News of the Institute

Annual Meeting News

Call for Poster Abstracts

Individuals interested in participating in one of the 2009 Annual Meeting poster sessions are invited to submit abstracts, not exceeding two pages in length, to the organizing committee. The accepted abstracts will be reproduced as submitted in the Annual Meeting notebook and therefore must be in final form. Abstracts should be prepared with one-inch margins on all sides, single-spaced in 11-point Times Roman or equivalent font. Text should be flush left. The title, in upper case, should be centered at the top, with presenters identified by name, title, and organizational affiliation. They should be e-mailed by December 1, 2008, to Juliane Lane at juliane@eeri.org. Presenters will be notified in early January of acceptance.

Travel Scholarships

Several scholarships are available to assist student members and younger EERI members (out of school no more than three years) to attend the 2009 Annual Meeting, thanks to support from FEMA. The financial support will be contingent upon participation in one of the poster sessions (see first column), either through the applicant's own research project, or as a representative of a student chapter depicting the chapter's activities. Each scholarship will be for a fixed amount and can be used to cover registration, three nights' lodging, and round-trip economy airfare. To apply, e-mail a letter of request by December 1, 2008, to the Student Activities Committee in care of Juliane Lane at juliane@eeri.org. Applicants should describe their current involvement in earthquake engineering or a related field and their status as students or professionals.

Call for Nominations for WSSPC Excellence Awards

WSSPC is accepting nominations for its 2009 Awards in Excellence, which recognize achievement in different areas of earthquake mitigation, preparedness, and response. State, provincial, county, territorial, and city governments as well as nonprofit agencies are eligible. The awards help to facilitate the transfer of exemplary programs, products, and policies to other organizations and to recognize creative and innovative efforts within the earthquake hazards reduction community. The awards will be presented at the 2009 joint WSSPC/EERI Annual Meeting. To download a nomination form and for information about categories, eligibility, and selection criteria, visit http://www.wsspc.org/Awards/2009/index.html. Nominations must be made by someone outside of the nominated agency and are due by October 31, 2008.

Learning from Earthquakes

M5.4 Chino Hills, California, Earthquake

Caltrans geologist Martha Merriam contributed this report.

Late in the morning on July 29, 2008, a M5.4 earthquake shook southern California. The earthquake was the strongest to hit the Los Angeles area since the 1994 Northridge earthquake. It occurred at a depth of 9 miles and the aftershock sequence was 75% less energetic than the average California aftershock sequence for a M5.4 mainshock, possibly because of its depth.

Strong shaking was reported to the north in the Chino basin and to the west in the Los Angeles basin. Buildings swayed in downtown Los Angeles 28 miles from the epicenter, area amusement parks were evacuated and temporarily shut down, but damage was minor. California State University, Fullerton, located about 10 miles west, suffered some damage in its older buildings. A minor landslide near Route 91 in the Anaheim Hills, 7 miles to the south, caused some traffic congestion, but no injuries or structural damage were reported. The volume of telephone use after the shock disrupted service into the afternoon, and some power outages occurred.

The earthquake gave organizers of the Great Southern California Shakeout (http://www.shakeout.org/), planned for later this year, an opportunity to promote the event and stress the need for preparedness in this active seismic area. The magnitude 5.4 earthquake is about 5,000 times smaller than the magnitude 7.8 earthquake, considered realistic for the region, that will be depicted in the Shakeout.

Ground shaking predicted by the latest ground motion prediction equations developed for use in the 2008 USGS seismic hazard maps fits well with most observed recordings of this event. The greatest acceleration observed (horizontal pga) was about 0.44 g recorded near Walnut, about 11 km northwest of continued on next page
Chino Hills Earthquake

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the epicenter. Peak velocity measured at the Walnut station was 38 cm/sec and the duration was a few seconds. Recordings in the greater Los Angeles area were commonly in the 10% g to 20% g acceleration range, and peak velocities in that area were mostly in the range 5 to 15 cm/sec.

According to Sue Hough of the USGS, the earthquake occurred in a complicated tectonic region, namely, the wedge sandwiched between the Whittier and Chino Hills faults that has many small faults with different orientations. The current theory (offered by Caltech seismologist Egill Hauksson) is that the wedge conceals a structure known as the Yorba Linda trend with no surface expression but with a linear trend of seismicity. The moment tensor showed a mixture of thrust and left-lateral strike-slip faulting on a plane striking 43° east of north, with a southerly dip of 58°. The preliminary locations of aftershocks suggest that this is the fault plane.

Updates to this information may be found at: http://www.cisn.org/.

Board Nominees

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Additional nominations may be made by the membership in accordance with Article VII of the EERI Bylaws (Sections 4 and 5), upon submission of a petition with signatures of 25 members. Petitions must be received prior to November 1. Biographies of the candidates and short vision statements will be published in a future issue of the Newsletter and posted on the EERI website, www.eeri.org.

EERI wishes to thank the Nominating Committee: Donald Ballantyne (chair), Scott Ashford, Craig Comartin, Rich Eisner, and Patricia Grossi.

Subscribing Member News

Risk Engineering Merges with WLA

Risk Engineering, Inc. (REI), an EERI Subscribing Member since 1995, has been acquired by William Letts & Associates (WLA), a leading consulting company specializing in geological and geotechnical investigations for engineering facilities, with offices nationwide. WLA is an operating company of Fugro, with offices worldwide. REI will merge with WLA’s geohazard division. REI’s expertise in seismic hazard and risk analysis as well as its expertise in hazards and risks from hurricanes, wind and wave loads, and storm surge, will complement WLA’s expertise in site investigations and geotechnical characterization of sites.

REI’s software programs EZ-FRISK™ and ST-RISK™, with applications and databases for characterization of hazard and risk for facilities worldwide, will continue to be licensed and supported. REI will continue to support clients from its Boulder, Colorado, and Acton, Massachusetts, offices, and its personnel and contacts will not change. Robin McGuire, REI founder, will become vice president and executive manager of WLA. Gabriel R. Toro will become a senior principal engineer with WLA.

Miyamoto: A New Subscribing Member

EERI is pleased to announce that the firm Miyamoto International recently became a Bronze Subscribing Member. Miyamoto provides structural, earthquake and risk engineering services. The firm’s earthquake risk reduction program utilizes performance-based design concepts and applies them to existing facilities. This program has been expanded over the years to incorporate other natural hazards. The award-winning staff has engineered over 8,000 buildings and consults to clients worldwide on state-of-the-art designs, consistently delivering cost-effective innovation. With California offices in West Sacramento, Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, and the San Francisco Bay Area, in addition to offices in Portland-Vancouver and Tokyo, Miyamoto is one of the largest and fastest growing structural engineering firms in California. The firm’s roots go back to Arthur Sauer & Associates in California’s central valley in the 1940s, when they specialized in school and hospital projects. The firm eventually evolved into Marr Shaffer & Miyamoto, Inc. In 1997, Kit Miyamoto became president and sole owner of the firm. Kit was named one of the “Top 40 Executives under 40” in 1999 by the Sacramento Business Journal for his enthusiasm to develop the firm into an industry powerhouse.

WPM Awarded LEED® Silver

EERI Subscribing Member WALTER P MOORE’s new corporate office in downtown Houston has been awarded CI (Corporate Interiors) LEED® Silver by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design) is the USGBC’s leading rating system for designing and constructing the world’s greenest, most energy efficient, and high-performance buildings. The LEED certification was achieved through energy use, lighting, water and material use as well as incorporating a variety of other sustainable strategies. LEED considers environmental performance, occupant health, and financial return. For more information, visit www.walterpmoore.com.