



The Engineering Voice

American Engineering Alliance

Winter 2005

Chairperson's Report by Salvatore Galletta, P.E. - Chairperson

As I write this report the year has just come to an end. The end of the year is usually a time for reflection and assessment. As we look back on the year 2004 we, as an organization, can take stock of our accomplishments, setbacks and disappointments. I will try to briefly summarize some of the major activities AEA has undertaken during the past year. One of the key initiatives that AEA has been vigorously pursuing is the implementation of the "Infrastructure Proposal" for the City of New York. As I explained in previous reports, the "Infrastructure Proposal" calls for creating a position of Deputy Mayor for Infrastructure for the City of New York. This proposal was introduced several years ago during the New York City mayoral race. We have been promoting it ever since. During the past several years we have been building support for the proposal within Engineering Community as well as with the political establishment. As you can well imagine this is a huge undertaking. After much effort we have finally come to the point where legislation will be drafted in the next couple of months and introduced in the New York City Council. In conjunction with this proposed legislation we are working with City Council members and various stakeholders to re-introduce the Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) bill in City Council. The QBS bill will eventually be incorporated into the "Infrastructure Proposal" legislation. However, to ensure its quick adoption, the QBS bill will be introduced in City Council as a stand-alone legislation. I am hopeful that our constant and focused efforts will yield positive results in the not too distant future.

In other areas, AEA has worked assiduously to educate our colleagues on the H1B Visa issue and the whole offshore outsourcing controversy. As a member of the Metropolitan Engineering Societies Council (MESOC), which represents 23 Engineering Societies in the New York Metropolitan region, AEA has been at the forefront by informing our colleagues in the Engineering Community of the dire consequences of these issues if we do not take appropriate actions. Several of AEA Board members are tied to an informal, yet effective, national network of activists on these critical issues. Because of this network, we are kept up-to-date on the latest developments and we respond to events as they happen. Thanks to the many dedicated colleagues on the frontlines of the immigration issue, the Engineering Community is slowly responding to the challenges that H1B Visa, offshore outsourcing and the globalization forces pose for the Engineering Profession. Despite limited resources, AEA has been instrumental in disseminating information and mobilizing our colleagues to take action. We intend to continue and augment our efforts.

There are many other actions and activities that the Board

undertakes during the year, from writing letters to government officials, coordinating efforts with other Engineering societies to making presentations at schools and colleges. Although in themselves, each of these activities is not of major importance, cumulatively they are having an impact. The frustrating part is that AEA does not have the resources to mount major initiatives that would have a dramatic impact. That is why we need to grow the membership base and find other ways to raise funds for AEA. Only with enough resources can we hope to achieve our goals in a reasonable amount of time.

In an effort to make AEA more responsible and effective, the Board has revamped its administrative functions. We are in the process of updating our membership database. Soon you will be receiving correspondence from our Membership Committee chair, Verghese Menachery, PE, regarding your membership. Please respond to his request in a timely fashion. If your membership is in arrears, please arrange to bring it up-to-date. I thank you in advance for your cooperation. AEA needs your support.

This year's AEA Annual Meeting, Social and Award Presentation will be held on May 5, 2005 at Bayard's in lower Manhattan. This is a special year since it marks the 10th anniversary of the founding of AEA. Preparations for the event are underway. We intend to make it bigger and better than last year's event, which was a great success. Our guest speaker will be our distinguished colleague, Frank Lombardi, PE, Chief Engineer of the Port Authority of NY and NJ. He will be speaking on the Port Authority's Capital Program. In his presentation he will also discuss Engineering leadership in the context of delivering Engineering services as well as the trend to commoditize Engineering services and what needs to be done to counteract it. As part of the evening festivities, we will be honoring some of our colleagues who have made significant contributions in promoting and advancing the Engineering Profession. If you know someone who deserves to be recognized for his or her contributions, please mail the name and reason for recognition to the Board. The categories of the various awards are given in this issue.

Please mark your calendar and let us celebrate together on this festive occasion.

Salvatore Galletta, P.E.

AEA AWARDS

The following is a listing of current AEA Awards, with descriptions of their purposes:

VANGUARD AWARD

To recognize Engineers who, at great personal risk, have defended the ethics mission and status of the Profession

HERALD AWARD

To recognize Engineers who have been instrumental in disseminating to their fellow Engineers, news of critical importance to elevating the Profession

DEFENDER AWARD

To recognize Engineers who have unselfishly utilized the resources at their command for the benefit of the Profession

SAGE AWARD

To recognize Engineers who have related to their fellow Engineers, critical analyses of the present state of the Profession, and prophetic visions of what it can be

CONFRERE AWARD

To recognize individuals outside the Profession who have made a significant contribution to the goal of elevating Engineering to benefit the Public

CORNERSTONE AWARD

To recognize individuals who through their dedication, work and contributions to the betterment of the Profession, formed a solid foundation to permit progress

ADJUTANT'S CALL

The Next Generation

Now is the time to think about suggesting to your company or agency hierarchy to hire Interns for the 2005 summer season. It is important for our future, to acquaint technically oriented students with the rewards of our Profession. Did you think I meant money? Perhaps, but more importantly prospective Engineers need to witness at close-hand, the actual work we do and the gratification that accrues from doing it well. If they do not have an actual taste of the vocation, they can only judge by the relative salaries in relation to other more lucrative careers, and we will lose the competition for the brightest minds. So promote the Summer Intern idea in your workplace.

As a special note to those in the New York City area, the AEA has a close relationship with the Brooklyn Technical High School. If anyone can help us place some of their Junior or Senior students in a summer position, please get in touch with me at comunellil@aol.com.

Why Should I Support That Banana?

The Political Party is immaterial. The platform of a Candidate is very important. Too many politicians seeking election completely neglect the issue of Competence in Government. As practicing Engineers, we know all too well the increasing absence of Professionally qualified executives at the top levels of local, state and federal hierarchies. Our citizens have suffered because of this in their health and welfare, as well as in their pocketbooks. I believe it is important to concentrate on local races, because this has more of a

chance for success, and local influence provides a solid foundation for our being heard at higher levels.

There is no excuse for any of us to sit out any election. Every vote counts, but influencing many votes counts many times more. Along with other Professionals, we need to have the politicians understand that we can vote as a bloc to advance professional quality management of our Infrastructure, and encourage others to also do so. Political figures that are willing to work toward this goal must be identified and assisted. On a personal basis, I would appreciate obtaining such information, and would appreciate receiving it from you. Please e-mail me at comunellil@aol.com.

Volunteer Editor-in-Chief Needed

As our operational activities increase, it is becoming increasingly difficult for me to keep up with sending out this newsletter. We therefore need a volunteer to take the responsibility to:

- Utilize the due dates for the newsletters to "bug" the Chairperson, myself and the other contributors to for each issue
- Coordinate the assembly of the articles with the volunteers who actually type out each issue, and with the volunteer who does the mailing
- Manage the advertisements

Send Me Your E-Mail Address

The time is rapidly coming upon us when we will have to capitalize on our recent political and public relations advances. The AEA will have to demonstrate that we can muster a significant number of Professionals to act as a unified group. The categories of some possible actions and reasons for communication are listed below. I need to be able to communicate quickly with as many members as possible, along with members of other Societies.

Toward that end, I request that all of you send me your e-mail address (mine is comunellil@aol.com). All e-mail addresses received will be included in a series of specific communications, based upon the categories you choose. Please remember to include your name, membership number (this is located on the upper left corner of your mailing label), latest residence and business addresses, latest telephone numbers, and the categories of communications you wish to receive. I will communicate with you via e-mail, and furnish you with details of how and under what circumstances we will communicate with you.

The present categories of mass e-mail communication are:

- Updates to members on specific actions
- Calls for volunteers for specific administrative tasks, such as assistance with mass mailings
- Calls for volunteers to staff peaceful physical demonstrations
- Calls for coordinated local level activities, such as attendance at school "Career Days", community service or Engineering recognition activities
- Eventually, electronic distribution of our newsletters

Call For Members Of Student Activities Committee

Since the future is in the next generations, we must develop strong relationships with students and their teachers. The Board has decided that additional volunteers are necessary to establish and coordinate those relationships.

We therefore request that each of you consider volunteering for the Student Activities Committee. This committee will operate under the general supervision of the Board, but will be composed of members from many jurisdictions. The Board will give the committee specific guidance, so volunteers will not have to fend for themselves. A sampling of activities could be:

- Participation in Career Days at Elementary, Junior High and High Schools
- Liaison with Engineering Students, and formation of Student AEA Chapters
- Development and maintenance of close relationships and mutual assistance with Faculties
- Specific educational assistance to individual students and groups of students
- Sharing of information throughout the various localities, so as to make the committee effort as efficient as possible

Lou Comunelli, P.E

WRITERS

We can improve the quality of our newsletter with either regular or ad hoc articles from our members. News items, essays, opinions, etc. are welcome.

Anyone interested should call Lou Comunelli at 718-636-9237 or 718-782-0268 or E-Mail a message to comunellil@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

As of February 15, 2005, AEA has 392 members.

The Membership Committee needs to improve and update their data base of our membership. You can help by supplying any changes in your address(es) and telephone numbers, as well as giving us your e-mail address. Please send the information via e-mail to Verghese Menachery of the Membership Committee at vmenachery@hotmail.com.

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of February 4, 2005, our account balances are as follows:

General Account	\$1,690.89
TELAF	\$745.00
Total	\$2,435.89

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Anthony Grosso, P.E.	NY
Jay Shah, P.E.	NY

LAPEL PINS / CLOTHING

Order your AEA Lapel Pins - \$8.00 ppd. Also available is a variety of clothing bearing the AEA Logo. Please use the Multi-Purpose Form to order merchandise.

READING LIST

The following two books are recommended reading for Engineers.

"Forks in the Road" by Richard Weingardt, P.E. and

"Engineering Ethics: Concept and Cases" by Harris, Pritchard and Rabins

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