



Society of
Women Engineers

ASPIRE • ADVANCE • ACHIEVE

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April 2008 Newsletter

Happy Earth Day!!!! April 22nd

Earth Day is a time to celebrate gains we have made and create new visions to accelerate environmental progress. Earth Day is a time to unite around new actions. Earth Day and every day is a time to act to protect our planet.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, and citizens like you, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.



**The little things we do every day can help save mother nature.
What do you do to help the earth?**

Being Green doesn't have to mean spending a lot of green!!!

Message from the President



In SWE months we are approaching the end of the fiscal year! Looking back at all of the activities that our section have done, all I have to say is Wow! We have been busy!

Our April meeting was a joint meeting with the SWE-UNL Section at the Othmer Hall In Lincoln. Pam Dingman, P.E. a SWE life member and CEO of Engineering Design Consultants, LLC was our speaker and she presented on "Career Planning". There was approximately than 25 students and 6 professional emebers. Many thanks to Pam for taking the time out of her schedule to present to the students and many thanks to the students for taking the time to meet with the professional section.

April 22, 2008 is Earth Day. This is a global holiday to celebrate the wonders of our earth. Here are some ideas to help celebrate this day:

- Reduce energy use by turning off your computer every night
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle office products. Use the duplex print feature on the copier to print on both sides of the paper.
- Lemon, vineagr, and baking soda are great for cleaning!

These tips will not only save our plant but will also save you money\$\$\$\$\$

Finally, with the end of the fiscal year you may be contacted by one of our nominating committee members!

Are You Ready!

We need your help!

We need your TALENT!

Respectfully,

Lara Syrocki, P.E.

Eastern-NE SWE Section President

How were you inspired?

Share stories about who inspired you to become an engineer and how your family impacted your future and career. Your stories will be featured in a future newsletter. Send them to newsletter@swe-nebraska.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Next Meeting

FY09 Planning Meeting

Saturday, May 10th
9:00 am to 12:00 pm
HDR - Westroads

It is that time of year again. The summer is almost here and that means the new fiscal year is here coming quickly. In order to provide our members with the best organization and program from the next year, the section will meet to discuss the objectives, meetings, and goals of the upcoming year. Join us for this planning meeting to help ensure you get the most out of our section.

Breakfast will be provided as long as you bring your thinking cap.

For directions and more information about the meeting contact Amanda Stahlnecker at newsletter@swe-nebraska.org.

Upcoming Meetings

June – Officer Elections
July - Social

If you have any ideas for topics of meetings or other suggestions or know of another organization's meeting that would be of interest to the section, please email SWE_Planning@swe-nebraska.org.

WOW! THAT'S ENGINEERING 2008

WOW we are off to a great start. The committee has held a couple of meetings so far this year and we are looking at another successful program this year. If you would like to be a part of the committee, contact Amanda Stahlnecker at wow_event@swe-nebraska.org.

LOCAL JOB POSTINGS

To post local engineering or engineering related jobs please contact our SWE section at newsletter@swe-nebraska.org.

Senior Geotechnical Engineer

Our client, a geotechnical engineering and construction materials consulting firm that performs services for Private and Public clients in 9 Midwestern states is seeking an experienced Geotechnical Engineer who has exceptional leadership skills and a desire to be a part of the management team. This profitable company is expanding due to increased demand for geotechnical engineering services as they are the "company of choice" for many municipalities and construction firms due to their attention to detail and excellent customer service. The company is very progressive in how they help their customers as evidenced by them being the only company in Central Iowa to operate their own testing facility. The ideal candidate will have an advanced degree (MS or PHD) in Geotechnical Engineering and possess a Professional Engineering license or have the ability to secure this license in the very near future. The ideal candidate must also possess a minimum of 5 years in Geotechnical Engineering and have proven leadership skills to help mentor the employees and be a part of strategic planning. If you would like to be a part of a company that is built upon superb ethics and character; would like to leverage your career for more growth and income and where your service to the customer is valued as a professional, please email your resume to Terry Lebo at lebot@qwestoffice.net

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For more information about the section's activities, please visit our website at www.swe-nebraska.org



NOTEWORTHY NEWS

Let's all congratulate Lara Syrocki on her recent promotion.

Lara Syrocki, P.E. of Kleinfelder has been promoted to an Environmental Department Manager. Lara Syrocki is a registered professional engineer in Nebraska and Iowa with 11 years of experience. Syrocki joined Kleinfelder in March 2007 as a project manager. In her new role, she will oversee the technical operations of the environmental department that provides environmental services for clients throughout the region and United States. She has managed environmental assessment projects, air quality permitting projects, facility compliance projects, and environmental permitting and planning.

INFORMATION TO SHARE

We always welcome articles of interest or tidbits of news from our newsletter recipients. Send information for the next newsletter to Amanda Stahlnecker at newsletter@swe-nebraska.org.

The tax deadline may be past but that doesn't mean our taxes aren't still on our mind

insulation incentive

While you're still thinking about taxes, keep in mind that improvements to your home's insulation can reduce your bill under federal legislation passed in 2005. Homeowners may be eligible for a 10 percent tax credit on insulation purchase and installation, up to a total of \$500.

do your part: For details, visit www.simplyinsulate.com.

LADY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Aarhi Parthasarthy

My name is Aarhi. I graduated from Iowa State University with a Masters in industrial engineering with minor in statistics. I am current involved with process improvement using lean six sigma concepts at Armstrong Cabinet Products, Auburn NE.



My dad is a mechanical engineer. He encouraged me to pursue a career in engineering. When I was in college in India, I studied about manufacturing concepts and was fascinated about the ways to improve processes to work smarter. As a volunteer and organizer for different activities, I found that I was able to work with different types of people to achieve consensus. So, I decided to learn more on industrial engineering.

Engineering impacts all of us in many ways. Starting from the morning coffee out of a coffee maker to the huge road construction equipment that greets us in construction zones, everything is made possible through careful selection and implementation of engineering concepts.

SWE is a great organization for women to network, share ideas and get help in a comfortable environment. I see SWE as a foundation for women whose building blocks help us to become stronger, confident and be aware of our inner abilities to achieve greatness in whatever we choose to do. I would like for our SWE section to reach out to more people, companies/ industries and gain more prominence in our community.

YOU ARE A LEADER - OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW AND EXCEL

2008 Women's Leadership Workshop
Unlock Your Potential. Shape Your Future.
April 25-26, 2008

Would you or a woman you know benefit from learning more about how an MBA can enhance career growth and help plan for future leadership development? As a joint initiative between the Women's Business Association (WBA) and the Kellogg Admissions Office, the 2008 Women's Leadership Workshop will provide an opportunity for young women to assess and develop their current leadership techniques and skills. It will also provide a chance to network with other professional women from different industries, learn from senior female management, and speak with successful alumnae.

Through the workshop, attendees will discover how an MBA can enhance their career growth and help them to identify a plan for future leadership development.

An ideal attendee for this conference would be:

- One to five years out of an undergraduate program
- Working in an industry where pursuing an MBA is not typical (e.g. engineering, manufacturing, non-profit, public sector, education, PR, advertising, accounting, design, media, start-ups, etc.)
- Interested in learning more about how to develop her personal and professional leadership skills

When: April 25-26, 2008

Where: Kellogg School of Management Executive Education building, Allen Center, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

Registration Fee: \$65

For more information: http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/student/sp_event/wlw/

Questions: Contact wlw-registration@kellogg.northwestern.edu

Learn More: http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/student/sp_event/wlw/

Would you like to take on a leadership role in our section?

Start thinking about how you could contribute to the section and become a leader. From something as simple as hosting/planning a monthly meeting or social to taking on an officer role, there are numerous opportunities for you to get involved. To learn more about these opportunities, contact Lara Syrocki, section president, at president@swe-nebraska.org

Apply for Leadership Omaha Class 31

Leadership Omaha develops effective, responsible community leaders through a 10-month program of educational seminars and interaction with business and civic figures. [Apply today](#) for your chance to participate. **Application deadline is May 12.**

Visit www.leadershipomaha.org for more information or contact [Lynda Shafer](#) at 978-7928.

Environmental Highlights: Federal Government Actions

The nation's air is much cleaner today than it was 35 years ago. Over the last three decades, total emissions of six principal air pollutants have decreased by 54 percent. Remarkably, this progress has occurred even while the U.S. Gross Domestic Product increased 187 percent, energy consumption increased 47 percent, and vehicle miles traveled increased 171 percent.

- This progress will continue with implementation of the Administration's new Clean Air Interstate Rule, the Clean Air Non-road Diesel Rule, and the President's Clear Skies legislation, which will result in a 70 percent cut in sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury emissions from power plants.
- The trend of annual loss of wetlands has been reversed, and steady progress is being made on President Bush's Earth Day 2004 Wetlands Initiative, which will create, improve, and protect at least three million wetland acres over the next five years in order to increase overall wetland acres and quality.
- Restoration and redevelopment of abandoned industrial sites known as brownfields is accelerating at a faster pace than before due to legislation supported and signed by President Bush early in his first term. Since 2001, nearly 1,500 brownfield sites are now ready for productive reuse, protecting public health, leveraging jobs, and revitalizing communities.
- The President is meeting his commitment to reduce the National Park Service maintenance backlog. His 2006 budget request includes a \$144 million increase over 2005 enacted levels for maintenance and construction at our parks, meeting his funding commitment of \$4.9 billion over five years.

To accelerate our national progress towards a cleaner, healthier, safer environment, Administration policies ensure decision making is based on the best data and science. They also encourage innovation and the development of new, cleaner technologies as the foundation for our nations future.

President Bush also believes in building on America's ethic of environmental stewardship and personal responsibility through education and volunteer opportunities - providing additional opportunities for States, tribes, local communities, and individuals to be involved in protecting our shared heritage.

For more information on President Bush's initiatives go to www.earthday.gov

``Our species needs, and deserves, a citizenry with minds wide awake and a basic understanding of how the world works.''

--Carl Sagan

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• With landfill space increasingly at a premium, it's important to minimize the volume of trash you're •
• putting at the curb. If you can't recycle or reuse them, try to collapse cartons and boxes, flatten steel •
• or plastic containers, and fill garbage bags completely to get the most service out of each one. •
.....

10 Ways to Go Green and Save Green

*How can we live lightly on the Earth and save money at the same time? In honor of Earth Day 2006, the Worldwatch Institute teams up with the Washington, D.C. members of [SustainUS](#), the U.S. youth network for sustainable development, to share some ideas on how to **go green and save green** at home and at work.*

This Earth Day, it's [time](#) to take action.

And we really mean it. [Study after study](#) has confirmed that global warming is already occurring and that it is caused primarily by human activities. The only uncertainties are how soon and in what ways it will disrupt our existence. Stronger storms? Flooded coastlines? Harsher droughts? More disease? Not to mention that our waterways, food, and air are already polluted to unsound levels in many areas, affecting our health and quality of life every day.

But there is still time to act, and our great-great-grandchildren will thank us for living more sustainably, starting now. Fortunately, many of the steps we can take can actually make our lives better as well.

Below we offer a list of 10 things you can do today that will not only reduce your [ecological footprint](#), but also save you money and help you live a happier, healthier life. (We call this a positive feedback loop.) Start with these, and after reading our [Peak Oil](#) forum, you can work on the rest.



1. Re-route your commute.

- [Walk or bike](#) to work and save money on gas and parking while improving your cardiovascular health and reducing your risk of [obesity](#).
- If you live far from your office, investigate the option of [telecommuting](#). Or move closer—even if this means paying more rent, it could save you money in the long term.
- If your streets are not conducive to biking or walking, [lobby your municipal government](#) to increase spending on sidewalks and bike lanes. With little cost, these improvements can pay huge dividends in decreased traffic and pollution.



2. Buy used.

- Whether you've just moved to a new area or are looking to redecorate, consider a service like [craigslist](#) or [FreeSharing](#) to track down furniture, appliances, and other items, rather than buying them new. Check out garage sales and thrift stores for clothing and other everyday items.
- Use your creativity in [gift giving](#), including making homemade gifts, donating to a good cause, or even regifting. (And [gift](#) green, in general.)
- Your purchasing habits have a real impact, for better or worse. When making new purchases, make sure you know what's "[Good Stuff](#)" and what isn't.

3. Buy local.

- Shop at your local [farmers' market](#). Though the offerings can be more expensive, you can generally count on a higher quality product—and the entire purchase price goes directly to the farmer. Buying any goods produced [locally](#) saves energy by reducing the fossil fuels needed to transport food and other items across the country and around the globe.
- Start a [local currency](#) program in your town. This can ensure that money stays in your local economy, valuing local services and supporting local merchants.



4. Compost your food scraps.

- [Composting](#) helps reduce the amount of waste you send to the landfill, which can save you money if you live in a municipality with a “pay as you throw” system. In the process, you create free, healthy fertilizer for your garden (or your neighbor’s—or lobby for a [community garden](#)!)
- If you don’t have a yard or space for a compost pile, try indoor ‘[vermiculture](#),’ or worm composting.

5. Change the thermostat setting and install energy saving devices.

- Setting your thermostat a few degrees lower in the winter and a few degrees higher in the summer can translate to substantial savings on your utility bills.
- Install low-flow showerheads and take shorter showers to save [water](#) and the energy used to heat it. Or, consider eventually installing a solar hot water heater on your property.
- Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible and use a drying rack or clothesline.
- When incandescent bulbs burn out, replace them with longer-lasting, low-energy [compact fluorescent bulbs](#).
- With the money you save from making these changes, consider buying wind energy from your local utility or purchasing [renewable energy offsets](#). [Renewables](#) offer our best hope for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as a host of other pollutants. In some cases, “green energy” options can be [cheaper](#) than electricity from conventional sources!

6. Skip the bottled water at the grocery or convenience store.

- Filter your tap water for drinking rather than using bottled water. Not only is bottled water expensive, but it produces large amounts of [container waste](#).
- Check out this recent [update](#) and [life cycle analysis](#) for the latest on bottled water trends.



7. Make your own cleaning supplies.

- Using simple ingredients such as baking soda, soap, and vinegar, you can make cheap, easy, and non-toxic [cleaning products](#) that really work! Save money, time, and your indoor air quality.

8. Think twice about new electronics.

- [E-waste](#) from discarded cell phones and computers is a growing environmental problem. Mounds of electronic refuse are being shipped [abroad](#) illegally for ‘disassembly’ by workers with little protection against the [mercury](#) and other toxic substances they contain.
- Keep your electronics as long as possible and dispose of them [responsibly](#) when the time comes.
- Buy higher-quality items and don’t give in to ‘psychological obsolescence’ marketing campaigns.
- Recycle your cell phone and [support good causes](#) at the same time!
- Ask your local government to set up a responsible recycling and [hazardous waste](#) collection event.

9. Add one meatless meal per week.

- While strict vegetarianism isn’t for everyone, even the most devout carnivores can [cut back](#) on [meat consumption](#) without cramping their style—and save money in the process. [Industrial meat production](#) requires huge energy inputs and creates noxious waste problems. The proliferation of factory farms is damaging the environment, and the global nature of the industry creates conditions that promote the spread of diseases such as avian flu, potentially costing society [billions](#).

10. Use your local library and other public amenities.

- Borrowing from [libraries](#), instead of buying personal books and movies, saves money and printing resources. Consider donating the money saved to your local library.
- Be an active [civic participant](#) and ensure that the public spaces and facilities in your town are well maintained. This will promote a healthy, sustainable community.

Go Green!!

I hate to toss wrapping paper after it has been used, so instead I recycle by putting it through my shredder or cutting it up into thin strips. Then I stuff the colorful pieces – instead of tissue paper – into gift bags. Dana Herron, Rome, GA

(Family Circle November 29, 2007)