

Montana Society of Engineers

A state society of the National Society of Professional Engineers



Founded 1887

President's Message:

Crystal Kuntz, PE, President

Well, it seems to be that time of year again... the weather has cooled and things are settling back into the routine of fall. The kids are heading back to school; everyone is winterizing the boat and packing up the camping gear for the season. And with this beautiful time of year comes the resurgence of our regular engineering society meetings. It seems that between work and family obligations further complicated by the shorter days and colder weather society involvement quickly finds itself on the bottom of the priority list.

When I was in college, I asked the principal of the firm I worked for why he chose to be a member of a professional society – his response.... ‘so I can get the magazines I don’t have time to read’. Admittedly, nearly 15 years later I find that my desk is stacked with a number of magazines that I receive from different society memberships that I’ve yet to find time to read - - but is that all there is to it? Does society membership not provide me with more than additional clutter to further complicate my already unorganized office? On the occasional day that I am flooded with email and phone calls related to one society or another, the answer is quite cynical. However, these occasions are few and far between and are overshadowed by the benefits provided by the inner-workings of the well-oiled machine that can be your local engineering society.

Now, there are the grand national committees, councils and other special-interest groups that exist to serve the broader profession and these are all important - but my focus is on the local, grass-roots effort. In Montana, we are worlds away from the thousand-member chapters of California or Texas. We are too far diverse in both practice and geography to support meetings of this magnitude but we bring to the society something different. We bring a real and direct sense of responsibility and duty to serve the needs of our profession and those that choose to practice it without the haze of the political overtones that seem to engulf larger groups.

Through our grass-roots efforts, our engineering society saw the need for quality continuing education and established the Joint Engineers Conference. Today, this conference serves the needs of multiple professional disciplines providing high quality and diverse educational opportunities. Local chapters bring in lunch speakers to cover specialized topics of interest to not only achieve the required educational hours but expand our overall professional knowledge base.

Local chapters of various societies have banded together in Billings to raise record-level funds for a multi-disciplined scholarship fund. This scholarship rewards the hard work of local deserving high school seniors in pursuit of an engineering education. Elementary school outreach efforts across our state have raised the awareness of engineering professional opportunities and inspired learning in both children and participating professionals. This year, the local MSE board is pursuing the concept of teaming via satellite with other groups to offer live study courses for the PE exam. These courses could serve not only the needs of our new members but also those that choose to change disciplines or simply expand their technical ability.

Well, this is a fine and well you say....but really, I’m busy. This is true, (and no more do I realize the true meaning of busy as I try to type this article with my 1-yr old daughter constantly providing assistance by pressing the keys on my laptop...) Really, what is the benefit of being involved in a society like MSE or any other society for that matter? The benefit is the opportunity for you to make a difference, to chance for you to elicit change and leave our profession better than you found it. Involvement in a society is about more than the discounts, insurance packages and free lunches (or even the great glossy magazines). It’s about you and your chance to get involved to solve a problem, improve a situation, meet a need or to simply grow in your own professional and personal life.

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September, 2010

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Montana MathCounts Plans

Montana MathCounts is already busy making plans for the 2010/2011 season. In an effort to stay current with today's world, Montana MathCounts will be launching their website later this fall. At this site Chapter Coordinators will be able to enter their competition information for the schools in their Chapter. Each school will be able to enter their team and individuals that will be competing at the Chapter competitions. This information will then filter through for the State competition. This is a big undertaking — only time will report how successful this new adventure will be!

November will mark the beginning of our fund raising season. Each year we contact our corporate sponsors requesting funding for the season. Without this financial help — Montana MathCounts would not exist. Here is the list of last year's sponsors:

2009-2010 Montana MathCounts Corporate Sponsors

American Public Works Association—
Rocky Mountain Chapter
Ash Grove Cement Company
Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative
CHS, Inc.
ConocoPhillips
Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation
ECI Environmental Services
ExxonMobil
Great West Engineering, Inc.
HDR SSR Engineering, Inc.
Luzenac Rion Tinto
Montana Refining Company
Montana-Dakota Utilities
NorthWestern Energy
PPL Montana, LLC
Robert Peccia and Associates
Stillwater Mining Company
Western Energy Company
Westmoreland Resources, Inc.
WGM Group
Yellowstone Electric Company
Alsco—American Linen Division

Another variable in the season is the Chapter Coordinators. There would not be Montana MathCounts without them. These hardworking and dedicated Chapter Coordinators — who volunteer their time — are what makes it all go forward. These folks are already busy — most have identified their Chapter Competition dates

slated for the month of February. Here is a list of this year's Chapter Coordinators:

North Central Chapter

Wednesday—February 2, 2011
MSU-Great Falls - Heritage Hall
Bill Burkland, Coordinator
bill@rpa-hln.com

Missoula Chapter

Tuesday—February 8, 2011
University of Missoula—Ballroom
Troy Monroe, Coordinator
tmonroe@m-m.met

Butte Chapter

Wednesday—February 9, 2011
War Bonnet Inn
Sandra Anderson, Coordinator
sandra_andersondavid@hotmail.com

Kalispell Chapter

Friday—February 11, 2011
Flathead Valley Community College
Vicki Neill, Coordinator
Vicki.Neill@northwestern.com

Billings Chapter

Friday—February 11, 2011
MSU Billings - Liberal Arts Building
Dan Munson, Coordinator
Dan.Munson@northwestern.com

Eastern Montana Chapter

Wednesday—February 16, 2011
Dawson County HS Auditorium
Mike Hunter, Coordinator
hunter@dawson.edu

Bozeman Chapter

TBA—February, 2011
MSU—SUB - Ballroom D
Jerry Stephens, Coordinator
jerrys@coe.montana.edu

State Competition

Wednesday—March 9, 2011
MSU—SUB - Ballroom A
Dan Munson, State Coordinator
Dan.Munson@northwestern.com

And the most important variable — the volunteers that help at every level— fundraising, scoring, and coaching!

Without all these components — Coaches at the School level, Corporate Sponsors funding the program, Chapter Coordinators and Volunteers giving their time — there would be no Montana MathCounts. THANK YOU!!

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Volunteers giving their
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Montana MathCounts.
THANK YOU!!***



The 2010 Joint Engineers Conference registration went live on September 7th at www.mtengineers.org. Early registration fees are available until September 31. It will cost more to register for the 2010 JEC after October 1 — today is a good day to get your registration done.

This year's conference will start on Wednesday—November 3 at 1:15 pm. There is no lunch on Wednesday. There are two sessions being offered in each of the 6 tracks. After a short break, there will be another set of sessions offered at 3:00 pm.

On both Thursday—November 4 and Friday November 5 there are 6 full tracks—with 2 morning sessions and 2 afternoon sessions. On both Thursday and Friday, a continental breakfast (7:30 am), a morning break, lunch (11:45 am—1:15 pm) and an afternoon break are included in the cost of your registration. The 2010 JEC concludes at 4:30 pm on Friday.

This year's off-site tour will leave at 12:30 pm on Thursday—November 4 to tour the Canyon Ferry and Houser Dams. This tour is included in the cost of a regular registration but open only to the first 38 persons that opt to go and PAY their registration fee. This is limited by the number of seats available on the bus.

Other Conference features will include the Montana Engineers Honors Awards Banquet on Wednesday evening (this is an extra). The Vendors are showing on Thursday with a Vendor Social with the cash give-away — this year you will have 3 opportunities to win: \$200 or \$300 or \$500 CASH. Many of the Societies are holding their meetings at lunch on Friday — MSE will be holding theirs on Thursday evening — see back cover for more details.

Those attending all three days have the opportunity to earn 15 continuing education credits!

2010 Joint Engineer Conference Registration is *NOW* Open at www.mtengineers.org

President's Message

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So, the next time you find yourself asking...why should I bother to join a society, volunteer for a committee or step up to serve in another capacity Perhaps you're asking the wrong question. Maybe, just maybe, in the plagiarized words of the immortal, ask not what your society can do for you, but what you can do for your society — eh?

During this year's JEC, our MSE board is extending a challenge to each of you. We are asking you to join us in seeking to participate —

ask friends and colleagues to join us for dinner on Thursday evening, November 4th and see what being involved in MSE is all about. For those of you that chose to bring a guest, MSE will graciously cover the cost of your evening. For those of you that choose to come sans a guest...well my friend, you're on your own when the tab comes. See the back cover of this newsletter for further details on our evening with MSE and make your plans to join us and help make our engineering profession the best that it can be.

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“For those of you that chose to bring a guest, MSE will graciously cover the cost of your evening. .”

Employee and Engineering Ethics

In the June 2010 issue of *PE—The Magazine for Professional Engineers* featured several articles focused on ethics. This magazine always carries articles about ethics for engineers but this time the cover reported “Ethics in the Balance—Ethical violations that make the daily news should serve as reminders that moral conduct at work needs to be a top priority”.

Page 10 reported that “company belt-tightening may influence employee ethics”. The article included a chart entitled “Percentage of Employees Observing Misconduct in the Previous 12 Months”. In response to current economic downturn, companies have adjusted work schedules, made layoffs, reduced compensation and benefit packages, placed freezes on hiring, created early retirement buyouts, implemented production slowdowns and recommended or implemented plant closures. There has been substantial increases in each of these activities.

The research reported from *Saving the Company Comes at a Cost* can be accessed at www.ethics.org. It reported that each of these adjustments can cause employees to harbor hidden resentment and attempts to unscrupulously “take back” what they feel they deserve. The impact of belt-tightening and the resulting misconduct can be even more severe in small companies because there is less distance between management’s decisions and employees.

On page 20 an article entitled *Ethics in the Balance* by Danielle Boylkin, warned that companies that engage in unethical business practices risk their reputations and the well-being of employees and the public. Recent corporate abuses show how important it is for professional to value ethical leadership over financial gains. The article discusses how the abuses by Wall Street and other industries could place a stigma on other professionals, even engineers. “It is unfortunate that we see in the media egregious cases of ethical infractions compromising the safety, health and welfare of the public in the interest of corporate profits or gains” according to Mumtaz Usmen, PE.

Stephen Smith, PE and the current President Elect of the MSE will be using professionally developed videos to stimulate thought and discussion to address current ethical issues faced by today’s engineers at this year’s JEC. The course will be offered on Thursday—November 4 at 1:15 pm. All participants should expect active attendee participation and cases or examples will be encouraged. When signing up for sessions at the JEC—consider taking in this session — another part of professional development.

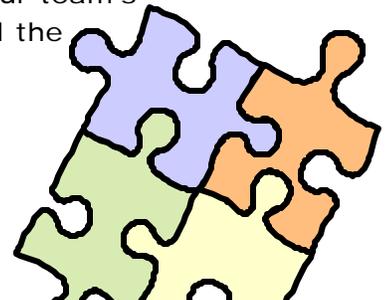
For more case studies and discussion of ethics, visit www.nspe.org or any issue of *PE—The Magazine for Professional Engineers* — each issue features a case study.

“It is unfortunate that we see in the media egregious cases of ethical infractions compromising the safety, health and welfare of the public in the interest of corporate profits or gains” according to Mumtaz Usmen, PE.”

Is Something Missing From Your Ethics Training?

NSPE now offers *customized* training presentations, seminars, keynotes and Web seminars for engineering firms, government agencies, and other institutions of all sizes and areas of practice. NSPE General Counsel and engineering ethics expert Arthur Schwartz will work with you to create the optimal program needed to increase your team’s engineering ethics awareness — and put all the pieces together.

Visit www.nspe.org/ethics,
or contact Arthur Schwart at
aschwartz@nspe.org.



MSE's - General Membership Meeting at the 2010 JEC

This meeting will be held at 7:00 pm on Thursday - November 4, 2010 - during the 2010 JEC. MSE will leave from just outside the front lobby entrance of the Red Lion Colonial in a coach for dinner at the Marysville House.

MSE will purchase dinner for any MSE member who brings a guest willing to consider being a member of MSE—either full NSPE/MSE or State Only MSE membership. MSE will buy the guest's dinner regardless of whether they actually become a member or not.

This evening is meant to be fun and social. Please contact the MSE office if you plan to take advantage of this opportunity — for the purpose of reservation counts.

2010-2011 MSE Board

Crystal Kuntz, President
crystal.kuntz@eciblgs.com

Steven T. Smith, President-Elect
stephentsmith@earthlink.net

Michael J. Cech, Vice President
mike.cech@northwestern.com

William D. Boger, Secretary-Treasurer
Tri-CoreEng@bresnan.net

Kenneth Phillips, Immediate Past President
kennethphillips@bresnan.net

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MSE Office
PO Box 20996
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mse@assoc-mgt.com

Deadline for the Next
Issue of this Newsletter is
December 10, 2010

Submit articles and advertising to
mse@assoc-mgt.com

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2010 Joint Engineer Conference Registration is *NOW* Open at www.mtengineers.org

JEC
**JOINT ENGINEERS
CONFERENCE**

**Conference (15 PDHs):
Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
November 3-5, 2010**

**Red Lion Colonial Hotel
406-443-2100
Helena, Montana**

*(Dam Tour to Canyon Ferry & Hauser
limited to first 38 PAID registrants –
no additional charge.)*

**Opportunity for up to 15 PDHs
of Continuing Education**

Six Concurrent TRACKS
Sessions covering Power,
Municipal, Structural,
Geotechnical, Transportation,
Mechanical, Waste Water
Management, Sustainability,
Ethics In Practice and more.

Over 50 Sessions in All

New at the website this year...

- More information on each of the sessions offered
- Pre-registration for your session (no need to pay!)
- Downloads of session materials

**Pre-Registration Opens
September 1st On-line at
www.mtengineers.org**

**Early registration fees end on
September 30, 2010**