

Willamette Valley Section News

April 2008

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Society of Women Engineers

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President's Letter

Abbie Kimerling, April 2008

Reflections on the FY08 Region J Conference

With the theme of "Sustainable and Responsible Engineering," the FY08 Region J Conference was held in Vancouver, Washington April 6-8 at one of the first LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified hotels in the country. (Photo shown on next page). The hotel and conference center were built by the city of Vancouver as part of their sustainability effort, and is operated by Hilton. This state-of-the-art building includes carbon dioxide sensors in the meeting rooms to adjust airflow based on occupancy, low-impact landscaping, and a white heat-reflecting roof. The hotel rooms have nice, large windows to let in natural light, a recycling bin, and compact fluorescent light bulbs in all fixtures (I checked, they even had some in the ceiling canister light instead of a flood bulb).

I attended sessions in the Sustainability Track, where I learned about engineering projects that are working to improve our environment and ways to help reduce your carbon footprint in the workplace. The City of Vancouver recently implemented a project to reduce the costs of pressing, shipping, and disposing of solids out of a local food waste lagoon. Lilly Longshore spoke on how using the lagoon liquids as-is for fertilizer for grass in a wetland restoration area just down the road from the lagoon has been a benefit both to the city utilities and the wetland project. Be on the lookout for solar panels along highways in the Portland area soon – Allison Hamilton of ODOT is working with PGE and a local solar cell manufacturer to become a carbon neutral office by putting photovoltaic cells along 120 miles of Oregon right of ways.

This practice is common in European countries, but Oregon will be the first state in the U.S. to implement the right-of-way project. The commercial building efficiency seminar had many ideas for reducing the carbon footprint of the workplace. The speakers, Mira Vowles from the BPA and Anne Wagner of SAIC, emphasized that people's comfort should not be sacrificed to reach efficiency goals (e.g., the workplace is too cold, too hot, or too dark), and that users of energy-efficient equipment and processes need to embrace changes, or else they will find ways to circumvent energy saving efforts.

The keynote speakers at the meals also provided a good deal of information. SWE FY08 President Michelle Tortolani spoke at breakfast on the society's accomplishments so far this year and encouraged members to check out the new web communities that will be launched April 15th. Vancouver Mayor Royce E. Pollard gave an overview of the city's sustainability effort at lunch. The city has adopted the Kyoto Protocol, along with over 700 other cities in the United States, in response to the fact that our country remains the only industrialized nation that has not signed the protocol. Mayor Pollard also proudly gave a history of famous military personnel that had been stationed at one time at Fort Vancouver.

Who's Who

Executive Council

President: Amy Welter
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Section Representative:
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Section Rep Alternate: Jeana Kanyer
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Committee Chairs

Banquet: Toni Doolen, toni.doolen@swe.org

Certificate of Merit: OPEN

Essay Contest: Bronwyn Pierce
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Fund Development: Myra Long
myra.long@hp.com

Girl Scouts: Katrina Sloma
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HP Activities: Patty Kellar
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Nominating Committee Member (elected):
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Scholarship: Karinne Wallace
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Webmaster: Celeste Baine celbaine@aol.com



By far the highlight of the conference was hearing Bill Bradbury, Oregon Secretary of State, speak on global warming at the evening banquet. This was his 115th climate presentation after being among the first fifty people trained by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore a year and half ago. The rapid increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the fact that it is at the highest

concentration in the past 650,000 years is startling, especially if one believes that the global temperature is related to the carbon dioxide concentration.

While the presentation included a good deal of global and national information, it was also tailored to the Pacific Northwest. Local examples of the effects of global warming include receding glaciers on Mt Hood, the dead zone off the Oregon Coast, poor salmon runs because rivers are too hot, and the increase in invasive species because they are not killed off by cold winters.

Whether you believe in global warming or not, there are some carbon-reducing activities we can all do to help our environment, and most will save us money in energy costs in the process. Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs. If everyone in the U.S. replaced just one light bulb, the energy savings and reduced carbon output would be equivalent to taking one million cars off the road. Next time you purchase a car, buy one that is more fuel-efficient. Don't use a flashy screen saver – this often requires more energy than when you are actually working at your computer – just have it go black. While planting a tree won't save you energy, it is one of the best "carbon capture" methods out there and adds aesthetic value to your surroundings. See the Oregon Environmental Council website (<http://www.oconline.org>) for more ideas.

Finally, it is worth noting that we only had **three** WVS members attend the conference. **Yikes! This conference couldn't have been any closer unless we organized it.** SWE sections from Seattle, Spokane, and the Tri Cities were well represented, as well as Members at Large from further distances like Idaho Falls.

The Columbia River Section did a great job of organizing the weekend, having many members in attendance and some local non-members that will probably be looking to join SWE in the next year. The FY09 Region J Conference will likely be in Seattle the first week in April again (proposal in progress). **Please think about setting aside this weekend now – it's embarrassing to be so close and be so underrepresented.**



WVS SWE Elections

By Amy Welter

A big thank you to all who supported our SWE section this year! Thanks to your hard work and commitment we had a very successful year. Now, it's time to look forward by thinking about the make up of our section's Executive Council (EC) and Chair positions for FY09. Please consider contributing your energy to this organization.

The roles of the EC (which require that you be a paying member of our section) as well as the committee chairs and special roles (no requirement that you be a paying member of our section) are reviewed below. These positions are a great way to get more involved in our section and develop your leadership skills at the same time.

All positions are considered open for next year, which officially starts on July 1st. Please reply to me (amy.welter@swe.org) by **April 23rd** with your first, second, and third choices (if you would consider more than one) so we can move people around if necessary to fill all of the positions. Many of the current chairpersons have already responded, so I have your choices already and there is no need to respond again. If you need more details about any position, please feel free to contact any current or past EC member or project chairperson. I am hoping to have a complete EC ballot by April 29th to allow for elections in May.

EC Positions (elected):

President: Oversees section management, runs monthly EC meetings, welcomes new members, writes president's letter for newsletter each month, and acts as primary point of contact for section. The nominating and fund development committees fall under the president. Previous EC experience desired.

VP Professional Development: Oversees committee chairs for Membership, Programs, Newsletter, Publicity, Banquet, and HP Activities, as well as the Webmaster and meet and greet lunches. This includes recruiting committee chairs and helping the chairs recruit committee members. Two people can share this job if desired.

VP Career Guidance: Oversees committee chairs for Pre-College Outreach, Girl Scouts, Scholarship, Essay Contest, and Certificate of Merit as well as the Counselor for the OSU section. This includes recruiting committee chairs and helping the chairs recruit committee members. Two people can share this job.

Secretary: Takes notes at EC meetings and publishes them. Helps with section correspondence as needed.

Treasurer: Manages the finances of the section (bill paying, check cashing, and scholarships).

Section Representative: Represents our section at the regional and national level through quarterly reports and attendance at the Council of Representatives meetings at the Regional conference and the National Conference. Support from management to fund conference expenses is strongly desired.

Section Representative Alternate: Must be able to carry out the Section Representative duties if needed.

The final elected position is not a member of the Executive Council, but is still very important. This is the **Nominating Committee Member**. Based on our bylaws, the nominating committee should have at least 3 members with one being elected. Each spring the nominating committee has the official duty of selecting candidates for the EC, collecting candidates' statements (if needed), and preparing the ballot.

Chair positions (appointed):

Pre-College Outreach: This program usually involves two workshops (fall/spring) targeted at middle school girls, run through the Saturday Academy at OSU. Workshops have included hands on engineering activities and tours of local manufacturing facilities. This chair would select activities, schedule with Saturday Academy and coordinate volunteers. It also includes an 'Introduce a Girl to Engineering' event for girls for National IAGTE day each February. Past events have included job shadowing and a hands-on workshop, but new ideas are welcome. Finally, it would include coordination of the distribution of a DVD to schools. Two people may share this post if desired.

Banquet: The banquet is held in February during Engineers Week. This chair coordinates volunteers through all of the tasks needed to plan the banquet including selecting a date, location, speaker, and catering; sending invitations (corporate and individual) and collecting responses/payment; identifying students; and preparing programs and name badges. Two people may want to share this job.

Certificate of Merit: The COM chair sends letters to high schools asking for nominations of outstanding female students throughout the Willamette Valley, and then presents the winners with a certificate from SWE recognizing their excellence. This occurs each spring, in time for the end of year award ceremonies. The chair also coordinates volunteers to present the awards in person where needed.

Essay Contest: Middle school students are asked to write an essay about an important woman in science or engineering, and \$50 prizes are given to winners from each grade. Prizes are presented at the banquet (if possible). This chair sends letters to schools, coordinates judging of the essays, and presents the awards.

Fund Development: This chair coordinates fund development activities for our section. Historically this has been a mailing to members and companies each year, however new ideas are always welcome.

Girl Scouts: This chair coordinates several Girl Scout activities over the year with different age groups of girls. Coordination includes setting dates and activities with the Santiam Girl Scout Council and organizing volunteers.

HP Activities: This chair coordinates HP-specific SWE activities. Examples activities would include coordinating SWE involvement the CRUISE recruiting event, organizing social events, and keeping regular contact with the diversity consultant. We could have chairs for other companies if there is interest.

Membership: This chair maintains the database of members and friends of our section both in email and snail mail and serves as a central location when messages need to be forwarded to the section. Other activities include greeting and sending “welcome” packets to new members and helping with mailings.

Newsletter: This chair produces this newsletter each month by polling the EC and chairs for stories and putting them together. This is a great way to become an expert at MS Word!

OSU Counselor: The OSU Counselor gets involved with OSU’s SWE section, acting as a liaison between them and our professional section and solicits help from us where needed.

Programs Chair and Committee: This is our biggest committee and really needs 8+ members as well as a chair to run smoothly. The committee is responsible for our membership meetings. With a large committee, the chair can keep everyone organized, while each member can be responsible for just one or two meetings over the year. Planning a meeting typically involves finding a location, coordinating the activity (speaker, tour, etc), and coordinating food. We will have a planning meeting in May to set the calendar for FY’08 so if you are interested in being on this committee please respond now.

Publicity: Activities include spreading the word about our section in the Salem and Eugene areas and helping with publicity of regular events as needed.

Scholarship: This chair coordinates the Martina Testa Memorial Scholarship, Georgia Pacific Scholarship, and HP Scholarship (each \$1000) that are given to three female high school seniors planning to attend engineering school. This requires sending a letter and application to schools, coordinating the judging of applications, and presenting the award at the banquet (if possible).

Webmaster: This chair keeps our webpage up to date and makes improvements if desired.



Meet 'n Greet

Wed April 23rd at noon at Applebee's in Corvallis in the Safeway/Movie Theater plaza. Please RSVP to Melissa Martinez at melissa.martinez@wahchang.com if you'll be able to attend.

National and regional elections in progress through May 1, 2008.

Please make sure to vote if you are an eligible member. Only 10% of the voting members of SWE have voted to select our past leaders! This year there are contested races for President and Board of Directors positions, so your vote counts.

If eligible, you should have received an email with a link to the voting website (www.cssconsult.com/elections/swe2009) and voting instructions. This website also contains the candidate statements. To access the online voting, you need the control code that was mailed to you in early April.



Mark your calendar:

Communication Skills Workshop

(Includes dinner)

Thursday, May 22nd, 2008

- Details will be sent out separately



SWE News

<http://societyofwomenengineers.swe.org/> gets a whole new look and added functionality; SWE K-12 outreach finds a new home.

The Society of Women Engineers Launches New Websites

Chicago, April 15, 2008 - The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) is excited to announce the launch of their redesigned website, which offers visitors an expanded experience, and their new K-12 outreach site, which is designed to spark interest in engineering among girls.

"SWE has a strong sense of community and we pride ourselves on offering the resources and connections that foster the community," says Betty Shanahan, executive director and CEO. "The new, highly interactive websites will make our Society even stronger and keep members and non-members well informed and in touch with advancing women in engineering."

The redesigned swe.org features all of the news and resources that members rely on—the career center, training for leading successful professional and personal lives, support for public policy initiatives, historical information and much more. It also serves as a hub for partners, the community, the industry, aspiring engineers, media, promoters and anyone else interested in

SWE or women in engineering. A new feature to the site is the virtual member communities—MySWE, which allows members to connect through public, private and group-based communities, and has networking features such as blogs, chat, whiteboards, file sharing and much more.

SWE's new K-12 outreach site, swe.org/aspire, serves as a hub for parents, educators, engineering professionals and girls in grades K-12 who want to get more involved with engineering or help prepare for its future. The site provides useful resources such as links to articles and scholarships and keeps visitors abreast of all SWE outreach activities. The site's cool look and fun feel is inviting and encouraging.

"Aspire, our new outreach website, is informative and engaging," says Michelle Tortolani, SWE president. "We wanted the look and feel to capture the true spirit of the profession and convey that engineering is not only a great career option, but it's exciting too."



SWE EC Minutes

April 7, 2008

Scribe: Abbie Kimerling

Attendees: Amy Welter, Melissa Martinez, Lorraine Wang, Sarah Rosenstein, Jenni Haines, Abbie Kimerling

Career Guidance

- Received thank yous from some essay contest and scholarship winners.
- Agilent kits tested. Some good while others missing pieces or had difficult to follow instructions; Meredith compiled and emailed feedback. Kits simple to use with question and answer sheets to have kids fill out. Some geared toward lower age levels than desired for Saturday Academy event.

Region J Conference

Summary from Abbie:
Conference in general

- Only three WVS members attended. Total attendance (including career fair) around 250 people.
- Sustainability focus. Many interesting and informative sessions. Lunch and dinner keynote speakers also spoke on the topic.
- [Will write summary article for President's letter for next newsletter.](#)

Region J Meeting

- Upcoming events

- § National elections in progress through May 1. Need to encourage members to vote – only 10% of eligible members have voted in past elections.
- § Section rosters for FY09 need to be complete by June 30.
- § National Conference in Baltimore, MD November 4-8. Also election week, so travel to the area may be problematic.
- § University of Washington and Pacific Northwest Sections to submit proposal to host FY09 Region J Conference in Seattle, probably first weekend in April again.
- More embezzlement prevention suggestions
 - § *Split accounts – have amount agreed upon for budgeted events in account that only requires one signature.* Does not stop someone from stealing funds, just controls amount can access. We will probably not implement, just require two signatures on all checks.
 - § *Allow checks under \$100 to only have one signature.* How difficult is this to set up with bank? Also, does not stop someone from writing multiple smaller

checks to steal funds. We will probably not implement.

§ *Have second person check bank accounts online instead of having extra statements mailed.* Lorraine already checks PO Box, sees statements before given to Clara. Will determine if process needs to change once FY09 officers elected.

§ *Ways with bonding to get inexpensive background checks.* We still need to set up a procedure for what we will do.

- Succession planning

§ Section, region and national levels to work on mentoring members to help them take on positions of responsibility.

§ Diversity encouraged.

Upcoming Events

- Saturday Academy April 11th
- ONAMI/Nanobits tour April 16th
- Girl Scout Engineering 101 April 26th
- May event not planned yet

Succession Planning

- Still need a presidential nominee.
- Concern over a number of people leaving positions, not many new people stepping in to fill spots.
- Amy had call for nominations for elected position in the March newsletter. [Will include officer and chair responsibilities in an upcoming email and newsletter and have another request for nominees and volunteers.](#)

Round Table

Sarah

- [Working on section report due in May.](#) Past section reports can be viewed on national SWE website.
- Bylaws update in progress. Has made changes and is waiting for instructions from Region governor.

Lorraine

- Saturday Academy event April 11th at HP
 - § Two Agilent kits selected – Catch a Thief and The Lighthouse.
 - § May also use Employee Product Experience Center if have time left.
- Girl Scout Engineering 101 April 26th at HP
 - § Still need volunteers. [Jenni to forward event announcement on to OSU section, Lorraine to send to her.](#)
- Certificate of Merit
 - § Receiving replies from schools.
 - § Andrea Knight helping for now, but not sure if will take over chair in FY09.
 - § Lorraine/new chair still needs CD with Erica's information – letters sent to schools with certificates.
- National Conference
 - § Need to start planning now. [Reserve hotel rooms?](#) Set aside travel funds for members?

Melissa

- Most Professional Development committee chairs willing to continue with their positions in FY09.

Action Item Review

Next Meeting:

Monday, May 5th, 2008. McMenamins (downtown), 420 NW Third St.