

# Annual Report

## San Joaquin Valley Chapter of AEG



The San Joaquin Valley Chapter has completed its first year as a Chapter. We were grateful that Past President Greg Hemen was one of our scheduled speakers last spring. He was able to deliver the good news in person following the Spring AEG Management Board meeting. Based on the most recent listing of current members from AEG Headquarters earlier this month, we have eighteen (18) members most of whom are practicing professionals.

The third Thursday of the month is when our regular meetings are held. We had meetings in September, October and November of 2018. Among our fall speakers was Deborah Green the current Jahns Lecturer. December is sufficiently busy with holiday-related activities and end of the semester duties at CSU Fresno that no meeting was scheduled for December.

We resumed meetings in January. However, the shutdown of the Federal Government prevented our January speaker (a US Government employee) from making his scheduled presentation. So, our January meeting was cancelled. We held meetings in February, March, April, and May. We had speakers for the February, April and May meetings. March was a Networking Night. We went on summer hiatus (too much good field work for everyone to do) as is our current custom.

The Networking Night was an idea for handling a monthly meeting where no speaker was scheduled offered by Morley Beckman during one of the monthly Chapter Support Committee conference calls. Everyone attending received a ticket for the raffle of a newly published reference book. As part of our Networking Night, we included an AEG Foundation fundraiser partly based on experiences related to me by AEG Foundation Director Jerry Higgins. Anyone contributing a \$1 or more to our Foundation collection could vote for which of five funds would receive the total amount collected. A total of \$479 was sent to the AEG Foundation for the John Moylan Fund supporting AEG Student Chapters. A sufficient number of members stayed to have supper at our meeting site to fully offset the room charge.

We announce our meetings to an email list that contains many more local geologists than just our AEG members. A monthly newsletter highlighting the upcoming meeting and other news items is emailed at the start of the month. A recent copy is attached to this report. The Newsletter includes an RSVP request to secure a count for our meeting site. A reminder email (consisting of the RSVP page which includes information on the speaker and meeting location) is emailed on Monday of the meeting week. Consequently, we typically have between 12 to 27 individuals attending a monthly meeting. There has been a consistent participation by CSU Fresno students from the Department of Earth & Environmental Science. The San Joaquin Valley Chapter also has a Facebook page where we post upcoming meetings and other technical information/events. It is found @aegsanjoaquinvalley. Our current vice-chair, Dr.

Christopher Pluhar, set this page up and ensures postings happen regularly. One of our members, Alexandra (Alex) Pytlak, volunteered to summarize our spring activities as a contribution to The Homefront in AEG News. It appeared in the July issue (p. 44).

At the end of May 2019, a ballot was emailed to all the AEG members listed in the most recent list provided by AEG Headquarters. The ballot listed the candidates for Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer each with a line also available for a write-in vote. Completed ballots were sent to Alex Pytlak for tabulation. Based on that tabulation, the chair will be Jerry De Graff, vice-chair will be Chris Pluhar, and the treasurer will be Rich Fink. May 2020 will be the next time for election of officers. We have endeavored to be on time making quarterly fiscal reports to AEG Headquarters. Rich Fink, current and continuing treasurer, has done a great job keeping our finances in order and making our meeting site arrangements.

We have a significant goal for the upcoming year---making a concerted effort to increase the number of AEG members. It is wonderful to have local geologists attend our meetings but having their financial assistance through paying dues would be even better. To be fair, there are several members who support us through their dues who cannot attend meetings very often due to their jobs and/or homes being somewhat distant from Fresno.

There are two issues important to our increasing Chapter membership. One requires assistance from AEG Headquarters and the other requires action by our Chapter. The assistance from AEG Headquarters is related to the website redesign and membership renewal. We had several individuals who were unable to change their affiliation to the San Joaquin Valley Chapter when renewing online. It required help from AEG Headquarters to get this accomplished. I understand this will be addressed in the web redesign and, in our view, should happen sooner rather than later as we approach another period for membership renewal. Somewhat associated with this issue is some confusion that came to light in an earlier Chapter Support conference call about whether someone joining in August or September only could join for the ending 3 to 4 months of the year or whether it was an added benefit of 3 to 4 months in addition to the 12 months of the upcoming year. I would really like to have this clarified because it could be an incentive for new members when kicking off our membership drive in September.

The second issue is rejuvenating the AEG Student Chapter at CSU Fresno. The Chapter needs to continue to welcome students to our meetings and share/coordinate speakers for appearance both at our meetings and on campus. Our November speaker will be Scott Burns who did such a great job when he was here as the Jahns Lecturer. He will return with new talks at both venues. We are also considering having part of a future meeting be devoted to student posters. This might be in conjunction with another Networking night.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome V. De Graff, Chair  
2018-2019 Annual Report - San Joaquin Valley Chapter of AEG



AEG SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CHAPTER

March 2019

## ***Executive Committee***

### **Chair**

Jerry DeGraff  
Engineering Geologist  
[idegraff@csufresno.edu](mailto:idegraff@csufresno.edu)

### **Vice-Chair, Faculty Advisor, Facebook Editor**

Chris Pluhar, PhD  
Earth and Environmental  
Sciences California State  
University, Fresno  
[cpluhar@csufresno.edu](mailto:cpluhar@csufresno.edu)

### **Treasurer**

Rich Fink, CEG  
Principal Geologist  
Provost & Pritchard, Clovis  
[rfink@ppeng.com](mailto:rfink@ppeng.com)

### **Past-Chair**

Kiersti Ford, PG  
Project Geologist  
Willbanks Environmental  
Consulting, Inc., Clovis  
[kiersti@willbanksenvco.com](mailto:kiersti@willbanksenvco.com)

Hello San Joaquin Valley Chapter Members and Friends,

Our February meeting at Sequoia Brewing (on Champlain) was a great success. Bruce Meyers capped our evening of food and good conversation with a close look at problems soils adversely affecting infrastructure. Particularly interesting was learning how dispersive soils, slaking soils, and sodic soils can foster sinkholes and piping/internal erosion in engineered structure while involving slightly different mechanisms. He made clear why the right soil tests are important to ensure you are effectively addressing the actual underlying soil problem.

We had an outstanding turnout for Bruce's talk which brought out many old friends as well as students. It also highlighted the importance of sending an RSVP to ensure the folks making our meals are prepared for us. This way we get served more quickly and get on with the speaker. So, try to let us know no later than the day before the meeting if you are planning to attend. We will continue to have the RSVP attached to the monthly newsletter and send a reminder RSVP notice the week of the meeting.

But RSVPs will **not** be needed for the March meeting which will again be at Sequoia Brewing (on Champlain). March 21<sup>st</sup> will be our **Vernal Equinox Networking Night and AEG Foundation Fundraiser**. It will begin at 5:30 PM and officially conclude by 7:00 PM.

Here is how the meeting will run. When you arrive, look for Rich Fink or me to sign in and receive a badge to wear showing you are attending the SJV-AEG meeting. Please do this as soon as you come in because the Sequoia Brewing staff will be tallying our spending on beverages, appetizers, and meals. This tally will determine if the Chapter must kick in any funds for having our meeting there that night. This would include if you stay after the meeting for your meal ordered from the menu. Individuals will be responsible for paying for all their food and drink at this meeting.

But like the late-night TV commercials say, "But wait, there is more!"

When you sign in you also receive a raffle ticket. The raffle prize is the just published reference book, “**The Encyclopedia of Engineering Geology**”. This book normally sells for \$725 retail. Some details about the book are on the last page of this Newsletter. Someone will go home with this valuable addition to their library **just** for coming to the meeting and signing in. The raffle drawing will be held about 6:45 PM as part of concluding our meeting. You must be present to turn your ticket in for the book, if your ticket number is called. If no one claims on the first drawn number, we will draw again.

**But yes! There is more!!** AEG Foundation provides substantial support for students and professionals from their various funds. (For details, see <https://www.aegfoundation.org/funds/>). We are asking you to consider giving at least a \$1, via cash or check, to the fund box when you sign in. Anyone donating will receive a sheet describing four AEG Foundation funds. As a donor, you get to vote on which fund will receive the total amount we are able to raise during the meeting. It will be submitted as a donation from the San Joaquin Valley Chapter. We will announce the winning fund right after the raffle is done. Just to sweeten the AEG Foundation fund raising, I will personally match up to the first \$100 donated.

As always, we welcome new members and guests. Bring your coworkers, clients, regulators, subcontractors, and students to our meetings! **For this meeting, make sure you have lots of business cards, too.** We hope to see everyone at our March meeting. Please note the topics/speakers listed below for our upcoming meetings.

Sincerely,  
Jerry De Graff

<p><b><i>Sponsorship Opportunities</i></b></p> <p><b>Bronze - \$100/year</b> Speak at one meeting for 10 minutes to describe company</p> <p><b>Silver - \$250/year</b> Speak at one meeting for 10 minutes to describe company Set up a booth at one meeting One-quarter page logo advertising in 2018 newsletters</p> <p><b>Gold - \$500/year</b> Speak at one meeting for 10 minutes to describe company One-half page advertising area in 2018 newsletters</p> <p>For more information contact Rich Fink at <a href="mailto:rfink@ppeng.com">rfink@ppeng.com</a> or any of the other board members.</p>	<p><b><i>Calendar of Events</i></b></p> <p><b>March 21, 2019</b> <b>Vernal Equinox Networking Night and AEG Foundation Fund Raiser (5:30 PM to 7:00 PM)</b> Sequoia Brewing at Champlain</p> <p><b>April 18, 2019</b> Cameron Alfving, Fresno State <b>“Assessing the Environmental Impacts of a Beach Nourishment Operation, Morro Bay, CA”</b> TBD</p> <p><b>May 16, 2019</b> Greg Stock, Yosemite NP <b>“2017 El Capitan rockfalls”</b> TBD</p>
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## Editors:

**Peter T. Bobrowsky**, Geological Survey of Canada, Sidney, BC, Canada

**Brian Marker**, London, UK

# Encyclopedia of Engineering Geology

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