



# Travis Engineer

Newsletter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers Travis Chapter

December 2005 Vol. 55, No. 9

## Share in the Joy of the Season

### Sponsor a Child for the TSPE Annual Children's Christmas Party

Each year the Travis Chapter of TSPE sponsors children in need at our December Christmas program. This year children ages 3-5 from *Escuela Montessori de Montopolis* and the *Alpha Omega School* will join us and Santa on Wednesday, December 14, 2005, at St. David's Episcopal Church Sumner Hall for a "holiday happening" that brings joy to the hearts of those who share in this special event.

If you've sponsored a child in the past, you will remember the smiles of delight as your child opens his or her presents. For those of you who have not sponsored a child before, we encourage you to join other Travis Chapter engineers and become a sponsor. This year 76 children are being sponsored and for many of these children, your gifts may be the only gifts they receive. If you would like to sponsor a child, please call Beth Falls at 433-2537. You don't have to attend the meeting on December 14 to sponsor a child.

TSPE Travis Chapter also supports the families of the children by purchasing turkeys and collecting non-perishable food items during its December food drive. You can donate money for the turkeys by forwarding a check made payable to TSPE to Beth Falls, C Faulkner Engineering, 400 Bowie, Suite 250, Austin TX 78703. Food items can be brought to the meeting on December 14, or call Beth to get a food basket placed in your office.

Special thanks to **James Klotz** and the **TxDOT Engineers** who for the last ten years have raised substantial funds to purchase books for each child. Their continued support is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time, help, and support in making this event a success. It's a great way to share during the holiday season. See you there!



#### December Program

#### Special Guests:

**Children from Escuela Montessori de Montopolis and the Alpha Omega School**

**Wednesday, December 14, 2005  
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**St. David's Episcopal Church  
304 E. 7th Street  
Downtown Austin**

**RSVP by visiting [www.tspe-travis.org](http://www.tspe-travis.org)  
or by calling Beth Falls at 433-2537.**

## President's Message

by Dale Shumaker, P.E.

# Wishing you all the Best This Holiday Season



The Holiday Season is upon us and I know you are all busy wrapping up 2005 and preparing to open a New Year! The Chapter is busy preparing for the Christmas Lunch where we celebrate with an enthusiastic group of children from our community and provide gifts and food for their families. It is really one of the special events that this Chapter hosts. If you have not participated in our Christmas celebration in the past, I encourage everyone to attend; and, if you have not adopted a child to provide gifts for, contact **Beth Falls at 433-2537**. Once again the Chapter membership has been very generous toward this great outreach program. Thanks!

The Texas Board of Professional Engineers met November 29 and 30 and we were well represented. **John Powell, P.E.**, our Chapter Professional Practice Director was there both days.

Other TSPE members in attendance included **Gerhardt Schulle**

**Jr., Jose Guerra, P.E., Jerry Weathers, P.E.**, and me. It was quite interesting to learn how the PE Board works and makes decisions. It was also great to see the Travis Chapter taking a bigger roll in the future policy relating to the practice of Professional Engineering. This is the essence of TSPE working for its membership and the way it should be. Please read John's article in this newsletter. He has done a great job of trying to keep us up-to-date on PE Board Issues.

All of our monthly meetings have been informative, exciting, and well attended. There is always room for more people. These monthly luncheons provide an excellent opportunity to meet with fellow engineers and keep up with the business of engineering in our community.

As we look forward to the coming Holidays and beyond to next year, we certainly have a plate full of work ahead of us. **Steve Roth, P.E.** is hard at work finalizing details for

the remaining monthly programs. Nominations for Engineer and Young Engineer of the Year are being accepted. Please go to our website [www.tspe-travis.org](http://www.tspe-travis.org) to see a list of candidates and details on where to send your nominations.

**Kelly Barney, P.E.** is busy with the planning for the Annual Engineers Banquet in March and John Powell, P.E. is finalizing plans for the upcoming TSPE Continuing Education Seminars. Add to this all the work **Jerry Daleiden, P.E.** and **Garret Bonn** are doing on Mathcounts and you can see that next year will be very busy.

I hope everyone has a Happy Holiday Season and comes back next year eager to work with TSPE and celebrate National Engineers Week in February 19-25, 2006!



**Travis Chapter**



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of the National Society of Professional Engineers

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# TSPE Scholarship deadline fast approaching

by Weng On Tam, Ph.D., P.E.

High School students interested in getting a degree in engineering are encouraged to apply for the Paul and Mary Keller Scholarship and TSPE Scholarships. The eligibility requirements are as follows:

- U.S. citizenship
- High school senior with a 3.0 or higher GPA entering college in 2006
- Score at least 600 in math and 550 in verbal on the SAT, or 29 in math and 25 in English on the ACT
- Plan to major in engineering at an ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) accredited engineering program
- Complete a scholarship application with all requested attachments postmarked or delivered by **January 10, 2006.**

I urge all of our TSPE members to pass this information along to their friends and neighbors. Last year we received over 15 applications and hope to continue to see a greater number of applicants this year. The Travis Chapter TSPE is offering two \$1,000 scholarships. Top applications from the chapter will also be forwarded to the TSPE office for state-level scholarships.

I encourage our young hopeful engineers to apply. Applications may be downloaded from the TSPE website: [www.tspe.org](http://www.tspe.org). Completed applications should be sent to the attention of:

Weng On Tam  
Scholarship Chairperson  
108 McNutt  
Building No. 4  
Hutto, TX 78634

Not receiving  
Chapter e-mail notices?  
Changed your work address or title?  
You may have to update your  
membership information.  
To update your information, log on to <http://www.nspe.org/>  
and click "membership." Have your membership ID number in  
hand – or call (888) 285-NSPE (6773). It takes less than 5

# Professional Practice Corner

by John D. Powell, P.E.

The Texas Board of Professional Engineers met November 29 and 30. Committees were convened to discuss issues such as enforcement, general issues, and licensing. A meeting of the full board also took place to discuss and act on the recommendations that were generated by the committees.

I encourage each of you to attend at least one committee meeting or regular board meeting in 2006 (see [www.tbpe.state.tx.us](http://www.tbpe.state.tx.us) for the meeting schedules). The Board meets quarterly to discuss the business that directly affects our practice of engineering. Those who attended last week as guests were well received by the Board Members. The Board is encouraged by TSPE-Travis' interest in the regulatory and legislative process. We should take advantage of the fact that we live so close to the TBPE office by attending one meeting per year as ambassadors of our organization and our profession. One additional note about the experience last week: I noticed most of the staff and many of the Board Members are licensed Professional Engineers. It's reassuring to know that the stewards of our profession are also P.E.s and are directly affected by regulatory action taken by the Board.

There were many issues discussed at the meetings. I'll only relate the three that you may be most interested in hearing about.

I have copies of the agendas and recordings of the meetings in mp3 format. You may request a copy of the Board proceedings by sending me an e-mail at: [john.powell@westonsolutions.com](mailto:john.powell@westonsolutions.com)

## Board closes loophole

The Board closed a loophole in the firm registration rules that allowed part-time employees with a P.E. license to be listed in the firm registration application. Each firm must have at least one full-time employee listed as a Principal Engineer (or Engineer of Record) for their firm registration. The Principal must also have the same firm listed as his primary employer in order to be a Principal for that firm. The new rule *will not* prevent an engineer from having a sole proprietorship as a side business, but it will prevent engineers from being listed as a Principal in multiple firms (partnerships, corporations, etc.) that offer engineering services.

## Architectural Engineers

The Architects' Board is whittling on the Engineer's end of the stick again. There is a rule proposed by the Architects' Board that would require that anyone presenting themselves as an "Architectural Engineer" have a degree from an accredited University as an "Architectural Engineer." TBPE does not distinguish between licensed engi-

neers as Architectural Engineers, Structural Engineers, etc. The proposed rule would place limitations on the practice of Engineering by a State Agency that lacks statutory authority to do so. Limitations placed on Engineers by another Agency are a precedent that will be detrimental to our professional practice. I encourage you to speak out against this proposal. The rule will be published for comment in the Texas Register soon. Your response will be addressed by the Architect's Board prior to adoption. Letters and our presence at the Architect's Board meeting to speak out against this action are required to quash the rule. I will pass on more information as it becomes available about how and when protests may be filed with the Architect's Board.

## Graduate Engineers sitting for the P.E. Exam

There is a nation-wide discussion about changing the rules to allow Graduate Engineers to sit for the Professional Engineer's exam upon graduation. Four years of practice will be required prior to licensure. The P.E. Exam is viewed as an academic exam rather than a professional practice exam and therefore may be administered as soon after graduation as possible. This is an interesting discussion

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# Professional Practice Corner

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that we will follow and report to you as more information is made available. Please send me your opinion. We should engage our Board in this discussion and let them know how, if at all, this affects our practice.

## TBPE rolling out new on-line registration system

I was treated to a demonstration of the new online system the Board has implemented for P.E. renewal and contact updates. It is scheduled to be deployed in February 2006 for everyone's use. December renewals are the only group allowed to access the system during the beta test period. Their log on password is provided on the renewal invoice. Everyone else will get a letter in February with a password to log on to the personal information area of the TBPE website. I'm impressed with the new system. We will be able to update our personal and professional information (home

address, email, employer(s), etc.), log our professional development hours as they are earned, pay for renewal, and indicate our contact preferences with the new online system. It will save time and ease the burden of obtaining and recording professional development hours for licensure.

TBPE will audit 250 Engineers each quarter during their renewal process for compliance with continuing education requirements. Are your records up-to-date prior to renewal? Be sure to stay current by logging your continuing education efforts as they are earned. According to the Deputy Director of TBPE, **Lance Kinney**, it is up to the Engineer to determine what counts for continuing education. You should have no trouble getting the credits required throughout the year. The contemporaneous recording of credits earned will be your best ally during an audit. Remember: TSPE

meetings are worth five hours, five hours of self study are allowed and, at least one hour of ethics is required. Call or email me if you have any questions. TSPE-Travis is in the business of disseminating information collected at the TBPE level. Call the TBPE personally or communicate with TSPE-Travis if you have questions or concerns about continuing education.

Mark your calendars for a four hour continuing education seminar on Thursday, January 19 in the afternoon. Final details will be published in the January newsletter. Also in January: TBPE Board Member, **Shannon McClendon**, will meet with us on Wednesday, January 18 at our regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Don't forget to register online at [www.tspe-travis.org](http://www.tspe-travis.org).

John D. Powell, P.E.

(512) 651-7118

[john.powell@westonsolutions.com](mailto:john.powell@westonsolutions.com)

## Mission of Texas Society of Professional Engineers

In order to assist the engineering profession in its responsibilities to protect the public health, safety, and property, the Texas Society of Professional Engineers is dedicated to:

- ♦ Restriction of the practice of engineering to properly qualified and licensed persons;
- ♦ Maintenance and observance of high ethical standards of conduct;
- ♦ Support of high standards of formal educational preparation for the practice of engineering;
- ♦ Continuing professional development of members of the engineering profession;
- ♦ Focusing appropriate public attention upon engineering responsibilities and engineering accomplishments for the purpose of attracting qualified persons to the practice of engineering;
- ♦ Providing of appropriate assistance to its members to facilitate the pursuit of their professional goals.

# Board Meeting Minutes

by Dan Shanahan, P.E.

Below are the minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting held November 9, 2005:

President **Dale Shumaker, P.E.** called for Reading of Communications, Web-Site, Newsletter and issues needing resolution including date changes for December, 2005 activities.

## Treasurer's Report

Treasurer **Rebecca Feldman, P.E.** submitted the treasurer's report and answered questions regarding budgets for activities and meetings.

President **Dale Shumaker, P.E.** called for budgets and accounting procedures as well as planning for all activities; Rebecca will assist.

## Monthly Meetings

Vice-President, **Steve Roth, P.E.** has provided three excellent monthly programs back to back: Travis County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe in September; Capital Metro's CEO Fred Gilliam in October, and City of Austin Mayor Will Wynn coming to us again at the November meeting.

## Banquet Update

**Kelly Barney, P.E.** sent out an excellent letter inviting Engineers Week Sponsorship opportunities featuring the March 4, 2006 Engineers Banquet with General Robert Crear, Commanding General of Mississippi Valley Division of U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers with us as the Banquet speaker. Math Counts was also featured in Kelly's letter. The Banquet will be at the Hyatt Regency-Austin on March 4, 2006.

## Membership

**Steve Roth P.E., Julia Harrod, P.E., Tim Martin, P.E., and Dan Shanahan, P.E.** discussed: Monthly meeting costs; Enterprise Memberships; Dale's Young Engineers social group (visit our website at [www.tspe-travis.org](http://www.tspe-travis.org), for location.

## Professional Practice

**John Powell, P.E.**, Professional Practice Director, reported Continuing Education opportunities and will use the Web-Site to inform all interested members regarding these opportunities.

## Education

**Julie Hastings** asked for membership assistance with MathCounts involving neighborhood school visits. The MathCounts program will occur in February, 2006. Engineer's Week is February 19 - 26, 2006, a program that involves us all.

## Awards

President **Dale Shumaker, P.E.** and **Larissa Wobus, P.E.** discussed the Awards programs: Young Engineer of the Year, Engineer of the Year and Scholarship Application, and fund-raising ideas.

## Christmas Program


The preparations for the Christmas program appear to be well organized.

## Attendees

President, **Dale Shumaker, P.E.**; Treasurer, **Rebecca Feldman P.E.**; Past-President, **Julia Harrod, P.E.**; Director of Awards, **Larissa Wobus, P.E.**; Texas P.E. Board of Engineers Liaison, **John Powell, P.E.**; Dale's Assistant, **Beth Falls**, and Secretary, **Dan Shanahan, P.E.**

## Next Board Meeting

The next TSPE Board meeting will be held at C Faulkner Engineering, 400 Bowie Street, Suite 250 on Wednesday, December 7, 2005.



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# **Know a Great Engineer? Nominate him or her today for the Engineer of the Year Award**

TSPE Travis Chapter is now accepting nominations for Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year.

For Engineer of the Year Nominations Contact:

Harvey Treybig

(512) 327-2504

harvey.treybig@klotz.com

For Young Engineer of the Year Nominations Contact:

Tim Martin

(512) 977-1800

tmartin@fugro.com

Nominations must be made by January 1, 2006.