

CIVIL ENGINEER



T H E N E W S L E T T E R

Tacoma ♦ Olympia Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers



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**CIVIL ENGINEERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!
THEY PROVIDE THE QUALITY OF LIFE!**

The **Civil Engineer Newsletter** is published for the Tacoma/Olympia Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers monthly from September to June.

To submit ads or articles of interest, please contact the current President of the Section or the Editor. Information must be submitted not later than the 15th of the month prior to publication.

For address changes and corrections, contact the Editor.

President
Rebecca Vader.... (253) 272-3343
timv@halcyon.com

Pres.-Elect.
Jim Brigham..... (253) 383-4940
JBrigham@GeoEngineers.com

Secretary
Kathy Hargrave . (253) 474-9449

Treasurer
Kristina Nelson.. (253) 591-5765
knelson@ci.tacoma.us

Director
Rob Armstrong .. (425) 251-6222
rob_a@barghausen.com

Director
Perry Shea..... (360) 493-6002
passca@mail.tss.net

Younger Members
Brian Matthews . (360) 491-3399
bmatthews@skillings.com

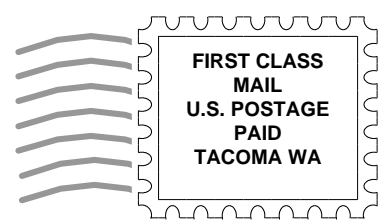
Past Pres.
Richard Swanson(360) 357-2788
Swanson@wsdot.wa.gov

Editor
Nancy Searle..... (253) 564-5885
jessailor@aol.com

Section Home Page WEB address:
<http://www.asce.org/gsd/sections/tacoly/tacoly.htm>

CIVIL ENGINEER
The NEWSLETTER

c/o Searle J&N
502 Contra Costa
Fircrest WA 98466



SEPTEMBER MEETING

Port Orchard Roundabout A Pilot Project for the State Department of Transportation Tuesday, September 15, 1998



Worthington Center,
Saint Martin's College, Lacey
Social: 6:00 P.M.
Dinner: 6:30 P.M.
Program 7:30 P.M.



The dinner cost is \$20.00 for members, and students are half-price.

The program is free to all.

Speaker: Perry Shea, SCA Engineering, Lacey

Construction of the first traffic roundabout to be built on a Washington state highway was recently completed in Port Orchard. WSDOT guidelines for current and future roundabout projects were developed with the assistance of SCA Engineering. **Perry Shea** will present a slide show of the Port Orchard roundabout showing specific design details, operational components and pictures before, during, and after construction.

Traffic roundabouts, long popular in Europe, are gaining acceptance in the US. as their safety, cost and construction time benefits are increasingly recognized. The Port Orchard project is at the intersection of Bethel Avenue and State Route 166, the site of numerous accidents. The \$500,000 project, funded by the city and the Washington State Department of Transportation, replaces a three-way stop. The configuration is a single lane, 160-foot diameter circle with three entry points and a landscaped center island.

It is the best traffic management approach for this intersection and will be a good evaluation of roundabouts for WSDOT. Maneuvering through roundabouts requires a bit of driver education, but the end result is increased safety and decreased cost, pollution and commute time. In a roundabout, drivers slow or stop at a yield line and enter when there is a gap in traffic. Roundabouts differ from traditional traffic circles, such as Washington, DC Dupont Circle, which are larger, encourage high speeds and have less vehicle capacity.

There are about 12,000 roundabouts in Britain, and France is building about 5,000 a year. The first US. roundabout was built in Las Vegas in 1990 and Gainesville, Florida was the first city to replace a stoplight with a roundabout. Vail, Colorado installed roundabouts to replace a series of four stop-signed intersections at the main entry to the city off I-70. Half-hour traffic backups were eliminated and there was an annual savings of \$85,000 on traffic officers. Despite initial skepticism, Vail residents soon gave the roundabouts a rating of 4.5 on a 5-point scale.

Roundabouts are also in use in urban areas of California, Maryland and Vermont. Closer to home, a roundabout is already in use at University Place near Tacoma, and others are planned for Marvin Road in Lacey, and Highway 16 and East-West Highway in Gig Harbor.

To St. Martin's Worthington Center

From Tacoma: I-5 south to Martin Way (Exit 109); bear right to College Street (the next signaled intersection); turn left on College; travel south to Pacific Avenue; turn left on Pacific to the entrance to Saint Martin's Pavilion on the left.

From Olympia: Take either Pacific Avenue to Saint Martin's or I-5 north to Sleater-Kinney/College Street (Exit 108); continue to College Street; turn right and proceed to Pacific Avenue; turn left on Pacific to the entrance to Saint Martin's Pavilion on left.

Reservations

Reservations for dinner are really needed or we end up without enough Plates and seating. For your reservations please call Chris Beckman at (253)798-3557 or Mark Leingang (360) 586-6163 by the close of business, **Friday, September 11, 1998**. This will let us tell the cooks how many to expect. You can also make reservations by accessing the Tacoma-Olympia Section Home page at: <http://www.asce.org/gsd/sections/tacoly/tacoly.htm>

If you miss the deadline for reservations, **call anyway**. It's better to be late than just not call at all and just show up. Members with reservations who do not attend will be billed.

It is very important to make firm reservations for the section meetings for the following reasons:

To make sure that we have a place set for everyone.

So the presenter can bring enough hand-outs for all who are present.

We (section) give an advance count of attendees so the proper amount of food will be prepared.

We are charged for each person we make a reservation for.

If the meeting is canceled, we can notify you.



As my term comes to a close I encounter the usual desire to make a summary of the items addressed in this column. And, as is typical, the subjects are too diverse to grasp. I am pleased that some of you took the time to write in how the world looks from where you sit, and I hope that will continue because it broadens our individual perspectives.

Now that we've established that I'm completely average at this job, I'm going to go ahead and give you my opinion again anyway. After all, this edition is a few words short and I need some filler.

The two items addressed over the last year that concern me the most are the proposal to require a Master's Degree for Licensure and the proposal to list urban salmon runs on the endangered species list. Both of these are relatively new topics, and the debate on their merits still has a chance of diverting the outcome one way or another. Please speak up and increase the IQ of the debate.

The education practitioners keep hammering out a message that more education is vital to our profession. While I agree with the basic statement, I don't agree that formal education is the ticket to better pay, better ego strokes (prestige is the word that keeps getting used), or even better protection of the public health and well-being. Until it's standard practice in the education system to do as St. Martin's does and arrange the classes to be where and when working folks can take a class here and a class there, and until it's common to do as University of Idaho does and offer video series for master's courses, and until it's understood that taking tests well doesn't mean you're good at real engineering, I can't support the Master's requirement.

The environmentalists keep hammering out a message that more fish in more rivers is better. I do agree that many unnecessary obstacles exist for Several Washington and Oregon runs. This does not mean that the best option is to remove any obstacle to save every wild fish run and at the same time still continue to harvest the fish and eat them. Engineers need to point out that no one is clamoring for a new fossil fuel plant in their back yard, no one is yearning to damage fragile desert ecosystems with miles of new road and impervious surfaces, no one is anxious for a new nuclear power plant, no one wants more highways, congestion, and pollution over the mountains and through scenic gorges, but no-one is willing to do without. It's

up to us to point out that if the dammed rivers are just very scenic power plants and gravity assisted transportation corridors, and if the dams go, new damage will be accrued to other species in many other places.

Rebecca Vader, President
Tacoma Olympia Section
timv@halcyon.com

Check It Out

by Kristina Nelson

ASCE Tacoma-Olympia Section has been asked to comment on the City of Tacoma's proposed adoption of the 1998 version of the Uniform Building Code. The Hearing Notice goes as follows:

"The Board of Building Appeals will hold a hearing to receive comments on the Draft Ordinances to adopt and amend the 1998 versions of the Uniform Building Code, the Uniform Mechanical Code, the Uniform Fire Code, and the Uniform Plumbing Code, on Wednesday September 16, 1998 at 2:00 P.M. in The City of Tacoma Council Chambers, First Floor Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, Washington.

Copies of the draft Ordinances for the adoption and amendment of each code are available from the City. Please address any questions or written comments to: Charles A. Pearson, PE, Secretary, Board of Building Appeals, 747 Market Street, Room 345, Tacoma, WA 98402, (253) 591-5019".

WELCOME New and Transferred Members

The Tacoma-Olympia Section is pleased to welcome the many new and transferred members that were assigned to our section during the last few months. You and your guests are more than welcome at all of the section activities, and we invite you to support these activities by joining the section if you have not done so already.

The Tacoma-Olympia Section Board is pleased to have attracted the volunteer services of engineers of both genders, all stages of practice, in public and private occupations from both Tacoma and Olympia areas. There are opportunities for everyone to participate and we urge you to come check us out.

Thank You
As my term is ending it is time for a big thank you to the Board and the past presidents who made this job easier over the last year. The dedication of Kathy, Kristina, Nancy, Chris, and both Jims over the years is much appreciated. And a special thank you to my immediate predecessor, Richard, for all the advice, encouragement, and for really helping me out when the going got tough.

ASCE Activities

Local

The fall Meeting of the Pacific Northwest Council of the Western Region of ASCE is scheduled for Saturday, September 19th at the West-Coast SeaTac Hotel on Pacific Highway in SeaTac. The agenda includes discussion of the new ASCE National endorsement to require a Masters Degree for licensure and presentations for selecting the regional winner(s) of the Outstanding Civil Engineering Award. If you would like to attend please contact Rebecca Vader (see masthead) for more information.

Positions Wanted/Positions Open:

AHBL, a professional Engineering firm, is currently seeking qualified applicants for the following positions:

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING - Project Engineer

CIVIL ENGINEERING - Project Manager

DRAFTERS - Experience in civil site design or structural design Auto Cad (v. 13 or higher) and Softdesk required.

Send resume and cover letter for above positions to: AHBL, Attn: Paul McCormick, 2215 N. 30th, #300, Tacoma, WA 98403, or e-mail at: AHBL_inc@ix.netcom.com. No phone calls please.

Resume Policy: Our section newsletter will provide free space for ASCE students and members to advertise their qualifications. The resume information needs to be received by the 20th of the month to make the next newsletter. If you still don't have a job, send it again the next month. The resume information is limited to: Name, Engineering Degree/Year, Position Desired, Years of Related Experience, Membership Status, ASCE section, Address to obtain more information, and Daytime Phone .

Please send information to Rebecca Vader, 2917 South 17th Street, Tacoma, WA 98405. e-mail timv@halcyon.com

Nominations

We are looking for a volunteer to take on the duties of Tacoma House Chair because the previous chair will now be serving on the Board. This individual will be responsible for making arrangements for meeting rooms and food service, taking reservations by phone (and e-mail if available), collecting meal fees at Tacoma meetings and delivering same to the Treasurer, and selling student activities raffle tickets.

The House Chair position generally requires 1 to 2 hours of prep time and meeting attendance every other month. It is a great way to meet people because everyone stops by to see you! Please contact anyone on the Board if you are interested in this opportunity.

Notices

Attention Students: It is the Tacoma-Olympia Section's long-standing policy that your meal price is half off. Remember to say you are a student when you make your reservation. As always, there is no cost to attend the presentation.

This newsletter is a function of the section, and your thoughts, announcements, articles, essays, and letters to the Section President are welcome at any time. Contributions made before the 20th of the month will definitely make the next newsletter, and after that, you take your chances.

You may e-mail information with attachments to the President or the Editor. E-mail addresses are listed on the front cover of this newsletter. Format attachments as plain text or Word 97 (PC).

ASCE Calendar

Our section holds open meetings once a month from September through June.

Meetings are typically scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month, but do vary for special speakers or joint meetings. Locations alternate between Tacoma and Lacey and times vary between lunch and dinner meetings.

In addition, the local Board conducts open meetings, generally the first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 PM. Locations vary, so please contact the President for the location if you would like to attend a Board meeting.

Our preliminary schedule is shown below. Please check our web page or contact a house chair for firm information one week prior to each listed meeting. Or, for a monthly meeting announcement and newsletter mailed to your address, please join the Tacoma-Olympia Section (in addition to the national organization).

September 15 - Lacey Dinner - Perry Shea - Port Orchard Traffic Circles

October 13 - Tacoma Dinner - Gary Carroll ASCE District 12 Director

November 10 - Lacey - Lunch Meeting

December 9 (Wed) - Tacoma, Joint Dinner with Seattle Section

January 12 - Tacoma Lunch

February - Lacey Saint Martin's Engineering Banquet Dinner

March 9- Tacoma

April 13 - Lacey Lunch

May 11 - Tacoma Lunch

June 8 - Lacey

PELP Programs

For information contact Ron Bucknam, PELP Program Director, at 206/543-1178; fax: 206/685-3836; or E-mail: rbucknam@u.washington.edu. Construction All courses will be held on or near the University of Washington campus, unless noted otherwise. To register for a course, please call Engineering Professional Programs at 206/543-5539. Early registration fees are applicable until two weeks before commencement of the scheduled course.

*Site Erosion and Pollution Control
September 8 and 9, 1998*

*Effective Writing for Technical Professionals
September 15, 17, 22, 24 and 29, 1998 (five sessions)*