

ASSOCIATION OF ENGINEERING GEOLOGISTS

Southern California Section

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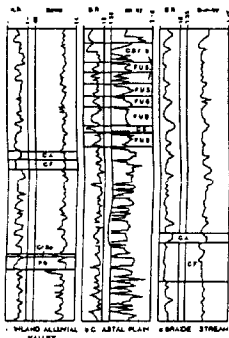
NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 1999

MONTHLY DINNER MEETING

Date: Tuesday, August 10, 1999
Location: Stevens Steak House, 5332 Stevens Place, Commerce, CA
Time: Social Hour - 5:30 p.m. Dinner and Meeting -6:30 p.m.
Reservations: Call (949) 253-5924 ext. 564
Cost: \$25.00 for reservations made by 12:00 noon Monday August 9, \$30.00 at the door, and \$10.00 for students w/ valid i.d.). "No-shows" will be billed \$10.00.

SPEAKER: Roy J. Shlemon, Ph.D.

TOPIC: The Holocene "Downtown Fault" in Salt Lake City, Utah: Technical Controversies and Geopolitics



Controversy abounds! Our recent investigations for the expansion of the Salt Palace Convention Center in downtown Salt Lake City revealed the presence of two grabens, bounding faults, liquefaction dikes, and offset paleosols and alluvial fan sediments of Holocene age. We interpret these features to be expressions of multiple displacements of an active (Holocene) tectonic structure that is probably the southern extension of the Warm Springs fault previously documented at the Washington Elementary School ~1.5 km to the north. This interpretation would necessitate substantial setbacks in accordance with State of Utah active-fault criteria, major delays in construction schedules, or possibly abandonment of the site. Accordingly, the Convention Center expansion would not be ready for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, nor for the income-producing conventions already under contract. The client therefore retained another geotechnical firm for a "third-party" opinion. This firm concluded that the downtown features were solely the result of liquefaction induced by seismic events elsewhere in the region, and that displacement of the underlying ~13 to 27 ka Bonneville Lake beds were merely "minor anomalies." An independent reviewer agreed with the "liquefaction only" scenario and construction on the site is now underway.

The investigations of the "Holocene Downtown Fault" (which, in our judgment, truly exists) exemplify, unfortunately, the influence of substantial geopolitical pressure. This included the public "rebuking" of the Utah Geological Survey and State Geologist (the latter held an appointed position and has now departed for Kansas); the interest, if not speculation, by the local press about this and other potentially active faults in the downtown area (including removal of the southern part of the Warm Springs fault from the Salt Lake County fault map); and the elimination, politically, of the Utah Geological Survey as an independent reviewing agency. The technical debate continues, albeit academically, for various views will be presented at the 1999 AEG national meetings in September, which, ironically, will be housed in downtown Salt Lake City.

Our speaker this evening, Roy Shlemon, received a Ph.D. degree from the University of California at Berkeley (during the late Pleistocene). Formerly on the faculty of the University of California at Davis and the Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, Dr. Shlemon has been a private consultant to the engineering-geology profession for the past 25 years. He specializes in Quaternary geology, geomorphology and soil stratigraphy. Projects have been world-wide, ranging from siting nuclear power and waste disposal facilities, large dams, and developments, to reviewing for government agencies and private firms, and recent appointments by the courts as a "neutral referee."

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CHAIR'S COLUMN

By now you should have received your Program with Abstracts for the 42nd Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah. If you have not received your program please contact me and I will endeavor to correct your address with National. The meeting this year will be held September 26-29 and it is strongly recommended that you register early. This not only helps the organizing committee but also results in savings for you. The early registration deadline is August 26, 1999 and registration forms are available in the program and at www.aegweb.org.

Although it is a long way off, I'd like to start rounding up interested people to form the organizing committee for the 2007 annual meeting. This will be the 50th annual meeting and since the first general annual meeting was hosted by the Southern California Section, it seems fitting that the 50th meeting returns here. At this stage there will be little to do other than to form a conceptual plan of what we would like to do for the meeting, where it should be held etc. If you are interested in lending a hand please let me know and we can get working on submitting a proposal to the AEG Board.

At the last dinner meeting, there was some discussion about the pricing of our dinner meetings. We have held prices steady for a number of years and absorbed the cost of price increases from the restaurants. It has become apparent that we can no longer absorb these costs as we are losing money at each meeting. Some people seemed a little surprised that we could lose money when we charge \$20 for a meal that Steven's charges us \$15 for. However, by the time service charges and tax are included, \$15 becomes \$19, then when the cost of the speakers dinner is included, and the cost of the speakers gift and the discounted meals for students, we are running at a loss. It is not our intention to use the monthly dinner meetings as a money making affair, but we cannot afford to eat into our treasury in order to continually cover the cost overruns from these meetings. Effective immediately it is now necessary for us to raise the price of our dinner meetings to \$25 when they are held at Steven's Steak House. The price at other venues may be higher.

Also at last month's meeting, there were a number of suggestions for improving our dinner meetings. One of these suggestions was to have a sponsor for the social hour. I hope to have this implemented starting with our September meeting. If you know of any companies that have products or services of interest to our profession, please forward their names to me so I can solicit them for sponsorship. If I don't hear from anyone, then I will assume that free drinks at our meetings are not important to you.

Recently the section purchased a second slide projector for use at our meetings. We do not have a case to store it in at present. If anyone can donate a case it would be much appreciated. Also our laser pointer gave up the ghost so we are looking for a donated one. Please contact Dave Seymour at 714-560-9016. Any donations will be acknowledged in the newsletter.

- Wendy Schell

CORRECTED INFORMATION - NATIONAL AEG MEETING

On page 50 of AEG 1999's annual meeting "Program with Abstracts," the phone number and fax number for the Little America Hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah are listed incorrectly. The correct numbers are:

**Little America Hotel
Salt Lake City, Utah
Phone: 801-363-6781
Fax: 801-596-5910**

We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you.

Julie Keaton and the AEG 1999 Planning Committee

Ballot for Election of 1999/2000 Officers
AEG- Southern California Section

Please mark one choice for each position and mail your ballot to the address on the reverse by August 31, 1999.

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Secretary

Doug Santo

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Vice-Chair

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Chairman

Wendy Schell was elected for a two-year term in 1998. The position of Chairman will not be open until August 2000.

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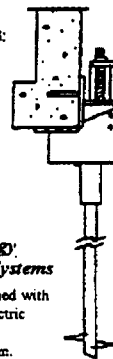
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Associate Engineering Geologist. The City of San Diego Land Development Review Division is opening a position for an Associate Engineering Geologist. In addition, the applicant list for Assistant Engineering Geologist will also be opened for future openings. Both lists should be open on July 21, and will close August 11, 1999. Job Bulletins listing details for both positions will be available from the City's Personnel Department after July 21. Requirements for the position include (but are not limited to): Bachelors degree or higher in Geology or Geology Specialty field, Geotechnical Engineering, or Registration as a Geologist/Certification as an Engineering geologist in California, 3 years of experience in engineering geology or related fields. For more information, please call Rob Hawk at 619-236-7236 or the City's Personnel Department after July 21, 1999 at 619-236-6467.

Engineering Geologist. Well-established and fast growing Orange County-based geotechnical firm seeks project-level engineering geologist with 8+ years hillside grading experience. Duties include management of medium- to large-sized grading projects within a number of southern California counties. Applicants must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of current grading standards, possess good communication skills and be capable to direct field technicians and grading personnel in day-to-day operations. Field mapping, record-keeping and report preparation experience is essential. Please fax resume (in confidence) to 714/549-1438, attention Mr. Robert Ruff.

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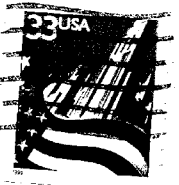
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DEADLINE FOR SEPT. NEWSLETTER SUBMITTALS IS AUG. 26TH.



Association of Engineering Geologists
Southern California Section



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