



THE FORGE

Newsletter of the Birmingham Branch of ASCE

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No Branch Meeting in June, July or August

We are all sure you'd rather be sitting around a table discussing ASCE with us instead of lounging by the pool with your families and friends, but you are just going to have to wait until after the summer break. This doesn't mean we don't have things planned. Stay Involved & stay in touch!

It's Late, It's Late...

By Andy Faulk

I know you all are use to having the newsletter around the first of the month but it has been a bit hectic. Let me tell you about it.

Aside from any personal or project related experiences I've had, there has been a lot going on in the background. A number of your fellow ASCE members have made the effort to put together the annual golf tournament and plan the Alabama Section Summer Conference. The golf tournament is complete, but the conference is still on the table.

As you know the Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament was held June 28th at the Highland Lakes Golf Club in Birmingham, Alabama. 44 people came out to play golf in the rain, 9 students volunteered and 1 big trophy was awarded. The folks at Highland Park Golf Club were great to work with and we're looking forward to next year's tournament.

The Summer Conference is close at hand... The conference will be July 25th through the 27th at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama this year. The date for "early" registration has passed, but you can still join us for a great learning and networking experience. The resort is out of rooms at the "conference rate", but there is space available. If you don't want to pay full price, the planning committee also blocked a number of rooms at the Island House Hotel for \$172 per night. Send in your registration forms today!



No time to say
hello, goodbye



*“Without input,
all we will
have is the
same old
situation.”*

A Message from the President

By Jonathan Byrd

With the celebration of the 231st birthday of our nation, we tend to think of things in a more patriotic vein. Sometimes we think of how American apple pie, hot dogs and fireworks are. Other times it is our freedom we think of; particularly when we remember that our freedom did not come free. Along these lines, I would like to steer your attention to a few amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

This past March many of us thought of the 27th Amendment, wishing it applied to State Legislators. Few of us realized that it was previously proposed as one of the Bill of Rights. Had they all been ratified our much touted First Amendment rights would have been our Third Amendment rights. Former President and “First” First Man Hopeful Bill Clinton thinks often about the 22nd Amendment wishing it had not been passed, though to hear him speak I doubt he ever actually read it. Many of us spend time reveling in the fact that the 21st Amendment repealed the 18th Amendment. The 15th, 19th, 24th and 26th Amendments all deal with voting. They insured us we could vote as long as we were over the age of 18, have a sex and race, though which it is matters not, and that we would not have to pay anything for the right to vote.

Personally, I exercised my 26th Amendment rights (with an exorbitant thanks to Tricky Dick for signing the amendment) when I was only 17 and a half. My wife on the other hand did not register to vote until after we had been married for 8 months. One reason she did it was because I have a steadfast rule when it comes to politics—unless you participate in the process you have no ability to complain about not liking the results. I never care how someone votes, voting with me, canceling out my vote, or just signing in, picking up a ballot and bringing it to the box empty. Montgomery Brewster had a point; none of the above is as valid in an election as it is in a test.

Where am I going with this you might ask? Heck, to be honest, I asked it myself. Over the course of the last year, there has been much mention of moving our Branch meeting location and date. There has not been a lot of input. Last month I implored you in this very column (because it is preferable to write something than have Andy put in a Photo Shopped picture of me and someone who used to be the Governor) to tell me your thoughts. That door is still open, that avenue is still available. However, if you have not told me, and do not tell me, when it comes time and things change, it is a lot less likely that complaints will be well received.

See Message continued on page 3

Message continued from page 2

Let us not forget the Summer Meeting in Gulf Shores. We are back at the beach, but the meeting will only be as successful as what the participants will put into it. There are still volunteers needed. Technical support for the presentations, volunteers to sit at the registration desk so the one or two people we already have can get out to see the exhibits and presentations, even stuffing door prize tickets into nametags require a warm body; there are many ways to help. If we all help some, no one will have to work hard and we can all enjoy the meeting.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, and I hope to see you at Gulf Shores.

Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

By Andy Faulk

It's done...

The tournament went off without a hitch, or at least any major hiccups. I would like to thank those that helped this year get it off the table and on the greens: Dwight Turnipseed, S&ME; John Gordon, Wiser Company; Jonathan Byrd and Jason Regner, Highland Park Golf Club. I would also like to thank the UAB student chapter of ASCE for their participation and willingness to put up with the weather with us. The sponsors were a big help as well and helped offset the costs of the tournament.

The sponsors this year:

Saia Construction	Alabama Asphalt Pavement Association	Wiser Company
BE&K Government Group	Volkert & Associates	

I would also like to thank John Nelson at Signs & Graphics for making the tournament signs.

The students from UAB came out to volunteer around the course as well as sale mulligans and strings. All of the proceeds from the sell go to help the student chapter in regional competitions. Below is a listing of the brave students that volunteered:

Blair Minyard	Ryan Philmon
Amber Greer	Jason Watson
Will Whaley	Jay Walters
Allison Copus	Jimbo Crew
Chris Gann	

See Tournament continued on page 5



*Is this covered by
Workman's Comp?*

Speakers and Presentations

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 Andy Faulk.

Here is the line up so far:

September	Michael Lipparelli	Solar Bee	November	Jody Saiia	BARD
October	Ron Bane	TBA			



Where Would You Like to Meet

By Andy Faulk

For a while now we have met at the Golden Coral in Vestavia, but increasingly more and more members are speaking up that they would prefer a different location; one that appears a bit more professional. The officers have spoken with a lot of you individually and we have put the bug in your collective ear at a few of the meetings. After the Summer Conference we will start pursuing this with vigor. Please let us know your thoughts.

September is National Preparedness Month



ASCE has joined with the Department of Homeland Security for National Preparedness Month. It is a nationwide effort to encourage all Americans to take simple measures to prepare for emergencies in their homes, schools and businesses. The goal is to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and to encourage individuals to take action.

You can find out more information on the following website:

<http://ciasce.asce.org/NationalPreparednessMonth.html>

Sharon D. Banks Award

The Transportation Research Board is seeking nominations for the Sharon D. Banks Award for Innovative Leadership in Transportation. The TRB award will be made during the Chairman's Luncheon on January 16, 2008, during the TRB 87th Annual Meeting.

For more information go to TRB's website, www.trb.org.

Nominations are due by 8/31.



Tournament continued from page 3

I was hoping to raise more money this year for the scholarship fund than we did last year, but we didn't. Still we netted a little over \$1200. We apparently chose a date that a lot of other groups were using for their events. Next year we will set the date early and begin our advertising and sponsorship campaign well in advance of the tournament. I want to double the number of players next year and my goal is to completely pay for the tournament through sponsors, so all of the money raised through registration will go towards the scholarship fund. Are these goals unachievable? No, with your help we can make next year's tournament the best we've ever had.



Summer Conference Update

The Birmingham Branch of ASCE is proud to host the 2007 Summer Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama. Mark your calendar for enlightenment and exultation (as much as engineers can have) starting July 25th through the 27th, 2007. We will have technical presentations, a vendors' alley and much more. In addition to the lineup of speakers, this year we will have a golf tournament on Friday the 27th at the Glen Lakes Golf Course located in Foley, Alabama.

The Perdido Beach Resort is out of rooms at the special rate. We also have rooms available at the Island House Hotel. Contact them by phone at (251) 981-6100. <http://www.islandhousehotel.com/>

For those of you that have not registered yet, you may download the form from the website at <http://branches.asce.org/birmingham> and follow the link to the conference information. You can also call Andy Faulk at 205.942.2822 for more information.

The Whole Nine Yards

Upcoming Events

- ECOB meeting July 11 at Gallet & Associates.
- 2007 Summer Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL. - July 25th through the 27th. See the website for details on registration and booking hotel rooms.
- NSPE Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado, July 26th - 29th.

The Rest of the ...

- Nominations for Historic Civil Engineering Landmark status are due by Sept. 14. For information on the program, visit http://content.asce.org/history/ce_landmarks.html.

See The Rest of the... continued on page 6

The Rest of the... continued from page 5

- The Alabama Environmental Management Commission denied a petition by environmental groups that urged the state to adopt stricter standards to protect its waterways from cancer-causing pollutants. After its unanimous vote, the commission will allow a committee to review Alabama's water quality standards and report its findings in six months. "The petition has been denied, it has not been killed," said Dr. Laurel Gardner, a member of the commission. "It's still very much alive." The groups that filed the petition asked that Alabama join 28 other states that require carcinogen levels in streams to be low enough that no more than one in one million people could get cancer from them. Alabama uses a less protective risk factor that allows one in 100,000 people to get cancer. EPA allows states to use either standard, but most use the more protective one. Alabama Power Co., the Business Council of Alabama, the Alabama Coal Association and the Alabama Pulp and Paper Council all objected to stricter pollution rules. The Business Council objected to "a significant financial impact on the Alabama business community" and stated that the petitioners failed to justify the additional expense on industry. Clean water advocates said they were disappointed the commission discussed the economics of regulation so much and the cost of cancer so little. *U.S. Water News Online 7/5.*
- Investigators from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) criminal division are looking into a 2005 Missouri dam failure, the Associated Press is reporting. The Taum Sauk reservoir in southeast Missouri failed in December 2005 as a result of improperly installed and maintained water-level monitors. <http://www.ago.mo.gov/newsreleases/2007/052207c.htm>.

Newsletter Sponsors – Thank You



www.saiia.com

If you would like to advertise in next month's issue, please contact Andy Faulk @205.942.2822

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Do you have something to say? Let's hear it, and maybe your thoughts will be in the next newsletter.

PLEASE RETURN THIS STUB WITH PAYMENT:

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