

Newsletter of the Birmingham Branch/Alabama Section

April 2007

P.O. Box 190366, Birmingham, AL 35219

<http://branches.asce.org/birmingham>**Secretary/Treasurer:**
Andrew Faulk, EI
Wiser Company, LLC942-2822
afaulk@wiserco.com**President:**
Jonathan Byrd, EI
Gonzalez-Strength
and Associates.
942-2486
JByrd@Gonzalez-Strength.com**Vice President:****April Meeting: Golden Corral, Lorna Rd, Hoover**

This month's meeting will be held on Thursday, April 5, 2007 at the Golden Corral, which is located at 3117 Lorna Road behind the Bill Byrd Kia Dealership and Burlington Coat Factory approximately 1.25 miles north of the Galleria. Lorna Road runs parallel to and behind Hwy. 31 until it intersects with Hwy. 31 at the I-65 Interchange. The phone number is 822-1314. Call the restaurant if you need directions or contact any Branch officer.

Meeting Agenda

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Renew Acquaintances/Meal* | 11:30 - 12:15 |
| Business Meeting | 12:15 - 12:45 |
| Speaker | 12:45 - 1:15 |

Please get your meal as soon as you arrive and proceed to the meeting room located at the rear restaurant.

*Attendees will be eligible for a drawing to receive a free meal at this month's meeting. The drawing will be held before the business meeting. Please sign the attendance register to enter the drawing.

Speaker for April Meeting

The speaker for the February meeting will be Sloan Crumbley of Contech. He will present on stormwater solutions.

Branch meetings are the first Thursday of each month, September through May. Each month's meeting includes a presentation by a guest speaker. If you have an idea for a speaker or topic, please contact Andrew Faulk.

**Alabama Section Meeting 2007
"Wrap Up"**

The 2007 Winter Meeting was held Thursday, March 15th at



the Embassy Suites Hotel in Montgomery. The group of 70 attendees and 10 speakers was greeted by Montgomery Mayor Bobby Bright to kick off the meeting. The technical presentations from the practice areas

of wastewater infrastructure, transportation, geotechnical, construction, and surveying filled the morning sessions. A special treat was the presentation by Chris Norris, P.E. of CH2MHill where he told of his experiences rebuilding wastewater treatment facilities in Iraq. The Section business meeting during lunch included the awarding of Life Member status to ten members of the Alabama Section, three of which were present to receive their award: Lynn Blackburn, Jr., P.E., Jon Gould, P.E., and Mack Lazenby, P.E. After lunch, there were two more technical presentations followed by tours of downtown Montgomery projects. The tours started with a riding tour of downtown, including stops at the Court Square Plaza reconstruction project and at Overlook Park. Other projects that were seen included the new RSA Office Building and the new Montgomery County Detention Facility. After the riding tour, attendees were treated to a short walking tour of the first section of the Montgomery Riverwalk as it is being completed for its opening to the public later this spring. The day ended under the historic Union Station Train Shed where refreshments were waiting and drawings for the final door prizes of the day were made. The Montgomery Branch thanks all of the 15 firms and industry organizations that made the meeting possible by being a sponsor. We would also like to thank David Cooper, P.E. for being the organizing committee chairman, the City of Montgomery for providing tour transportation and tour support, as well as all of the volunteers that helped run the meeting.

PLEASE RETURN THIS STUB WITH PAYMENT:**DUES: ASCE Birmingham Branch (2007)**
(Tax Id. No.63-0371391)**Total Due \$10.00****MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: ASCE-Birmingham Branch**
P.O. Box 190366, Birmingham, AL 35219

A Message from the President



For some months I have heard from branch members that we should move our meetings from the Golden Corral. In addition, I have received many comments that if we are going to change the place, we should also change the meeting day. Overall, the intent of any change is to increase attendance, and usefulness of our branch meetings. To this end I would like to encourage all members to respond with their feelings on the matter. Regular mail, email, phone call or in person, find some way to express your thoughts on these changes. We can discuss it at this month's meeting. At our May meeting I will have some type of summary and/or suggestion for whether or not we will change our meetings.

Another issue for discussion is how our Branch will adjust to our officer rotation gap. With Virgil taking a job in Georgia, there is no returning officer to serve as President next year. I have attempted to contact as many Past Branch Presidents as possible in order to find a willing volunteer to serve next year, but the predominant answer I received was that I should serve again. I would entertain the notion of serving again if that is the desire of the Branch. This issue can be discussed as well. A final resolution can wait until our September elections, but for the sake of continuity I believe we should have a plan.

Changing meeting days, places and officer gaps are concerns that will be crucial to our Branch in the next year. These issues are not normally considered by the Branch officers. I value everyone's opinions on the matter, however, as President I get an opportunity to voice my own thoughts a little louder than most. I believe that we should move our meetings to a more professional location, and that we should meet on Wednesdays. Our new meeting place may not be an all you can eat buffet style place. There have been a few suggestions such as a hotel, country club, or even sit down style restaurant that could increase the cost of lunch as well as the distance some members will have to travel. None of these should deter us from improving the meeting. A new location will give us a better facility, more conducive to presentations and networking between firms, vendors, and engineers of all levels from drafters to principals.

Having said all that, the meetings will not be moved or changed for the comfort or ease of one person or group. We will continue to meet at the Golden Corral on 5 April and 3 May leaving any change for the start of next year. Please voice your opinion over the coming weeks and let's make sure that the Birmingham Branch ASCE will continue to provide for the needs of all our members.

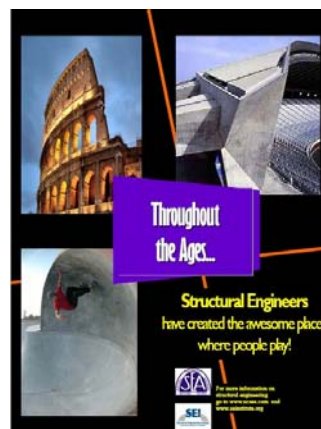
I hope to hear from you all, soon.

- Jonathan Byrd

Partnership Produces Engineering Education Poster



Each year, SEI and the National Council of Structural Engineers Association (NCSEA) partner to create a career poster promoting structural engineering. The intent of the poster, which is distributed to middle schools and high schools, is to increase young people's awareness of structural engineering as a career by featuring different appealing aspects of the profession. It is SEI and NCSEA's hope that young people will be inspired by the structures shown in each year's poster and consider structural engineering as a future profession.



Upcoming Events & Activities

- 2007 SEI Structures Conference is to be held in long Beach, California on May 16th - 19th.
- 2007 Summer Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL. - July 25th through the 27th.

Guess What Lava Lamps, NASA and Snack Food Have in Common?

Modern Marvels: Great Inventions Week May 15-17 on The History Channel®

From tape cassettes to lava lamps, *60's Tech* tells stories of modern marvels that changed the world. Stay tuned for *It Came From Outer Space*, our look at NASA technology in everyday products. Hungry for more? *Snack food Tech* showcases the science behind your favorite munchies! To top things off, watch as we reveal the outstanding innovators of 2007 - the winners of the Modern Marvels Invent Now Challenge! Check your local listings for broadcast times.



ASCE National and Section News

The latest ASCE National News can be viewed at

www.asce.org.

The Alabama Section web site can be found at

<http://www.alabama-asce.org>

Newsletter Advertising

If you or your company is interested in purchasing advertising space in a future newsletter, please contact one of the officers. The price is \$50 per issue for a business card size space. With nearly 500 newsletters being distributed each month, your company could be exposed to nearly 500 of your peers!



ASCE Birmingham Branch
P.O. Box 190366
Birmingham, AL 35219

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 2669
BIRMINGHAM, AL