



# The Engineering Voice

American Engineering Alliance

Summer 2004

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

In my last report to you, I described how the issue of offshore outsourcing (i.e. sending American jobs overseas) had become a hot political topic. This issue has been brewing for many years but given recent advances in technology, the offshoring of American jobs has hit a crisis stage. It has affected computer and IT Engineers particularly hard, but its impact has been felt by all segments of the Engineering Profession, as well as by other sectors of the economy. The trend to offshore jobs will continue at an ever-increasing pace if Engineers and others impacted by this trend do not take political action to mitigate its effects. If we leave it up to our politicians and industry leaders, offshoring will continue apace without any thought or concern given to the detrimental effects to those Engineers and others who are affected by it.

From reading the many e-mails I receive, it seems there are a lot of angry Engineers out there. They are angry not only at the government, but also at the Engineering Societies that are supposed to represent their interests. In addition to the anger, there are a variety of opinions as to what needs to be done. There is a lot of frustration and disillusionment with the major Engineering Societies that represent our Profession.

The disarray in the Engineering Profession concerning this critical issue of offshore outsourcing clearly shows the need for the leaders in our Profession, especially the leaders of the major Engineering Societies, i.e. NSPE, ASCE, IEEE, ASME, etc., to take the lead and try to unify our Profession. Only then can we adequately address this and other critical challenges to our Profession. The time is ripe for initiating this effort. AEA is ready to work with our colleagues to further the goal of unifying the Engineering Profession. We are at the forefront of this effort in the New York Metropolitan region. However, for this effort to be successful it needs the active participation of all the Engineering Societies and it has to be done at the national level. If the leaders of the various Engineering Societies do not lead and initiate this undertaking, then the rank and file members have to force their leaders to take this action.

Turning now to a more positive note, I would like to report on AEA's "Annual Meeting, Social and Award Presentation" held on May 19, 2004 at Bayard's in Lower Manhattan. The event was a resounding success. I was gratified to see a large turnout as well as strong support from many Engineering firms. The evening activities included a presentation by our guest speaker, Connie Crawford, PE, a senior vice president with the New York City Transit Authority. In addition to an excellent presentation by Ms. Crawford, we presented AEA's Herald Award to Richard Weingardt, PE, President of Richard Weingardt Consultants. The Herald Award is given to an "Engineer who has been instrumental in disseminating news of critical importance to fellow Engineers and thereby elevating the Profession".

Richard Weingardt has been and continues to be a great

advocate for the Profession. He has written extensively on the need for Engineers to step forward and become engaged in their communities. In his writings and public speaking he has urged his fellow Engineers to become involved in the political arena and to assume leadership positions so that society can benefit from the expertise and analytical skills that Engineers can provide.

Mr. Weingardt has an impressive website ([www.richardweingardt.com](http://www.richardweingardt.com)) which I urge you to checkout. In it you'll find an extensive list of articles and books that he has published over the years. In particular, I highly recommend that you read his book "Forks in the Road" which not only echoes the viewpoints of AEA but also makes recommendations, which if embraced by our fellow Engineers, will go a long way in improving and advancing our Profession. As an AEA member, you can obtain this book at a 40% discount by contacting the publisher (see below for details).

Bracketing the evening's main events was the social and mingling hour. The "mingling" is a trademark of AEA and was initiated by our former chair, Lou Comunelli, PE. The mingling is the most enjoyable and important part of the evening festivities. This is the time for Engineers to relax, socialize and discuss issues of importance to the Profession as well as meeting new colleagues and networking.

I can truthfully report that we all had a great time and are looking forward to next year when again we shall meet to celebrate the accomplishments of our Profession and honor a few of our colleagues for their contributions in promoting and advancing the goals of our Profession.

I hope to see you all next year!

*Salvatore Galletta, P.E.*

### ADJUTANT'S CALL

A few short months ago, I attended another round of Presentations given by Brooklyn Technical High School Seniors for their Civil Engineering Design Project. As many things do these days, it reminded me of an old book and movie title, "The Agony and the Ecstasy".

First, the "Ecstasy" part. The presentations were magnificent. It seems that every year, the projects get more sophisticated, and reveal a deeper involvement in the actual steps carried out for real projects. This is due in no small part to the contributions of the volunteer Engineering Mentors who contribute their time to advise the individual student teams. These Engineering Professionals have a wealth of experience in Infrastructure projects in the New York Metropolitan Area, and have helped to bring forth creative approaches from the students, while not interfering with the students' way of



carrying out their chosen projects. The actual Presentations have become more elaborate, and the students' increasing familiarity with Power Point brought a tear or two to my eyes.

The "Agony" came at the conclusion of each Presentation, when individuals of each team announced their plans for the future. MOST of them do not plan to go on to seek Engineering degrees. This brought substantially more than a few tears to my eyes. Could I blame them? This situation is not their fault; it is ours! We are our own worst enemies. If we as individuals shirk our responsibility to strengthen the profession, how many talented youngsters will want to follow in our footsteps? If on the other hand, we each commit ourselves to make a personal grass-root effort to improve the situation for our fellow Engineers, many consequential benefits will follow exponentially. When we are all pulling together in this way, our economic and social goals will be more easily achieved. Who then wouldn't want to be an Engineer?

The Brooklyn Tech Faculty leaders of the Civil Engineering Senior Project will attend our next Board meeting and will discuss other ways in which we can benefit their students, and the cause of our Profession.

In any event, I recommend attending the Brooklyn Tech annual Project Presentations. E-mail me at [comunellil@aol.com](mailto:comunellil@aol.com), or at telephone number (718) 782-0268 if you are interested.

**Lou Comunelli, P.E**

### NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Frederick, L.Pascopeppella, P.E. – New York  
Michelle Singh – New York

### NEW TREASURER

After serving for many years as our Treasurer, Marc Matalon's family responsibilities could no longer permit him to serve in this capacity any longer. Brian Gill was elected to replace him.

Marc was our first Treasurer, and initiated all the policies and procedures of that office. His devotion to the position and fiscal advice on Board activities have served to keep AEA's financial position sound in the uncertain initial period of our growth. Marc will continue to be a Member of the Board, so we will still have the benefit of his valued participation in the management of AEA.

Brian Gill is our newest Board member. He brings to the post of Treasurer the same energy he has demonstrated in our activities relating to the NYCTSIA, and in assisting Sal Galletta with arranging the Annual Event for 2004.

### NEW VOLUNTEERS

Two new members have volunteered to help us in work relating to the NYCTSIA and in arranging for next year's Annual event. They are Susan Bayat, P.E., and Michelle Singh.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *Engineering Leadership*

Engineering is one of the most interesting Professions anyone can imagine. Within the last one hundred years, it has changed the face of this planet. It has united the world, and fed, clothed, sheltered and entertained billions of people around the world.

Today, our country can boast of being the only Superpower, not because of our present-day politicians, but due to the great force of American Engineers.

The only way to truly brighten the future for this country is to elect all executive officials, including the President, Governors, Mayors, etc., who have been educated in Engineering. Such an education leads a person to search for the truth in issues requiring action, and then to put into practice the means for successfully resolving those issues. Principles developed by such leaders will properly utilize all types of technology to provide for people; safe housing; abundance of food; more and better hospitals, highways, air travel; and other facilities and services to improve the quality of their lives

I suggest a few measures to raise the image, perceived value and prestige of Engineers:

1. Individual Engineers should take active part in elections at every level, so that they have an opportunity to help frame values and policies.
2. Engineers should start Charter Schools, where they could control the curricula to build future Engineers and leaders.
3. From as early as the Ninth Grade, students should be asked to choose four potential important careers, such as Engineering, Business, Medical Sciences, and Arts. In this way each individual's curriculum may be better directed at an earlier time to the education necessary for his/her likely career.
4. Political Parties should encourage Engineers to provide internal leadership.
5. Engineers must work to change this "Age of Terrorism" to the "Age of Abundance". In this way we can ensure Peace and Prosperity.

Rakesh Dayal, P.E.

### IN MEMORIUM

It is with much sorrow and shock that we announce the very recent passing away of one of our newer members.

Rakesh Dayal, P.E. joined AEA several months ago. From the beginning, he did not hesitate to share his ideas with me concerning the status of our profession, and the need for each of us make the general public aware of our issues and their importance to the public Safety and Welfare.

In this issue is a "Letter to the Editor" from Mr. Dayal.

On several occasions he asked me to urge individual AEA



members to write "Letters to the Editor", not only to Engineering publications, but also to the general press. He said to have you write as many as possible to as many publications as possible.

AEA the Profession, and the general public have now lost for the third time in our brief history, a mind and heart that was already making important contributions to the welfare of us all.

We grieve for the loss to his family, and to the Profession.

#### 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

Forks in the Road

*This book was written by our Year 2004 recipient of the Herald Award, Richard Weingardt, P.E.*

The world is run by those who show up, and the need for more Engineers and other Professionals to show up in "the big picture" policy and decision-making positions is more critical now than ever before. *Forks in the Road* is a collection of reflections, essays and practical advice on how this can be accomplished, and why individual Engineers should become involved in leadership in their communities and in Society.

While this publication is available from bookstores, it may be purchased directly from AEA, with 40% discount. Please contact me at [comunellil@aol.com](mailto:comunellil@aol.com) or at the AEA Post Office address to order your copy.

#### Engineering Ethics: Concepts and Cases

Engineering Schools are rediscovering the critical importance of graduating new Engineers who will have some preparation on what types of issues can affect their work. This book not only identifies some of those issues, but also examines real-life cases.

One such case is the ordeal of Ed Turner, P.E., L.S. Ed's case is covered in Chapter 11 of the book. They mention the assistance given to Ed by the AEA. This publication is available in bookstores. In addition, if you have the opportunity to recommend it to faculty representatives, please do. It will cover information needed by graduating students in a straightforward way, and also make known an AEA successful undertaking.

This publication is available from bookstores. We are currently seeking to make arrangements to get a discount. Please contact me at [comunellil@aol.com](mailto:comunellil@aol.com) or at the AEA Post Office address for information.

#### 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](mailto:comunellil@aol.com)

#### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

As of October 8, 2004 AEA has 389 members.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

As of October 7, 2004, our account balances are as follows:

<b>General Account</b>	<b>\$3,408.85</b>
<b>TELAF</b>	<b>\$715.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,123.85</b>

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