



## EVENT CALENDAR:

### April

3rd - Habitat for Humanity  
Volunteer Work Day

8th - Transportation Group  
Meeting - Omaha

9th - 2010 ASCE/LOCATE  
Annual Transportation  
Conference - Scott  
Conference Center Omaha

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

From The President

Trust Bustin' Competition  
Summary

"Bounty Offered to Sections  
for Peer Review Referrals

Annual Transportation  
Conference

## PRESENTING

April 2010

### The Transportation Group Presents:

*"High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Update -  
Chicago to Omaha"*

Thursday, April 8th

**Featuring:** William Sharp, P.E., P.T.O.E. with HDR Engineering

Mr. Sharp is a Vice President and senior transportation engineer specializing in project management, location studies, design, environmental compliance and traffic engineering. Mr. Sharp served as Project Manager on the Iowa DOT Intercity Passenger Rail Chicago to Iowa City Environmental Assessment and Service Development Plan and is currently serving as the Project Manager on the Iowa DOT On-Call Passenger Rail Planning Activities.

**Location:** Biaggi's Ristorante Italiano

13655 California Street, Omaha NE 68154 #402-965-9801

<b>Times:</b>	Social Hour	5:30
	Dinner	6:00
	Presentation	7:00

<b>Menu:</b>	Family Style	\$25
	- House Salad	
	- Rigatoni Bolognese	
	- Chicken Marsala with Garlic Mashed Potatoes	
	- Soda/Tea/Water	

Spouses and guests are welcome. Price is \$10 without the meal. Student meals are FREE. If you require a vegetarian dinner, please contact Ticha Rohan at 399-1277 or [patricia.rohan@hdrinc.com](mailto:patricia.rohan@hdrinc.com). Register online by 12 PM Tuesday April 6th at [www.neasce.org/meal\\_signup](http://www.neasce.org/meal_signup).

Deadline for articles to be published in the May newsletter will be May 2nd. Email articles to Aaron Grote at [editor@neasce.org](mailto:editor@neasce.org)

2009-2010  
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## From the President

### - John Hill, P.E.



*John Hill, P.E. President of ASCE*

#### Nebraska Section Members:

After a long, cold winter with little sunshine, we finally have most of the snow melted and spring has arrived! (I say most snow, because out in the country area near where I live, there are still piles that are slowly melting.) This also means the start of the construction season, and I hope that everyone's workload is increasing. It is also warming so that I can do another of my favorite activities – riding my bicycle. There are not many things better than the fresh air, the quiet and the enjoyment riding a bike in the park or countryside. I'm sure many of you have other activities that you enjoy just as much.

We had a good turnout for our March meeting despite going up against the opening day of March Madness. I would like to thank our Environmental Technical Chair, Lara Syrocki for her work done to put together the March Meeting. We had over 30 people registered prior to the meeting and the room was filled with attendees. It is always good to see the members of ASCE active in the monthly meetings.

As we start our spring season, I would like to remind our members of our mission to do outreach and remind you of our resources for the schools and functions.

We have three portable displays, Building Big kit and the Bridge kit. Let me know if you have or know of an upcoming outreach opportunity for ASCE.

I have also received a video entitled Ethicana™, a movie, training guide and teaching materials from the Anti-Corruption Education and Training (ACET) initiative that is working on a concerted effort to reduce corruption in the engineering and construction industry. ASCE suggests that it be shown to a Section function, Younger Member Groups or Student chapters. It can also be lent out to Section members to show at their place of work. Again, contact me if you are interested in borrowing or seeing the video.

(Continued Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2 : From the President)

After last month's letter, I promised to keep this month's letter shorter. And since it hasn't been that long since the last newsletter, there is not more to report. Please keep involved with ASCE, and be sure to come to the April Meeting!

John M. Hill, P.E.

Dates to Remember (some tentative to change):

April 8 - Transportation Meeting

April 9 - Transportation Conference

May 13 - Annual Meeting/Banquet at Quarry Oaks Golf Club

## March Meeting Hosted by the Environmental Group

Thanks to the Environmental Group for hosting the March Meeting. The list below can be considered official documentation of attendances at the March meeting worth 1 PDH credit.

Alan Blair	Aaron Buettner
Jim Conroy	Denis Gilbert
Scott Gilliland	Paul Gonzales
Brain Havens	David Hill
John Hill	George Hunt
Doug Kellner	Loras Klostermann
Daren Konda	Jeff Kopocis
Marie Maly	Mike McIntosh
Abby Nelson	Ed Prost
Romeo Reales	Lisa Richardson
Greg Seib	Mike Sklenar
Chris Spilinek	Neal Suess
Lara Syrocki	Ed Thiele
Amelia Toellner	Andres Torres
Dwaine Voboril	Alex Wehbe
Quentin Yada	

## ASCE/LOCATE Annual Transportation Conference

The 2010 ASCE/LOCATE Annual Transportation Conference will be held Friday, April 9th at the Scott Conference Center.

Registration fee is \$110 if registered before April 2, 2010 and \$135 after this date.

The conference is presented in collaboration with

- Nebraska Department of Roads
- Nebraska Transportation Center
- City of Omaha
- City of Lincoln
- MAPA.

Registration and payment information is available online at [www.neasce.org](http://www.neasce.org) just click on the "Registration Now Open" link. Professional Development Hours will be awarded for attendance.

## “Bounty” Offered to Sections for Peer Review Referrals

The Committee on Peer Review for Public Agencies is introducing a \$250 incentive for referrals that result in a peer review.

### What is Peer Review?

The purpose of ASCE's Peer Review for Public Agencies Program is to help public sector engineering and construction agencies improve the management and quality of their engineering services through a quick, confidential, and affordable process. Reviewers study an organization's policies and objectives and conduct staff interviews to determine how well those policies and procedures are understood and practiced. Management areas covered include: organizational management, project management, emergency management, technical procedures, human resource management, finance, and public relations. The focus may cover planning, design, construction, operations, and maintenance -- and can include an entire agency or just a portion. The team concludes the process with an oral report to the engineer/director requesting the review, and if requested follows up later with a written report.

The process was modeled after a similar one used by the American Council of Engineering Companies in the late 1980's. Since 1987, almost 70 different local entities have benefitted from the ASCE Peer Review for Public Agencies program. Typical comments include “We were and still are very happy with the review that was performed.” and “Experience showed and was very valuable.” More information, including a brochure, is available on the ASCE Web site at [http://www.asce.org/professional/peereview/peer\\_review.cfm](http://www.asce.org/professional/peereview/peer_review.cfm).

ASCE Peer Review is a voluntary and confidential program for public infrastructure organizations and is conducted by experienced government engineer/managers who are trained in the process. Timing is typically controlled by the requesting agency. A review can be done quickly. The turnaround time can be within 90 days of the request. Cost is low for this kind of study since reviewers volunteer their time, and therefore no cost is included for their salaries.

The fee covers reviewer travel costs and administration. It typically ranges from \$6,000 to \$20,000 but depends on the size of the agency being reviewed and whether the agency requests a more customized review to address specific challenges or opportunities that they are facing.

### Benefits of a Peer Review

A peer review provides an objective outside assessment of strengths and weaknesses by fellow government engineers experienced in leadership and management. They have no stake in future work; their intent is to provide a useful service to colleagues. Agency management can gain insights into procedural difficulties, communication obstacles, organizational problems, and employee morale but also positive reinforcement from staff feedback. This helps them prioritize and implement suggestions for improvement of effectiveness in a manner that utilizes both staff and management input.

### Incentive process

Sections and Branches should email Becky Waldrup, ASCE's staff contact for the Committee on Peer Review for Public Agencies, at [rwaldrup@asce.org](mailto:rwaldrup@asce.org) to recommend an agency. Provide the following information:

1. ASCE Section or Branch name and contact, and
2. Government agency name and contact information.

Becky will acknowledge your submission, enter the contact information into ASCE's Peer Review tracking system, and follow-up with the agency to determine their interest. Upon completion of a review and payment of the review fee, the 'nominating' Section or Branch will receive payment of \$250. There is no limit on the number of referrals that a Sections and Branches may make or the number of referral fees that they may earn.

Agencies who have used this service have found that the process is very valuable. The Committee on Peer Review for Public Agencies hopes that this incentive offer will increase the exposure of this service. Please consider participating in the referral program for the benefit of your local public agencies as well as for the financial assistance that it will provide to your Section or Branch.

## Truss Bustin' Competition

### Summary

Contributed by John Hill  
Truss Bustin' Competition Coordinator

The 22nd Annual "Truss Bustin' Competition during Engineers' Week was conducted at the Strategic Air and Space Museum near Ashland on Saturday, February 20, 2010. The turnout was slightly lower than last year's record, but was still a great success. Feelings were mixed on having the competition at the SASM as it was a great place to have the kids and parents attend, but not all kids were allowed to drive that far to see the competition.

This year we had 170 trusses entered in the competition. The top place went to Will Stott of Omaha North and second and third places went to a team of Kristen Whitney and Kaitlyn Tomasek, and a team of Kelsey Phelan and Katie Zoucha, respectively from Gross Catholic. The other school participating was Burke.

The testing started at 12:00 Noon and finished nearly 4 hours later. Prizes will be presented to the school students in the amount of:

1st Place - \$150.00

2nd Place - \$75.00

3rd Place \$50.00.

Each student also receives a certificate and is invited to our April Section Meeting.

The competition didn't go off without a few hitches. First a ball bearing for the testing device was missing and due to the isolated area of the SASM some anxiety of having a non-working testing device had begun to set in. Lee Kolstrom, teacher of Omaha North walked in before competition and presented the missing part to great relief. The UNO students also forgot one box of trusses and had to return to UNO to retrieve them to keep us on schedule.

The truss holding the most weight was much less than last year, as the rules added a restriction on the number of members in a single chord. Last year the highest load was 629.6 Lbs. This year the maximum

load was 434.8 Lbs. The loading condition randomly selected was two concentrated loads, at an outside and center position. A device braces the truss laterally at the third concentrated load point, but no load is applied vertically. The winning truss from Omaha north weighed 59.6 grams and carried a total load at failure of 434.8 pounds.

John Hill, as Truss Bustin' Competition Coordinator and NE-ASCE President will be going to the schools to make presentations to the students and talk to the classes. A special thanks to all the Nebraska Section members and others that helped to contact the metro area high schools and assisted during the truss testing, the UNO Student Chapter of ASCE, that helped with the weighing and testing recording and sorting, and especially Melissa Letak, UNO ASCE Student President, helping get the students organized. Thanks to the Civil Engineering Round Table for the nice location at the SASM and those High Schools that participated.

## March Environmental Meeting

### Summary

About 30 people attended a dinner meeting hosted by the Nebraska Section's Environmental Technical Group on March 18th, 2010. A great mixture of professionals, guests, and students turned out. The meeting was held at Grisanti's Italian Restaurant in Omaha. Thanks to all who attended!

**NE-ASCE – AEI  
Joint Work Day For  
Habitat For Humanity**



NE-ASCE has asked AEI to team up and provide a volunteer work day at Habitat For Humanity on **Saturday, April 3, 2010. Time will be from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM.** You may work the morning from 8:30 AM until noon, or all day. Be prepared to work, have fun, meet be others involved with your profession, and give back to our community and represent ASCE.

Snacks will be provided for breaks, and lunch will be provided for those working all day. Available openings are limited, and we need to have an accurate count of workers, so sign up soon. More detailed information will be provided to those signing up as the date gets closer. NE-ASCE needs more volunteers than AEI!

Please Join Us! Sign Up or Get More Information by Contacting John Hill at :

[John.Hill@LRA-inc.com](mailto:John.Hill@LRA-inc.com)  
c/o Lamp, Rynearson & Associates  
14710 W. Dodge Road, Ste. 100  
Omaha, NE 68154  
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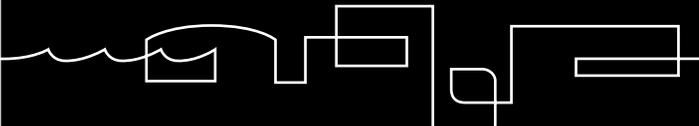
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