papers that were presented at the Dr. Joseph F. Poland Symposium on Land Subsidence during the AEG/GRA Joint Annual Meeting, in Sacramento, California in 1995. Over 100 authors from 10 countries contributed 57 articles that are grouped in nine chapters. The hardback book measures 8.5 by 11 inches, and includes numerous photographs, maps and charts on its 572 pages.

The volume begins with retrospective articles describing early studies of land subsidence in the United States and the scientific contributions of Joe Poland. The final section of the first chapter presents anecdotal remembrances of Joe by his colleagues, and includes the here-to-for unpublished history of the beginnings of land subsidence research in California.

Chapters 2 through 7 describe current research and case studies of land subsidence associated with: extraction of ground water, brine, and hydrocarbons; hydrocompaction of moisture deficient sediments such as debris flow deposits and artificial fill; oxidation of peat deposits; collapse of underground and solution mine voids; tunneling; carbonate and evaporite karst terrain; and tectonics. Topics include site exploration and characterization of subsidence potential, innovative techniques to detect subsidence and measure its magnitude, theoretical advances in understanding the physical processes responsible for deformation and fissuring of the land surface, predictive modeling, damage to infrastructure and the environment, and design of infrastructure in subsidence prone areas.

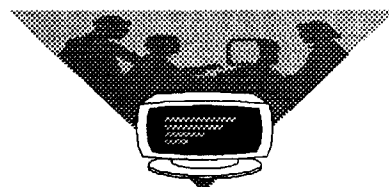
The final chapter, 'Resource-Management, Legal, and Political Issues', brings together scientific case studies of land subsidence and discussions of resource-management options that may minimize subsidence-related damage to infrastructure and the environment. Authors discuss subsidence-related issues of property rights, water and land-use law, politics, and liability.

Because the book is an unusual blend of history, current research, engineering geology and timely resource-management/political/legal issues, it might appeal to a wider audience than some strictly technical publications. The sponsors of the symposium represented a varied group including AEG, United States Geological Survey, California Department of Water Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, Association of California Water Agencies, Water Education Foundation, and California State Association of California.

The editor's goals were to produce a volume that would be used both as a technical reference and as a tool to educate people about the insidious relation between resource-management decisions and the deleterious effects of land subsidence. These goals are consistent with the California Council of Geoscience Organization's (CCGO) educational mission; particularly the education of the public and public officials regarding the necessity to consider man induced and natural geohazards when making natural resource policy decisions. For more information please e-mail Jim Borchers at [jborch@usgs.gov](mailto:jborch@usgs.gov).

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED

The AEG Southern California Section needs a Newsletter Editor. It is a great way to support AEG. Start in July with the August 1998 Newsletter. Please e-mail Linda Tandy at [LASTRATA@aol.com](mailto:LASTRATA@aol.com) if you are interested.



## SECTION OFFICER NOMINATIONS

Nominations for 1998-1999 Southern California Section Officers will be accepted at the May meeting. Positions on committees including newsletter editor, legislative affairs, education, field trips, short courses and publications are also available.

## STOUT SCHOLARSHIP

Applications for the Stout Scholarship are now being accepted. Application forms are available from Dave Ebersold. Please contact him at 626-568-6943 or Dave.Ebersold@us.mw.com. Due date is July 15, 1998. The only requirement is that you be a student member of AEG. Contributions to the fund in any amount may also be made. Please make check payable to Stout Scholarship Fund and send to Dave Ebersold, 301 N. Lake Ave., Suite 600, Pasadena, California 91101.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

*Ninyo & Moore's* Geotechnical Division seeks Project Geologist. Minimum 5 years experience. RG/CEG preferred. Please send resume to Ninyo and Moore, 9272 Jeronimo Rd. Suite 123A, Irvine, California 92618.

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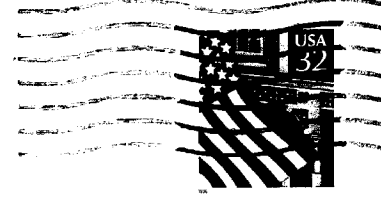
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 Rudy F. Ruberti  
 818-785-2158

**EDITOR**  
 Linda L. Tandy  
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 LASTRATA@aol.com  
**Deadline for submittals to the June 1998 Newsletter:**  
 May 29, 1998.  
 Please submit via e-mail or on disc and via snail mail to 1341 Hill Drive, Los Angeles, CA, 90041



**Association of Engineering Geologists**  
*Southern California Section*



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AEG Newsletter Editor  
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