

Event Calendar:

- March 19—
Environmental
Meeting
- May 19, 2015—
ASCE Annual
Meeting

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March Meeting

Date: Thursday, March 19, 2015

Host: Nebraska Section ASCE, Environmental Group (Ms. Lara L. Syrocki, Environmental Group Committee Chair)

Location: Scott Conference Center
6450 Pine Street
Omaha, NE 68127

Program: **Reaching Zero: The Realities of Ecological-Friendly Engineering on a Continental Scale**

Mitigating the impacts of climate change requires understanding. The National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON), funded by the National Science Foundation, enables understanding and forecasting of the impacts of climate change and invasive species on a continental scale. Critical to the project's success, however, is the low-impact construction of each tower site. Strict guidelines imposed by NEON and site hosts present unique access challenges. This presentation will showcase the nature of the NEON project, its relevance to low impact construction, the access challenges it presents, and the planning/ engineering employed to meet those challenges.

Presenter: Elizabeth Hunter, PE, AICP, LEED BD+C,

Senior Associate, Leo A Daly

Elizabeth earned a BS in Civil Engineering and Environmental Studies from Iowa State University and an MS in Civil Engineering and Community & Regional Planning from the University of Nebraska. Elizabeth has a PE in 12 states, her AICP and LEED BD+C. She is a Senior Associate with Leo A Daly where she is the Project Manager for NEON work.

Times: 11:00 am Networking/Registration
11:30 am Lunch
12:00 pm Presentation

Menu/Price: Chef's Choice Buffet (2 hot entrée, 2 salads, 1 starch, 1 veggie, dessert, ice tea, and water)
\$15.00—payable to NEASCE at the door (cash, check, or credit card).

Registration/Deadline: Life Members are free, NEASCE Students are free, but everyone must pre-register to attend.

Register at <http://meeting.neasce.com/signup/>
Sign up by 12:00 pm Monday, March 16, 2015.

Contact Lara.Syrocki@hdrinc.com for more information.



**Andres Torres, PE,
M.ASCE**

From the President

Greetings Nebraska Section!

Let me start by saying that February was an **amazing** month for NEASCE! When the NEASCE Board started planning activities for 2014-2015, we knew February would be busy but couldn't anticipate the great success that we had this past month. I'm glad to share with you the highlights of the activities undertaken by NEASCE in February.

On February 12th, we had our monthly meeting organized by the Geotechnical group. The speaker, Dr. Edward Kavazanjian, PhD, PE, D.GE, talked about different ground improvement technologies including turning sand into sandstone and the application of microbiology to enhance soil properties. This meeting was well attended and we had more than 35 participants. That night also served as a good introduction to the 32nd Annual Geotechnical Conference (GEO-Omaha 2015). We broke the attendance record for this conference. In total, there were **265 participants** including professional attendees, students, presenters, vendors, and special guests. I'd like to thank Brian Havens, PE, and the rest of the planning committee for the outstanding work. As I may have mentioned in another opportunity, proceeds from this conference benefit the ASCE funded Peck/Engineering Achievement Scholarship for civil engineering students enrolled at UNL or UNO and other NEASCE outreach programs including Future City.

E-week was held later than usual this year, but this didn't stop the great number of volunteers that made the E-Week School Blitz a complete success. We wanted to celebrate Engineers Week in a special way this year by having a *School Blitz* on which NEASCE members would be visiting local schools to give presentations and lead activities with a focus on civil engineering. In total, **709 students** (Kindergarten through High School) in 29 classrooms, 8 schools, and 4 school districts in Omaha and Lincoln were exposed to civil engineering. I'd like to thank John Smith, PE for leading this effort and the 30 volunteers who made this possible.

During E-week, NEASCE was also part of the 5th Annual Industry Networking Mixer organized by the UNO Chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and co-sponsored by the student chapters of the Mexican American Engineers & Scientists (MAES), the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). This event provided an opportunity for students of the ASCE student chapter to interact and network with other students and industry professionals. NEASCE members were also in attendance talking and sharing their experiences with the students.

Last but not least, the Truss Bustin' competition took place on Saturday February 28th at the PKI Building (UNO South Campus). **156 students** from different local high schools competed in this event. The competition also coincided with an engineering recruitment activity at PKI which provided additional visibility to this event. I'd like to thank Ryan Hanson, EIT, and all the volunteers who helped by measuring and testing more than 150 trusses.

In summary, more than **1100 individuals** participated in events organized or sponsored by NEASCE. This is just amazing!

The success of these events wouldn't be possible without the effort and commitment of the NEASCE Officers, Board Members, Committee Chairs, and countless volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage NEASCE members to send me or the Board ideas for improving the Section, getting more participation, or filling a need among our membership. Our Board Meetings are open to all our members and are usually held right before the monthly meetings (4:30pm to 5:30pm). This month is an exception as we will be having our Environmental meeting at lunch on Thursday, March 19th at the Scott Conference Center. However, for all those interested, the next Board Meeting will be held in Lincoln at the Alfred Benesch & Company offices on Tuesday, March 24th at 5:30pm. See you soon!

February Meeting Summary

The Nebraska Section ASCE Geotechnical Group hosted the February meeting at on the Scott Conference Center in Omaha. Dr. Edward Kavazanjian, PhD, PE, D.GE, presented on ground improvement technologies, including turning sand into sandstone and the application of microbiology to enhance soil properties.

The list below can be considered official documentation of attendance at the February 12, 2015 meeting and presentation worth one (1) PDH credit.

Brian Havens	Ed Kavazanjian	Allen Cadden	Amelia Ganze
Steven Saye	Brandon Gardels	Bryan Kumm	Stephen Matychuck
Terri Norton	Rick Donovan	Gopalakrishna Allam	Jim Hill
Ryan Leigh	Thomas Strauss	Loras Klostermann	Patrick Kinsella
Joseph Sinden	Larry Isom	Sheryl Gallagher	Mohamad Ibrawish
John Hill	Bill Arneson	Edward Prost	Marlaine Ngudia
Dan Mahrt	Deanna Baker	Brittni Stephens-Yates	Eri Skulstad
James Conroy	Shannon Smith	Joseph Waxse	Mark Nelson
Ed Thiele	Brian Keaney	John Puls	John Hovanec

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Multi-Regional Leadership Conference

- Matt Hubel, PE, M.ASCE

On Friday, January 30 and Saturday, January 31, Tyler Klusaw and I attended the ASCE Multi-regional Leadership Conference in Houston, Texas. This annual conference is a conglomeration of three smaller conferences including the Workshop for Section and Branch Leaders (WSBL), the Central Region Younger Member Council (CRYMC), and the Workshop for Student Chapter Leaders (WSCL).

I was at the conference representing the Nebraska Section at the WSBL. This portion of the conference is centered around the training of current board members for their roles as leaders within their local ASCE organizations. One of the sessions in this year's curriculum was centered around learning our unique personality traits based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test and how best to communicate with each type of personality. For instance, I am an EITJ, which stands for Extroversion, Intuition, Thinking, and Judging. I won't go into what each of these means, but if you are interested in your own personality type, go to www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp.

Other sessions at the WSBL instructed attendees on how to hold a formal board meeting according to Robert's Rules of Order and how to work with confrontational people. We were also given the opportunity to ask direct questions of the current society leaders, network with other branches and sections throughout the central region, and candidly talk with the younger members and student chapter attendees from Nebraska on what we do well, what needs additional work, and how we can work together to better ASCE in our state for all members.

At the conference, I attended break-out sessions centered around the current issues affecting the civil engineering profession. I brought home valuable information on the "Raise the Bar" initiative in ASCE, which is our effort to increase the educational requirements for becoming professional engineers. I also learned techniques for staying engaged with local, state, and federal political leaders on factors affecting our profession.

To end the weekend, we were given the opportunity to visit the Houston Space Center, which was a pretty cool experience for someone whose second choice as a profession was to be an astronaut. (First choice was civil engineer, of course. Third choice was cage fighter, in case you were wondering.) Overall, it was a great trip and a great way for a new board member like myself to get more acquainted with the organization and bring back some ideas and information to improve the Nebraska Section.

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2015 Truss Bustin' Competition

- Ryan Hanson, EIT, A.M.ASCE

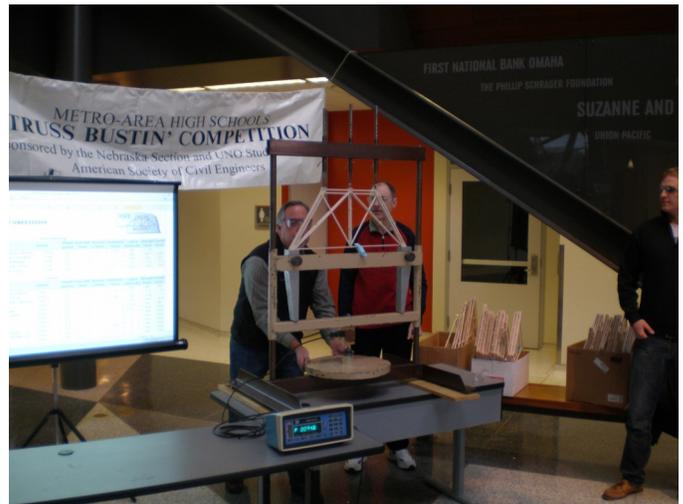
The 2015 ASCE Truss Bustin' competition took place on Saturday, February 28th at the Peter Kiewit Institute on the UNO campus. Truss Bustin' is an annual event, sponsored by the Nebraska Section ASCE and the UNO Student Chapter, that challenges Omaha-area high school students to design and construct a balsa wood bridge, simulating the engineering design process from concept through construction. Students design their own truss following standard specifications, draw construction plans, and put their designs to the test at the competition where the trusses are loaded to failure. The competition introduces students to engineering professions, and provides teachers a hands-on approach to teaching their students about structural mechanics and the design process.

156 students participated in this year's event, with entries from Omaha North, Gross, Papillion-La Vista South, and Bellevue West High Schools. Congratulations to the team of Alina Becerra, Kelsy Beaudin, and Sydney Sakalosky from Gross Catholic High School on their first place finish in the competition! Their truss withstood a load of 260 pounds, while only weighing 33.1 grams. Further congratulations to the team of Matt Lewis and Nick Hofmaier from Gross, and to Mark Armbrust from Omaha North, on their 2nd and 3rd place finishes, respectively! Mark's truss withstood the highest load of 534.8 pounds, with a weight of 63.5 grams. The top three teams will receive a cash prize, along with a certificate signifying their achievement, and an invitation to NEASCE's April meeting with their parents and teacher for recognition. Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to everyone who volunteered at the competition!

The future is bright for the Truss Bustin' event. A new testing machine is in the works for next year's competition, allowing for more flexibility in the design envelope and load cases for the competition. Furthermore, with increased recruiting efforts, we are hoping for a significant increase in the number of entries for next year's event. If you are interested in helping out with growing the competition, look for opportunities advertised in this newsletter in the future, or contact Ryan Hanson. Your help is always appreciated!



2015 Truss Bustin' Competition



Loading Trusses at the 2015 ASCE Truss Bustin' Competition

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Legislative Update Report

- Bill Arneson, PE, M.ASCE

Professional Engineers Coalition (PEC) is planning on testifying in favor of LB 610 at the Revenue Committee hearing on March 6. This bill offered by Sen. Smith from Dist. 14 will allow the state to collect more tax per gallon of fuel, with a few exceptions. The proposed rate increase would be 7.5 cents per gallon until the end of 2015. Then there would increases each year until 2019 where it would end up to be 9.5 cents per gallon. Representatives of PEC considered that a bill that would help to increase funding for the state's road and bridge construction would be a favorable outcome.

The week of March 9 the Transportation & Telecommunication Committee will be having a hearing concerning LB 609 also introduced by Sen. Smith from Dist. 14. At this time PEC is watching this bill and will stay neutral. The intent of this bill would set up an independent commission that is separate from county and state control to build or fix bridges. There is no requirement that any members of this commission would have to be professional engineers. This bill would also be the first time that design-build would be allowed to construct public transportation projects using state money. The PEC committee thinks that there is no need to set up a separate commission to oversee the construction of bridges when NDOR and the counties currently are performing those tasks very efficiently.

As follow up, LB 23 has been voted out of committee, on the legislative floor and is expected to be approved in March. As a reminder LB 23 was developed by the State Board of Engineers and Architects to clean up and update some issues with the Engineers and Architect Regulation Act.

As always, Nebraska ASCE members are encouraged to go to the Nebraska Legislature web page and view the full text of the introduced bill.



Central Region Younger Member Council

- Brandon Gardels, A.M.ASCE

The 2015 Central Region Younger Member Council (CRYMC) was held January 30-31st in Houston, TX. Mark Egger and Brandon Gardels, the Co-Chairs of the Younger Member Group, attended the conference as the representatives from the Nebraska ASCE Section. The conference consisted of leadership training, roundtable discussions, a regional business meeting, and other breakout sessions. In the breakout sessions, participants learned about ways to engage ASCE members, start outreach programs, promote community service projects, transition student chapter members to professional members, and other ways to improve the younger member groups.

Throughout the conference, younger members are encouraged network and collaborate with other section and branch younger members to gather ideas to improve the younger member groups. In one particular session, younger members, section and branch leaders, and students met together with the Regional Governor of their respective areas. This gave members an opportunity to discuss ideas and collaborate between multiple levels of the local ASCE. The conference also had breakout sessions with members of the national ASCE leadership so that we could ask questions and provide input for national issues. Overall, the conference was a great way to learn about all levels of the ASCE, gather ideas for future younger member events, and network with other engineers.



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SAVE THE DATE!

ASCE NEBRASKA SECTION ANNUAL BANQUET—SPOUSES AND GUEST WELCOME!

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2015

Location: The Pella at Blackstone (303 South 41st Street, Omaha, NE)

Time: 5:30 to 8:30 pm

- Social Hour: 5:30pm to 6:30 pm
- Dinner and Program: 6:30pm to 8:30 pm

RSVP: Joe Flaxbeard | 402-677-2131 or Joe.Flaxbeard@LRA-INC.com

Program:

- Keynote Speaker: Steve Rodie, Director of University of Nebraska Omaha Center for Urban Sustainability
- Presentation of Life Member Awards
- Presentation of Outstanding Member and Student Awards
- Election of ASCE Nebraska Section Officers

Price:

- \$15 per person
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Thank you to the businesses that support this
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For underwriting information, contact Greg Seib,
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Deadline for articles to be published in the March newsletter will
be March 4th. Email articles to Greg Seib at
gseib@olssonassociates.com