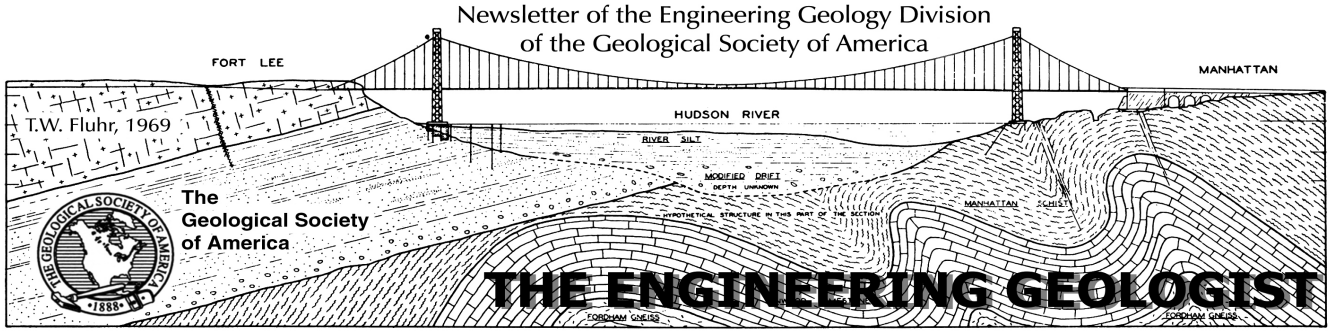
Newsletter of the Engineering Geology Division
of the Geological Society of America



THE ENGINEERING GEOLOGIST

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Division Chair's Message

By Robert A. Larson

I am pleased to report that we have only good news for you this year. Interest in our Division continues to grow as demonstrated by an increase in membership, attendance at our Annual Luncheon, and abstracts submitted to the annual meeting. Membership is up to 798 geologists, since the Society-wide low point in 1996. We have the lowest student dues and next to lowest membership dues of all the Divisions because your officers work hard at keeping down expenses. At this year's annual meeting we will have seven oral sessions and one poster session with enough variety for everyone interested. More than 110 abstracts were submitted for our sessions. This up from an average of about 40 abstracts just a few years ago. We are repeating a session held 21 years ago on "Academic Training of Engineering Geologists" so we can determine our progress. So come and join us. Sign up now for the meeting this November, visit with all your friends, win a little money at the tables, and attend the Division Luncheon and honor our Awardees.

This year we completed revamping our charitable funds to form the Richard H. Jahns Distinguished Lecturer Fund and the Roy J. Shlemon Scholarship Fund for Engineering Geology. The former supports the Jahns Lecturer, the primary purpose of which is to attract great students to our field of practice. The latter supports students through scholarship and meeting awards. We are pleased that Robert J. Watters of the University of Nevada, Reno accepted our joint nomination, with the Association of Engineering Geologists, as the Jahns Lecturer for 2001. You can read the abstracts of the two talks he can present at your school or meeting in another part of this newsletter. The Roy J. Shlemon Fund presented two scholarship awards at the Master's level and meeting awards to 16 of our student members. Please consider making tax-deductible contributions to both of our funds so we can continue to expand our influence on and support of students.

Changing the name of our Division has been discussed for at least twenty years. As stated in a previous newsletter, a proposal to add "Environmental" to our name was presented to GSA. However, we did not garner any support for the proposal because the other Divisions, except Planetary Division, felt that their members also work in the environmental field. So our name remains. What I think we need to work on is broadening the definition of engineering geology, to reflect what many of us now do, beyond our traditional tie to fixed civil engineering works. This process can start with the revision of our bylaws, to include a definition of engineering geology. The bylaws are available on our Web site and we welcome input from our members. George Kiersh has suggested the name "Engineering Geosciences Division". What do you think about this suggestion? Let us know.

GSA is going through a transition of its own, trying to survive in our increasingly expensive world. The changes have resulted in long-term headquarters personnel leaving to find jobs in Denver-based dot-com companies. And those of you who have submitted abstracts to the annual meeting have found that there is now a charge. But Reno is still going to be the second largest meeting ever, so professionals are finding value in GSA membership.

We have four volumes of Reviews in Engineering Geology in the works. The first of these upcoming volumes should be available next year. Two of our previous volumes were handed out to new student members of GSA on CD ROMs for the first time. We are the only Division to have our own book series, and we can be proud of the continuing quality and value of these volumes.

I want to thank my fellow officers, our members who called with suggestions, and those professionals who submitted topical session proposals for the meetings. All the volunteers are all doing a great job and deserve your gratitude. Please check the Web site regularly for the latest news on our Division. We are always looking for volunteers, so let us know if you are interested.

With your help we can continue to grow, prosper, and enjoy our profession. I hope to see all of you in Reno.

Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!

Voting for Engineering Geology Division Officers will be done by either the enclosed paper ballot or blast email. Electronic balloting will be at http://rock.geosociety.org/balloting/EGD.asp. The choice for how to vote for this year's officers will be yours to make---just remember which one you did, so you don't vote twice.

Hear 2000 Jahns Lecturer

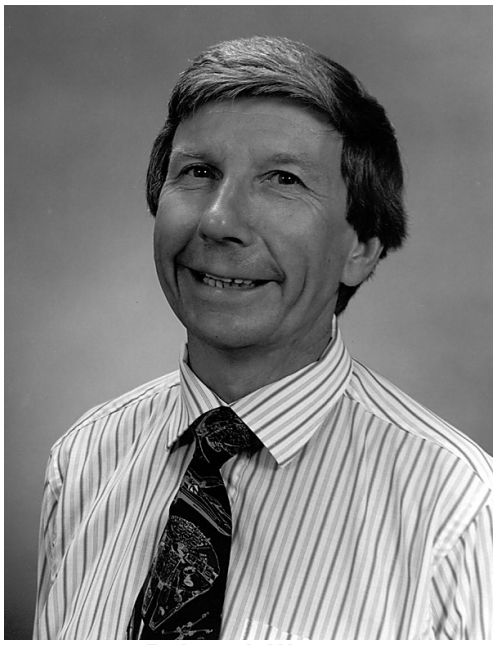
If you were unable to hear Dr. Allen W. Hatheway give his presentation during the last year, you still have a chance. Dr. Hatheway will present "Site Characterization" during the Engineering Geology topical session (#250) on Wednesday, November 15th. Don't miss it!

Dr. Robert J. Watters to be the Next Jahns Lecturer

The Richard H. Jahns Distinguished Lecturer is a joint program of the Engineering Geology Division of the Geological Society of America and the Association of Engineering Geologists. Dr. Robert J. Watters of the University of Nevada, Reno accepted the nomination to be the lecturer for 2001.

Dr. Watters is an accomplished practitioner in the field of engineering geology. His contributions include both academic research and experience as a practicing professional.

Dr. Watters will be offering a choice of two lectures. One is entitled, " Importance and Limitations of Geology, Strength Data, and Modeling Studies to Understanding Slope Instability" and the other, "Realism in Volcano Hazard Zonation: Does Geo-Engineering Help Provide a More Accurate Assessment". He can be contacted at watters@mines.unr.edu in order to check on scheduled presentations or to arrange for a talk at your meeting or school.



Robert J. Watters

Call for Applications!

Looking to expand your professional horizons? Believe in serving society through science? Ready for a unique challenge**? Then apply for GSA's Congressional Science Fellowship 2001- 2002.** Put your expertise and experience to work helping shape science and technology policy on Capitol Hill. Work directly with national and international leaders.

The Congressional Science Fellow will be selected from top competitors early in 2001. Successful candidates are GSA members who possess either a Ph.D in the earth sciences or a related field, or a Master's degree in the earth sciences or a related field with at least five years of professional experience. If you possess this professional background, have experience in applying scientific knowledge to societal challenges, and share a

passion for helping shape the future of the geoscience profession, GSA invites your application. The fellowship is open to U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. **The deadline to apply is February 2, 2001.**

To learn more about the Fellow experience, contact David Verardo, 1997-1998 GSA Congressional Fellow at (202) 314-2234 or dverardo@usgcrp.gov. For application information, check our Web site at

www.geosociety.org/science.csf.scifellow.htm or contact Karlon Blythe, Program Officer, GSA Headquarters, (303) 447-2020, ext. 136 or e-mail kblythe@geosociety.org.

The USGS National Landslide Information Center

By Lynn Highland

Many people are familiar with the National Earthquake Information Center in Golden, Colorado, funded and staffed by the U.S. Geological Survey. But, did you know there are two sister hazard information centers located in the same building? One is the National Geomagnetic Hazards Center that facilitates research for and tracking of geomagnetic and electromagnetic phenomena such as sunspots and auroras. As these types of magnetic activities can impact satellites and other communications entities, this center provides up-to-the-minute information for government agencies and other organizations that need to receive rapid and accurate data about these occurrences. The third information center, the National Landslide Information Center (NLIC), provides a means of disseminating information about landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, debris flows, and other surface processes that occur with astounding regularity on planet Earth.

The NLIC is the outreach and public information arm of the federally funded Landslide Hazard Reduction Program. Most of the 15 scientists working in this program are located in Golden, Colorado. The rest are housed in the two USGS regional headquarters in Reston, Virginia and Menlo Park, California.

Landslides and other similar earth processes occur in all 50 states. It is estimated that in the U.S. they may cause in excess of 2 billion dollars in damages each year, and between 25 to 50 deaths. Globally, landslides cause untold billions of dollars in damages and thousands of deaths and injuries each year. As there is virtually no homeowner or commercial insurance that covers losses from landslides in the U.S., the home and business owner, as well as local, state and national government entities (such as highway departments) must assume the brunt of damages, the costs of which are potentially astronomical.

Head of the Sourgrass debris flow in the Stanislaus River drainage, Sierra Nevada, California triggered by the New Years Day 1997 storm event.

Since the national landslide program is small, the NLIC provides a means to access local information at the state and municipal level. There are currently no national regulations or guidelines pertaining to landslide mitigation—most local landslide resources are in the form of grading codes for new construction, and in the form of maps created by the USGS, State Geological Surveys, and/or counties and cities. These maps may or may not provide an analysis of landslide hazard potential—most simply they indicate where landslides have occurred in the past. As the current status of landslide mapping is sketchy and intermittent, the watchwords are “buyer beware”. Private geotechnical consulting companies are sometimes the best bet if a thorough assessment of landslide hazard potential for a site is desired.

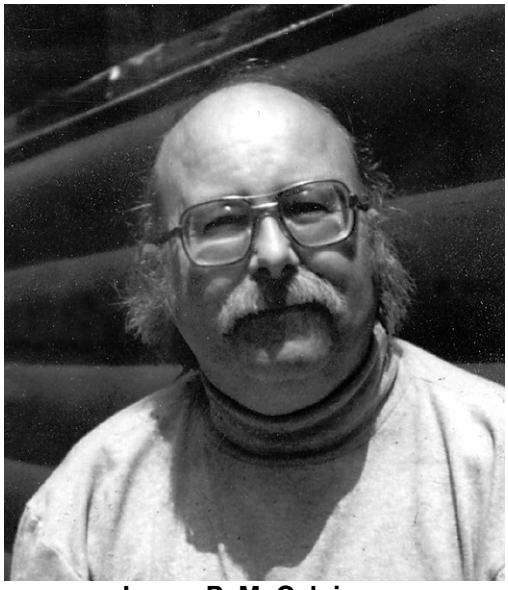
The NLIC has a toll-free number for anyone wishing to find out more information about landslides (1-800-654-4966). The Center’s Web site. http://www.geohazards.cr.usgs.gov, presents a searchable, bibliographic database, a click-on map of the U.S. providing a direct link to any State Geological Survey, updates on recent events, and published reports by USGS, including downloadable illustrations, graphics, and zoom-in-and-out maps, and the full texts of landslide project investigation reports. There is also information about the USGS landslide scientists, including contact information, as well as profiles of current project work.

(Editor’s Note: Lynn Highland is the NLIC Coordinator. She can be reached at Highland@usgs.gov for additional details on the NLIC).

Honoring the 2000 EGD Awardees at the Reno Luncheon

The Engineering Geology Division luncheon will be held on Wednesday, November 15th as part of the GSA annual meeting activities. It affords an excellent opportunity to honor the 2000 EGD award winners. As noted earlier, the EGD/AEG Richard H. Jahns Distinguished Lecturer for 2001 is Dr. Robert J. Watters.

This year's recipient of the E.B. Burwell, Jr. Award is Dr. James P. McCalpin, Geo-Haz Consulting. Dr. McCalpin is being recognized for his book, Paleoseismicity. This is an outstanding reference in a rapidly developing field of applied geology.



James P. McCalpin

Dr. Erhard M. Winkler is this year's recipient of the Meritorious Service Award. Dr. Allen Hatheway eloquently states the reason for his selection as: "For more than fifty years Erhard M. Winkler has provided an ongoing organizational need for the Division of Engineering Geology to continue its commitment toward the application of classical mineralogy, petrography and geochemistry in the preservation of fine stone, our most noble of engineering materials. At the same time, he has served as the dean of North America's applied engineering mineralogists. By example, he has shown us, as well as provoked us, toward the application of careful micro-techniques necessary to the innovative application of classic geology in the balance between fine science and engineering practicality. We salute Professor Winkler for his fine science, his clear literature, his stout leadership, and his sterling personal example of the true professional geologist".

Ellis L. Krinitzsky

The Distinguished Practice Award is being presented to Dr. Ellis L. Krinitzsky. Dr. Krinitzsky is a well-know engineering geologist with an impressive list of accomplishments over many years. Dr. Krinitzsky has served his profession as an editor for the periodical, "Engineering Geology" and in leadership roles within various professional organizations.

In addition to honoring our year 2000 awardees, the luncheon is a great way to see old friends with whom you have missed during the technical sessions. As well, the luncheon will provide a chance to further become acquainted with other Colleagues and Engineering Geologists.

Special Annual Meeting News

EGD members may already have noted a Pardee Symposium entitled "Living With Uncertainty: Scientific, Political, and Societal Perspectives" on the schedule for Reno. This symposium will deal with the role of

uncertainty in science, an issue familiar to practicing Engineering Geologists, as are the differing views and understandings of uncertainty found among fellow scientists, the public and political entities. This symposium will begin at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, Nov. 14th in the Reno/Sparks Hall C.

EGD Student Member One of First Interns in "Geology in the Forest" Program

EGD student member, Ann Finocchio, was selected to be one of the first four interns placed on national forests in California this summer. She spent ten weeks on national forests in the Sierra Nevada. The "Geology in the Forests" is a joint intern/mentor partnership between the Geological Society of America and the Pacific Southwest Region of the USDA Forest Service.

Ann is a senior at Radford University, Radford, Virginia. Ann's primary mentor was EGD member Alan Gallegos stationed on the Sierra National Forest in Fresno, California. She also worked on projects with EGD member Jerry DeGraff. Both Alan and Jerry share responsibility for the geologic needs of the three southernmost national forests in the Sierra Nevada. Ann helped research and determine the bedrock geology for 132 watersheds distributed throughout the Sierra Nevada and participated in later water sampling from lakes in the Kaiser Wilderness. Her field experiences were not limited to ground pounding. She also went on a helicopter reconnaissance to observe the geology along the American River area. Other projects Ann assisted on included monitoring of the Camino Meadow restoration project and collecting temperature and chemical data from the Mono Hot Springs. Ann also served as a role model for another Sierra National Forest geology intern, Ibeth Avila. Ibeth is a recent high school graduate with a dream of becoming a geologist. They both participated in an end-of-the-season field meeting led by geologists from the USGS and the California Division of Mines and Geology.

Ann Finocchio (foreground) and Ibeth Avila collect water for chemical analysis at Mono Hot Springs

Planning Ahead - Year 2001 Award Nominations Sought

Nominations for the E.B. Burwell, Jr Award should be made by **February 1, 2001**. Also, nominations for the Distinguished Practice Award, Meritorious Service Award, and the Richard H. Jahns Distinguished Lecturer are due **March 1, 2001**. Please give thought to individuals you think would be deserving of recognition and submit a nomination. Details pertaining to qualifications and submission relating to these awards are posted on the Engineering Geology Division at Web page: http://rock.geosociety.org/egd/index.html.

First Shlemon Scholars

Matthew A. Barner, Wright State University, and Jason M. Taylor, Portland State University, were the first recipients of research support under the Roy J. Shlemon Scholarship Awards. Each is working on their Master's thesis. Matt is doing research on geophysical methods applicable to assessing damage to flood levees from burrowing animals. Jason's research is focused on the long-term stability of lakes created by the debris flow from Mount St. Helen.

Details on applying for future scholarships are found on the GSA and Engineering Geology Division web sites. The deadline for submitting an application for next year is **March 1, 2001**.