

April 18, 2011

## CalGeo Turns 40!



CalGeo is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. In February 1970, a group of soil and foundation engineers from Southern California met to discuss the status of the profession, and to assess if there was a need to form an organization to represent the unique needs of California's private-practice geotechnical engineering consultants. In May 1971, the **Soil and Foundation Engineers Association (SAFEA)** was established with a goal unlike other

engineering associations: Rather than focus only on technical research and social events, SAFEA would address the key business and legislative issues necessary to advance the profession of private-practice geotechnical engineering.

That mission remains just as strong today, as decades later the organization has grown to serve thousands of geotechnical engineering consultants across the Golden State. In 1987 we changed our name to the **California Geotechnical Engineers Association**, and in 2009, to reflect our representation of the entire geotechnical consulting industry, we became known as CalGeo **THE California Geotechnical Engineering Association** – but nothing about CalGeo's commitment to the business of geotechnical engineering has diminished.

We now also have student chapters at Cal Poly Pomona, UCLA, Fresno State, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and Cal State Fullerton.

The organization continues to make great strides on behalf of the profession and we'll continue to be the voice of California's private-practice geotechnical professionals as we advance through the 21st century.

Join us in celebrating CalGeo's 40th anniversary at this year's Annual Conference. Founding members and the first two presidents, **Jack Ralston** (1971-1972) and **Don Shepardson** (1972-1973), will be in attendance, so please be sure to greet them warmly!

To read more about the history of CalGeo [click here](#).

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# The History of Geotechnical Engineering Consulting in California

By Rex Upp

Upp Geotechnology, Inc.



Now 40 years old, CalGeo was born from a strong tradition of consulting geotechnical engineers throughout California. The industry developed from the roots of a few pioneer consulting firms, including Southern California's Quinton and Leeds, LeRoy Crandall, Lindvall-Richter, Leighton, Dames & Moore, and Labarre and Converse. In Northern California, early leaders included Woodward-Clyde, Gribaldo, Jacobs and Jones, Harding-Lawson, and Kleinfelder, to name a few. Largely from these firms, through split-offs and mergers, grew the thriving geotechnical consulting industry of today.

A hobby of Dr. J. David Rogers, former California consultant and current Missouri University of Science and Technology professor, is to research the history of the geotechnical consulting industry in the Golden State. Dave has provided the results of his research for you to read in the two attached links: one for the Los Angeles metro area and one (in conjunction with

Alan Kropp) for the San Francisco Bay Area. You should consider these descriptions as works-in-progress, and Dave will appreciate your corrections and updates - and even photos. Dave can be reached at:

[rogersda@mst.edu](mailto:rogersda@mst.edu).

*Late Bulletin: We are sorry to report that LeRoy Crandall [photo above] passed away on April 3, 2011 at the age of 94.*

**If you have a favorite story or two about LeRoy please send it to us at [jyurkovic@calgeo.org](mailto:jyurkovic@calgeo.org) and we'll publish them in the May e.Geo.**

[Click here](#) for the history of Southern California geotechnical engineering.

[Click here](#) for the history of San Francisco Bay Area geotechnical engineering.

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## Counsel's Corner

### Documenting Your File

By Niv V. Davidovich, Esq

Manning & Marder, Kass, Ellrod, Ramirez, LLP

Paperwork sucks, but getting judgments entered against you is a whole lot worse. Large job or small job, big money or no money, if your signature's on the plans or the report, you're on the hook. But avoiding liability is

easy when you correctly document your job file. Whether it's taking accurate meeting minutes, confirming oral conversations in writing, or keeping important documents safe, organized and protected, “annoying” paperwork can save you a lot of time and frustration when a nasty claim comes in. [Click here](#) – link to Counsel's Corner full article.

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## The Latest from BPELSG

*By James W. Foley,  
P.E., S.E., G.E.*

Late March was a very busy time for BPELSG members. It began on March 21 with a Sunset Review Hearing with the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee, resulting in news that BPELSG is expected to remain in existence for the foreseeable future. On March 24, BPELSG leadership updated its Strategic Plan with a facilitated session and spent a full day developing its mission, vision and values statements and reviewing its goals and objectives. With the merger of the Geologists and Geophysicists with the Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, this update was critical.

The BPELSG meeting was held the following day, on March 25. The Board has been pursuing online renewals using credit cards, and also is considering modifications to its requirements for written contracts. The Board's finances were a major issue as the state is “borrowing” its funds to offset California's growing budget deficit. [Click here](#) – link to full article on BPELSG activities.

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## GeoChallenge Student Competition

### Congratulations to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

*By Taki Chrysovergis, E.I.T.  
CalGeo Representative  
Cal Poly Society of Civil Engineers*

Sixteen schools were selected to participate in the sixth annual Geo Challenge at the Geo Frontiers 2011 in Dallas in March. Each team designed and constructed a scaled-down Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) Wall using a three-sided plywood box and a poster board as the wall, with strips of kraft paper as reinforcement. The team using the least reinforcing mass while keeping the wall stable under vertical and lateral pile loading was declared the winner. The Cal Poly San Luis Obispo team, sponsored by Cal Geo, took second place nationally in its first appearance on the national level.



Cal Poly San Luis Obispo students (left to right) Clayton Proto, Kira Ortiz, Taki Chrysovergis and Brent Goligoski.



Awards presentation at the Sheraton in Dallas.

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## Member News

### Petra Geotechnical, Inc Update

Effective April 1, Petra Geotechnical, Inc. has a new office address. The telephone numbers remain the same. Please update your contact list with the following:

Petra Geotechnical, Inc.  
3190 Airport Loop, Ste. J-1  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626-3403

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## Current Job Openings!

### New Positions Just Posted

Please [click here](#) for CalGeo's industry job listings, including new positions available with American Geotechnical, Geocon, Geocon West, GMU Geotechnical and SPC Geotechnical.

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## Landslide of the Month

*By Rex Upp*

*Upp Geotechnology, Inc.*

The Central Coast's March Madness began on March 16, when Highway 1 was closed by a landslide just south of Rocky Creek Bridge near Carmel. About 40 feet of the





roadway collapsed into the Pacific at 5 p.m. Caltrans installed emergency drainage measures to control further erosion, but had to halt construction due to heavy rains and lightening. The two-mile section of road will be closed for at least a month while repairs are made. The \$2.5 million emergency repair project was awarded to Condon Johnson & Associates' Oakland office.

[Video](#) | [Fox 35 Coverage](#)



[San Luis Obispo Tribune Coverage](#)

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## Answer to the March Landslide Quiz



Did you know the answer to March's Landslide of the Month? It occurred on April 25, 2010 on Taiwan's National Freeway No. 3.

To learn more about this landslide, [click here](#) and [here](#).

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# Safety First

## Practice Good Housekeeping

*"Courtesy of the State Compensation Insurance Fund"*

A planned and enforced housekeeping program is an important part of any safety program that can produce immediate and long-range positive results. A clean and orderly workplace can prevent slips, trips, or falls and reduce the chance of caught- and struck-by injuries. Practicing good housekeeping can also lower operating costs and increase worker production.

When a work area is clean and orderly, workers can do their jobs more efficiently, without unnecessary delays. And, production runs smoothly when workers can quickly find and locate tools, parts, and materials. Keeping floor space clear and unobstructed allows workers freedom of movement, smoother and faster traffic flow, and easy access to machinery and equipment.

Another benefit to good housekeeping is the reduction of fire hazards. Poor housekeeping can cause fires, help spread them, impede the effort to put them out or prevent the safe exit from a fire. Good housekeeping also contributes to higher employee morale. A clean and orderly workplace lessens frustration, increases comfort, makes work more enjoyable, and improves employee attitudes. But, for a good housekeeping program to be effective, management must be committed to the program, communicate their commitment to workers, and consistently enforce the program's practices.

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## Digg

### Share Your Stories With Us



It looks like there's still a lot of snow in them hills. California's geotechs have a passion to dig, but most don't dig in the snow. This guy wrote about it in the snow on his window. Why don't you write about your interesting dig for e.Geo? [Click here](#) for details.

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## Understanding Engineers

*By Rex Upp*

*Upp Geotechnical Inc.*

An engineer was crossing a road one day, when a frog called out to her and said, "If you kiss me, I'll turn into a handsome prince."

She bent over, picked up the frog and put it in her pocket.

The frog then cried out, "If you kiss me and turn me into a prince, I'll stay with you for one week and do ANYTHING you want."

Again, the engineer took the frog out, smiled at it and put it back into her pocket.

Finally, the frog asked, "What is the matter? I've told you I'm a handsome prince and that I'll stay with you for one week and do anything you want. Why won't you kiss me?"

The engineer said, "Look, I'm an engineer. I don't have time for a boyfriend, but a talking frog, now that's cool."

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## FEEDBACK! NOT FEED BEAR!



How are we doing? We need your feedback on the **e.Geo**. Whether you are a CalGeo member or not, please let us know [what you think](#)

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