

ASCE American Society of Civil Engineers

Northwest Branch Newsletter No. 114 April 19th, 2012



President's Message – The Plunger

Dear ASCE Northwest Branch,

Who's going to be that guy? That person that can loosen the communication pipes (tension and stress level) in any family, office or public place. Yes, I am referring to the effect humor has in relation to stress management. If you haven't noticed, we are in the month of April and it is a busy month for people around you that enjoy humor. It starts with April Fool's Day on April 1st which encourages us to prank our friends and co-workers; April 5th is International Fun at Work Day which encourages fun in the workplace; April 14th is International Moment of Laughter Day which encourages us to laugh; and April 19th is National High-5 Day where you give High-5s of course.

Studies from the Mayo Clinic indicate that laughter can cause stress relief.

A good sense of humor can't cure all ailments, but data is mounting about the positive things laughter can do. A good laugh has great short-term effects. When you start to laugh, it doesn't

just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:

- Stimulate many organs. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.
- Activate and relieve your stress response. A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response and increases your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- Soothe tension. Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Long-term effects: Laughter isn't just a quick pick-me-up, though it's also good for you over the long haul. Laughter may:

- Improve your immune system. Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can impact your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. In contrast, positive thoughts actually release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.
- Relieve pain. Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers. Laughter may also break the pain-spasm cycle common to some muscle disorders.
- Increase personal satisfaction. Laughter can also make it easier to cope with difficult situations. It also helps you connect with other people.

Using humor is a great way to get people thinking differently. It sparks creativity and helps people think outside of their normal perspective. This doesn't mean you have to get your team to tell jokes all the time. Instead it could be as simple as creating an environment that is incongruous what is expected. It could be as simple as playing the ice cream truck music over the loudspeaker and holding an ice cream social in the middle of the afternoon on a nice day or busting out the movie Office Space at lunch and playing it in the conference room. Check out the following website with a 101 ways to generate humor at work.

http://www.humorthatworks.com/how-to/101-ways-to-create-humor-at-work/?utm_source=Humor+That+Works+List&utm_campaign=7ed55788c4-newsletter_march_2012&utm_medium=email

Our next branch event will be in the Eau Claire Area. I hope you enjoy meeting this newsletters featured member Ben Olson. I wish all of you a happy National Humor month. Remember to give your co-workers a high 5 today and be the plunger around the office.

Sincerely and civilly yours,

Dan Borchardt P.E.

Northwest Branch President

Email: danborchardt83@gmail.com

As always, the views expressed in the president's message are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official positions of ASCE.

ASCE FEATURED MEMBER

BEN G. OLSON P.E., M.ASCE (Life Member)

Place of Employment: Self employed at O. Neil Olson & Associates LLC, Consulting Engineers

Location of Employment: Milwaukee area & La Crosse

Career Specialty: Precast, pre-stressed structural systems & architectural concrete

What are the current projects that you are working on?
Precast concrete cladding & precast concrete lintels for Eau Claire Co. Courthouse & Jail.



What are your favorite projects you ever worked on? U.S.F.S. highway bridge over the Vermillion River in Superior Nat'l Forest near Orr, MN. and being on the committee that prepared the 3rd & 4th editions of the PCI Design Handbook

What would be your dream project? Anything using precast and pre-stressed concrete.

Favorite activity/hobby outside of work: Skiing with 60 yrs of Nat'l Ski Patrol, fishing, boating & playing baritone ukulele with the Cheez Land Uke Band.

What is usually your first thought when you wake up? It's going to be a great day.

If you could choose anyone who would you pick as your Mentor? I chose my father, O. Neil Olson, because he was a nationally recognized expert in the field of concrete masonry & precast concrete floor & roof systems, as well as being the Head of the Civil Engineering Dept. at Marquette University. Eventually formed partnership for consulting.

If you could stay a certain age forever what age would it be? Old enough to feel secure in life and still young and healthy enough to enjoy it to the fullest.

What do you miss most about being a kid? The freedom and lack of major responsibilities.

What would you name the autobiography of your life? "I Hope I Helped You"

If you could meet anyone, living or dead, who would you meet? The signers of the Declaration of Independence.

What do you like most about the Civil Engineering Profession? The ability to be part of the creation of something which will be lasting and beneficial.

Involvement Opportunities

NORTHWEST BRANCH BOARD POSITIONS OPEN

There are two Director at Large positions vacancies on the 2012-2013 Northwest Branch Board. Besides the vacancy, the other positions (President-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, and 1 additional Director-At-Large) are available to run against a current board member. Serving on the Northwest Branch Board is a great way to give back to ASCE and your community. There is no substitute for the powerful networking and career services that ASCE can offer. Please contact Dan Borchardt ASAP at danborchardt83@gmail.com, if you are interested in serving on the ASCE Board. Ballots and biographies/narratives for each member running for a 2012-2013 board position will be sent out the beginning of May 2012.

WISCONSIN SECTION TREASURER POSITION OPEN

Contact John Bainter at jbainter@donohue-associates.com for details and position description.

Past Events

March Branch Meeting: PE Exam Helpful Hints & Continuing Education Requirements

By: Jessica L. Felix P.E.

Ayres & Associates hosted 10 engineers for the information sessions and social on March 14, 2012. The Civil PE Exam information session gave helpful hints about exam registration, preparation and test taking. Registered PEs had the opportunity to share with EITs ideas on helpful resources and exam day strategies. Two EITs were in attendance and received CDs with studying resources. Upon request, the studying resource CD and presentation is available to EITs preparing to take the exam within the next year.

The Civil PE Exam information session provided segue into the new WI licensing requirements for Professional Engineers—specifically the continuing education requirements. Eight Professional Engineers were in attendance to learn about the 30 PDHs required each biennium, starting August 2012, for WI licensure and potential resources for earning PDHs. The presentation, PDH tracking spreadsheet and copy of the Wisconsin Administrative Code pertaining to continuing education is available upon request.

If you think these information sessions would be beneficial in the future, please contact a board member and we will schedule another session for the 2012-2013 year.

ASCE NORTHWEST BRANCH K-12 OUTREACH

By: Dan Borchardt P.E., Andy Walters P.E., Joseph Behlen P.E.

The ASCE Northwest Branch utilized a \$375.00 State Public Affairs Grant (SPAG), awarded through ASCE National, to build a base for its continued outreach efforts. The Northwest Branch during National Engineers Week, aka E-Week, set out to do outreach in multiple area schools including DC Everest Middle School, Edgar Middle School, and Lincoln High School. The Northwest Branch created a base presentation called "What is Engineering?" that presenters could modify to tailor fit the presentation to their need. The Northwest Branch also purchased items for their outreach toolkits that included the Building Big series and Discover Engineering DVDs. ASCE promotional materials (bookmarks) and supplies (pens and rulers) were given to the kids as incentives for the hands on engineering activities.

On Tuesday February 21st, Dan Borchardt taught with Edgar middle school science teacher, Jon Albee, the 6th, 7th and 8th grade classes for 1.25 hour block periods. The periods all started with an introductory presentation followed by hands-on activities. The activities included Understanding the properties of Corn Starch, determining the slope of the line using survey equipment, Newspaper Table design, shaky ground experiment, building terms (tension and compression), single shape table design and finally the students determined if the school floor was level. They even played a game of Jeopardy. Needless to say the students soaked up a lot of information that day. The students learned how engineering is an integral part of their life each day; the opportunities that an engineering career can bring; and they became aware of engineering; and how to start preparing for civil engineering as a potential career. Jon Albee was pleased with lessons prepared by ASCE for the students and has made a request for ASCE to continue offering outreach to his classroom because of the active engagement and enthusiasm his students portrayed.

On Friday, February 24th, Andy Walters worked with Mr. Andrew Guden, the technology education teacher at D.C. Everest Middle School, and presented to 94 eager 7th graders across four class periods on two topics: 'What is Engineering?' and 'The Design Process'. Prior to the presentation, Mr. Walters and Mr. Guden met to discuss a focus of the presentation and it was understood, they wanted the presentation to go over details of engineering and the process engineers' use in design. Mr. Guden's class was currently working on the design of drink coasters, and Mr. Guden mentioned that one of the most difficult parts of his class was the student's inability to visualize the final product while working on 2-dimensional drawings. For 'The Design Process' portion of the presentation, Mr. Walters worked through a simplified example of a bridge design and construction project while identifying connections to the process the students were using to design their drink coasters. The presentation brought up additional discussion and questions from the students that typically lasted beyond the end of the class period. Mr. Guden was very pleased with the presentation and has requested additional presentations for each quarter. Mr. Walters is scheduled to 'return to' 7th grade in May.

On April 10th, Joe Behlen worked with Mr. Nelson, the engineering design instructor at Lincoln High School, and presented to Mr. Nelson's class a 'What is Engineering?' presentation and answered questions about engineering. Joe modified the basic presentation to have 50 minutes packed full of great information. Some tidbits Joe added where from PBS such as why the new iPad was made in China instead of the United States. It had nothing to do with cheap labor. China had 50,000 industrial engineers available to help get the production facilities set up while the United State barely had 5,000. The kids knew about the Panama Canal expansion, which was great. Overall, it was a very good experience and there were very good questions. A few of the kids in this class were kids whom also went to the Engineering Expo in Madison a few years back. The ASCE Northwest Branch sponsored one of the buses and Joe had sponsored the other. It was nice to see some of the students still had an interest in engineering.

Additional K-12 outreach will be presented in the next newsletter.

ASCE National News

TOM WALTHER: LEGISLATIVE FLY-IN AND ASCE NATIONAL PRESIDENT-ELECT NOMINEE

Tom Walther represented the Wisconsin Section and Northwest Branch at the 11th Annual ASCE National Legislative Fly-In where on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 20 and 21, he joined Wisconsin Section President Elect Julie Hoppe and about 160 other ASCE members from around the nation to learn more about the political advocacy process and then to visit with their Representatives and Senators. The big issue this year was to try to get congress to finally pass a new transportation bill. U.S. DOT Secretary Ray LaHood personally spoke to attendees for about 1/2 hour explaining how congress has adopted 6 continuing resolutions since the last federal transportation bill expired in 2009. Secretary LaHood explained how political gridlock is offering significant challenges to state and local planning, scheduling and funding processes. At the time of the visit the Senate had adopted a 2 year bill and sent it to the House. Unfortunately, since the Fly-In, the House has failed to take action and instead another continuing resolution has been adopted. In an attempt to get our elected officials to get moving on transportation Tom and Julie jointly visited with staff members in the offices of both Senator Kohl and Senator Johnson. Both Senators acknowledge the need for a long term transportation bill but differ on how that should come about. Tom then had the pleasure to personally meet with Congressman Ron Kind for about 20 minutes in an ante-room in the U.S. Capital building across the hall from the House chambers. Tom thanked Congressman Kind for his support of the bill to move the Stillwater bridge project ahead. He also encouraged the congressman to do whatever he could to get a multi-year transportation bill adopted. On Thursday evening Tom attended the annual ASCE OPAL awards gala then on Friday he "interviewed" with the ASCE Board of Direction Nominating Committee for the position of ASCE President Elect. Tom's run for ASCE National President-Elect came to an end as the election field was narrowed by the Selection Committee from four to two candidates. As stated in the ASCE National By-Laws, only two candidates may be on the voting ballot.

The Northwest Branch Board and Members thank Tom for his commitment to representing the Branch and Wisconsin Section at the National Level. His campaign for President-Elect was just another example of his dedication to the profession and of his ideals of being a member of ASCE.

Senate Passes MAP-21

By: ASCE National

The Senate on March 28th passed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) by a vote of 74-22. The two-year, \$109 billion authorization, maintains current levels of transportation investment, and adjusts those funding levels for inflation. The strong bipartisan support for the legislation capped off months of work from both sides of the aisle to produce a surface transportation bill.

Overall, MAP-21, also would consolidate highway programs, speed up project delivery, create a national freight program, and expand a financing program known as the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program. Instead of highway funding distributed to states based on formulas and "equity" bonuses, the bill would base such funding on the portion of money, both discretionary and formula, that states received under the last reauthorization compared with total funding the states received. Adjustments would be made to ensure that states receive no less in apportioned funds than 95 percent of the taxes they paid into the Highway Trust Fund.

After passing the legislation on Wednesday with such strong bipartisan support, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) called on Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH) to take up the Senate bill and pass it in the House. Surface transportation talks in the House have stalled and the chance of the original five year authorization passing the House at this time seems unlikely. Boehner has suggested that the House could take up the Senate bill, which should pass the House with bipartisan support, however no definitive commitment has been made. The latest extension will expire on March 31st, so if the House does not act quickly a ninth extension will be necessary.

ASCE applauds the Senate passing MAP-21 and thanks all Senators who voted for the legislation. We thank Senators Barbara Boxer and Jim Inhofe for their leadership on critical legislation that will provide two years of stable funding for our nation's transportation network, and keep our economy moving. If we are to compete globally in the 21st century, our highways, bridges, and public transportation systems need to be maintained and modernized.

UPDATE—Transportation Reauthorization-Another 90 Days

The House and Senate left Friday, March 30th for a two week recess after passing a 90 day extension for surface transportation programs. This, the 9th extension, will now expire on June 30th. ASCE was disappointed in extending the program another 3 months, because Congress tends not to work on anything until the deadline nears.

Congress returned on April 16th and there are rumors that the House Republicans are still working on a path forward

Fracture Sand Mining Plants in Wisconsin and Impacts –May Branch Meeting

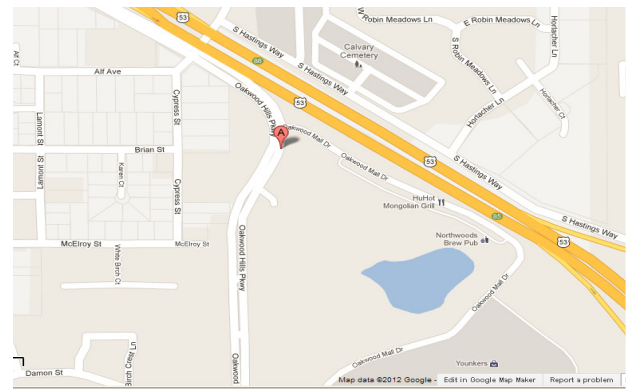
Hydraulic Fracturing a process in which fractures in rocks below the earth's surface are opened and widened by combining quartz sand (mined in the Midwest), additives and liquids at high pressure: used especially to extract natural gas or oil. Impacts include transportation such as access management and increased truck traffic, air quality, and fast-track construction of facilities.

Mike Stoffel and Lori Rosemore from Ayres associates will give a presentation on Frac Sand Mining in Western Wisconsin. It will be a general overview of the sand mining process starting with why the sand is here, continuing through the mining and processing, and ending at what is the material used for. Please join Mike and Lori to learn some basic knowledge of an industry that is very popular right now.

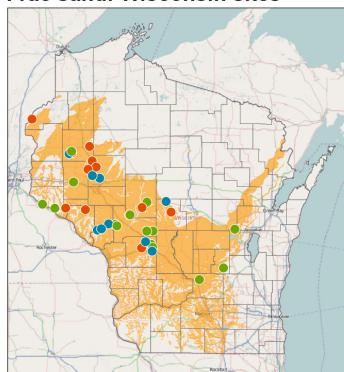
When: Wednesday, May 16, 2012

Time: 5:30pm—Presentation

Location: Ayres & Associates—Board Room or Employee Lounge (attendance dependent)
3433 Oakwood Hills Parkway
Eau Claire, WI 54701-7698



Frac sand: Wisconsin sites



● Active (16) ■ Sandstone areas of possible interest to frac sand miners
● In development (11)
● Proposed (14)

Mine and processing plant sites compiled in July 2011 from interviews with county and company officials; company websites; and Department of Natural Resources permit records. Sandstone identified with assistance from the Wisconsin Geological Survey.

Map: Kate Golden, Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. Research: Jason Smathers and Julie Strupp, WCU.



Please contact: Lisa Fleming at flemingl@ayresassociates.com if you have questions or suggestions for content. An Evite with additional details and request to RSVP will be sent closer to the meeting day.

2012- 2013 Calendar of Events

The calendar is just a guide and may change throughout the year

APRIL:

- April 25th @ 4:00PM Rib Mountain Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant (WSPE invited ASCE for a joint mtg)

MAY:

- May 10th 2012-2013 Northwest Branch Board voting ballots are emailed to members
- May 16th Branch Meeting—Frac Sand Mining in Wisconsin – Eau Claire - (Organizer - Lisa Fleming)
- May 16th Awards Ceremony for the NW Branch Goodell Scholarship recipient
- May 31st 2012-2013 Northwest Branch Board Voting Ballots due

JUNE:

JULY:

- July 28th Application for October 2012 PE Exams due to WI Dept of Regulation & Licensing
- July 31st Last day to renew WI Professional Engineering License (credentials expire today!)

AUGUST:

- August 1st New WI Professional Engineering License Continuing Education Requirement begins (complete 30 PDHs between 8/1/2012-7/31/2014)
- Wausau Area meeting - Domtar Biomass Plant, (Organizer – Dan Borchardt)

SEPTEMBER:

- WI Section Annual Meeting
- September 23rd & 24th ASCE 2012 Section & Branch Presidents and Region Governors Forum; Reston, VA

OCTOBER:

- October 26th & 27th PE Exams

NOVEMBER:

DECEMBER:

JANUARY 2013:

- January 11th-12th Regions 3, 6 & 7 Workshops for Section & Branch Leaders; Milwaukee, WI

UPDATE ASCE ONLINE PROFILE REGULARLY

Please update your ASCE Online Profile with current email and mailing addresses to guarantee you receive ASCE Newsletters and important information. As a reminder, those of you that have passed your PE exam, make sure to change your account with ASCE National. To update your ASCE profile, go to www.asce.org or call (800) 548-2723.

CURRENT NORTHWEST BRANCH OFFICERS

President: Dan Borchardt, MSA Professional Services; Marshfield (715) 216-3601

President-Elect: Will Kratt, Mead and Hunt, Inc.; La Crosse; (608) 784-6040

Secretary-Treasurer: Lisa Fleming, Ayres Associates, Inc.; Eau Claire; (715) 831-7677

Wisconsin Section Northwest Branch Representative: Dan Borchardt, MSA Professional Services, Marshfield; (715) 216-3601

Northwest Branch Directors-At-Large:

1. Andy Walters, Tetra Tech, Wausau, WI; (715) 355-4180
2. Jessica Felix, WisDOT Northwest Region: Eau Claire, WI; (715) 577-4365 or (612) 803-2959
3. Zach Ferrall, Krech Ojard & Associates: Eau Claire; (715) 552-7374

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