

THE FIRST WORD

August, 2009

Gary Ridley to Speak at August 20th ACEC OKLAHOMA Meeting

Gary Ridley, Secretary of Transportation and Director of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, will be our guest speaker at the August 20th ACEC OKLAHOMA General Membership Meeting.

The meeting is set to begin at 11:45am, and will be held at the Oklahoma Engineering Center, 201, N.E. 27th Street in Oklahoma City.

Ridley will review the recent 2009 Legislative session, discuss the outlook for reauthorization of the federal SAFETEA-LU transportation funding bill, and update ACEC OKLAHOMA members on the Department's plans, challenges, and opportunities in the coming months.

Registration information has been sent to all members, and is also available on the ACEC OKLAHOMA website: www.acecok.org.

Please register as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you on August 20th!!!!

Thanks to our Convention Sponsors!!!!

This year the following companies helped sponsor various convention events and helped hold costs down at the meeting. Please help us thank these companies for supporting the 2009 ACEC Midwest States Conference:

ACEC Retirement Trust/Prudential Retirement Services; ACEC Life/Health Trust/UnitedHealthcare; Cash-Flow Solutions; The Crane Agency; Holmes Murphy & Associates; and XL Design Professional.

Welcome New Members

ACEC OKLAHOMA is excited to welcome three new member firms to the organization.

LOGIC LEADERS, LLC is an Electrical Engineering firm providing services for industrial applications. Marc C. Wood, PhD, PE is the principal of the firm located at 113 W. Platt Dr., in Yukon.

RED ROCK CONSULTING, LLC is a new firm formed by Kristi Bumpas, PE to provide geotechnical engineering services. Kristi's firm is located in Edmond.

CABBINESS ENGINEERING, LLC has been formed by Bret Cabbiness, PE and is operating out of Norman. Bret's firm provides general civil engineering with emphasis on public works projects (water, sanitary sewer, roadway design), stormwater management, and site development.

ACEC OKLAHOMA congratulates Marc, Kristi, and Bret on their new ventures; thanks them for their confidence in ACEC OKLAHOMA; and, looks forward to having each as active members of the Council!

ACEC Fall Conference Set of October 7-10

David Doody, flight operations lead engineer for NASA's Cassini Mission to Saturn, and Former Mexican President Vicente Fox will be featured speakers at the ACEC 2009 Fall Conference at the La Quinta Resort in Palm Springs, CA.

Conference sessions will address industry trends, markets, and business practices in today's challenging economy, including leveraging ARRA dollars, identifying new capital sources, taking advantage of new business opportunities, and moving towards web-based project management.

For more Conference information and to register, go to: <http://www.acec.org/conferences/fall-09/index.cfm>

In Memory -- Cline Mansur and Bob Leise

ACEC OKLAHOMA is saddened to report the passing of two individuals who were longtime members and supporters of both ACEC OKLAHOMA and the consulting engineering profession. Both contributed greatly to the Council, the profession, and people of Oklahoma, and will be greatly missed. We extend our deepest sympathies to their families and friends.

Cline Mansur, 94, died of heart failure Sunday afternoon, July 12, 2009. He was born September 22, 1914 in Norman, OK, the first son of Hari and Evelyn Mansur.

Cline grew up in Elk City, OK and graduated from Elk City High School and then graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1934 with a B.S. in Civil Engineering.

Following graduation he worked at the OU Powerhouse and in 1938 married Betty Jo Chitwood. He worked for W.R. Holway and Associates on the Pensacola Dam until he was called to active duty during WWII. During the war he served in a variety of assignments with the Persian Gulf Command, including Assistant Chief of Staff of Operations for the Command. After the War he continued to serve in the Army Reserve and retired as a Colonel with the Corps of Engineers.

In 1947, he opened an engineering consulting firm, Owen, Mansur and Steele, later Mansur, Daubert and Strella. During his 60 years as a civil engineer Cline was responsible for the engineering of many of Tulsa and Oklahoma's public works projects, streets, highways, and land development projects.

Cline was one of the founding members of the Consulting Engineers Council of Oklahoma and served as President in 1961-62. Cline later served as Chairman of the Oklahoma Board of Registration for Engineers and Land Surveyors.

Throughout his life he was a faithful member of the Church of Christ and served as elder of the Brookside and Park Plaza congregations for over 50 years. He was also active in and loved the members of the Downtown Tulsa Kiwanis Club.

He was preceded in death by: his parents; brother, Monroe of Dallas; and first son, John Carter.

He is survived by: his wife, Betty; brother, Dr. Hari and Evelyn Mansur of Wichita Falls, TX; sister, Beth Wegener of Broken Arrow; former daughter-in-law, Marcie Knowles and her husband Billy Knowles; son, Dr. Laurence and Lynne Mansur of Westport; son, Tom and Cindy Mansur; and son, Brent and Vicky Mansur, of Tulsa; and grandchildren, Clark and Becky Lineback of Tulsa, Rex and Shay Mansur of Bixby, Cathy Mansur of Sand Springs, LTC Mark and Andrea Aitken of Stuttgart, Germany, Michael and Sarah Mansur of Kiefer, Bryan and Melissa Abbott of Semarang, Indonesia, and Stephen, Mark, David, James, Zack and Joel Mansur of Tulsa; 13 great-grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Robert "Bob" Leise, 77, passed away peacefully on Thursday, July 23, 2009. Bob was born September 8, 1931, in Hartington, NE, to August and Mary Leise.

He attended Creighton University and graduated from Marquette University in 1954 with a degree in Civil Engineering. Following graduation, he served proudly in the U.S. Army as a 1st Lieutenant.

Bob married his beloved wife, Helen Burroughs, on November 5, 1960, in Greeley, CO. He pursued a career in engineering and they started a family.

In 1970, they moved to Tulsa where Bob was employed by HTB and Associates and was promoted to VP of Engineering. In 1991, Bob accepted the position of Deputy Director at the Port of Catoosa where he worked until he retired in 1996. He continued to provide engineering consulting services for the Port of Catoosa on a part-time basis until recently.

Bob was a member of the Professional Engineering Association where he was awarded Engineer of the Year. He was also selected for The Arkansas River Historical Society's Hall of Fame for his important contributions to the Arkansas River Navigation System. He was a devout Catholic and a parishioner of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux where he attended Mass and served as Eucharistic Minister.

Bob enjoyed playing golf, volunteering for Meals on Wheels with his wife, attending Oklahoma State University football games, and visits from his grandchildren. Bob had great devotion to his faith and family, and will be remembered for his compassion and generosity.

Bob leaves his devoted wife, Helen, who loved him deeply in sickness and in health. He is survived by his 5 daughters, their spouses, and his 12 grandchildren: Sheryl Walseth (Greg) of Tulsa, OK; Sandra Stangeby (Pete) of Oak Hill, VA; Michelle Sheffield (Ed) of Plano, TX; Karen Payne (Ray) of Edmond, OK; and Rhonda Johnson (Chris) of Frisco, TX Bob is also survived by his brother, Richard Leise (Margaret) of Omaha, NE; his 2 sisters, Rita Ann Diebel of Aurora, CO and Marge Miller (Gerry) of Hartington, NE; and his sister-in-law, Wilma Jean Leise of Hartington, NE.

He was preceded in death by his parents, August and Mary Leise; brother, Ronald Leise; and infant daughter, Glenda Mary Leise.

Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor Responds to ACEC OKLAHOMA Request

In early May, ACEC OKLAHOMA wrote Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor expressing concern with the City's delay in awarding contracts for the \$452 million street improvement program and other enhancement programs. The City had put a "hold" on all engineering and construction contracts to allow for internal and external audits to be completed following criminal charges being brought against individuals in an alleged kick-back scheme.

In our letter, we stated, *"While ACEC OKLAHOMA and our members fully understand and appreciate your reasons for wanting to delay the start of this capital improvement program, any further long-term delay could inhibit our member firms' ability to provide the City with much needed design services."*

"Engineering firms constantly monitor both their current and anticipated workload to assure that they have the resources necessary to provide the very best in professional services to their clients. Long-term delays in awarding of engineering contracts by a major client can seriously jeopardize a firm's ability to have those resources available."

At the time of our letter, the City had already conducted solicitations and interviews under the City's QBS process, and was ready to begin the final selection and negotiations. ACEC OKLAHOMA asked, *"...that the City's Public Works Department be allowed to complete selection and negotiation for these critical projects so that the firms selected can schedule their workload to be ready to begin the design process when the City releases the program."*

On Monday, August 3rd, we had the opportunity to talk with Paul Zachary, Deputy Director of Engineering for the Tulsa Public Works Department. Paul thanked ACEC OKLAHOMA for our letter to Mayor Taylor and said that he really appreciated our efforts. Paul said that after our letter was received, the Mayor allowed the Public Works Department to move forward with the contracts and that some 31 contracts had now been finalized. Paul went on to say while his department had been urging the Mayor to let them move forward for quite some time, our letter convinced the Mayor that the time was right to move forward on the design contracts.

ACEC OKLAHOMA is very pleased with the outcome of this situation, and wanted you to know this is just one of the many things YOUR ASSOCIATION does on a regular basis to enhance YOUR BUSINESS opportunities.

Poor Economy has some States/Cities Looking to Revise (downward) Engineering Contracts

In just the past few days, ACEC OKLAHOMA has been hearing of disturbing activities in some of our counterpart states which should have the entire engineering community "on point" as well as "up in arms!"

There seems to be a growing trend, especially in eastern and northern states, where state and local governments are amending (either unilaterally or "strongly requesting") existing contracts downward by 3% or more.

One state's transportation department has already informed firms of a 3% reduction for the next 2 years. That states' governor has asked all state agencies to review their service contracts to determine if cuts can be made to help reduce state spending. Additionally, the governor mandated state employee furloughs of 8 days/year over the next 2 years and extended a request to have those working for the state "share the pain."

Other states have furloughed employees and/or are not replacing positions lost through retirements or resignations.

In another jurisdiction, a major Department of one of the nations largest city sent a letter to several engineering firms under contract with the City "requesting" **firms furlough employees to save the City money!**

The state ACEC organization in which this City is located has responded sharply, suggesting that the City is **"crossing the line where a government entity is dictating employment policies in the private sector."** Additionally, the ACEC organization questioned how a furlough would save the City money considering that the same amount of hours will be needed regardless of how many employees the firm has working on the City's projects.....(two employees doing 5 hours each verses one employee doing 10 hours is still 10 hours!!!!)

While, to date, these are isolated incidents, unless the national economic downturn slows or ends soon, it will not be surprising to see more reports of this "sharing of the pain."

While we're not suggesting that any agency in Oklahoma would have the "lack of foresight" to do something like this, ACEC OKLAHOMA will closely monitor these situations in our counterpart states and be watchful for any "national trend."

PRESIDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

August, 2009

David Raymond, ACEC President & CEO

During July we encouraged Congress to take up a new six-year transportation reauthorization bill; gained a \$7 billion transfer from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to make up for a shortfall; made progress in ACEC/AASHTO/FHWA audit guide and compliance deliberations; introduced a bill to preserve cash accounting; provided information to firms on stimulus funding programs; achieved yet another federal agency QBS victory by having a non-compliant cost-based procurement withdrawn; and bolstered state organization efforts with Minuteman Fund grants and other support. We're also focused on getting the Senate to act next week on a new \$38.5 billion water infrastructure bill. And ACEC Chairman Tim Psomas joined us for several high-level meetings with senior House and Senate members in support of our key agenda items.

General

- The ACEC Executive Committee underscored the importance of ACEC taking an industry leadership position on the issue of sustainability; a task force was appointed to develop recommendations; and the Board will discuss the issue at the upcoming meeting in Palm Springs.
- Approved Minuteman Fund grants for ACEC/Hawaii to enact tort reform legislation to protect designers on highway project; and ACEC/Indiana for defense of the economic loss doctrine. ACEC/Hawaii achieved an early victory as reported in *Last Word*, July 23.
- *Engineering Inc.* received a Gold Award for exceptional design from the American Society of Business Press Editors (ASBPE) for the September/October issue.
- Joined with ACEC Chairman Tim Psomas for Congressional meetings promoting early reauthorization of transportation bill, including with Senator Bingaman (D-NM), and Congressmen John Boozman (R-AR), Ken Calvert (R-CA), and John Duncan (R-TN); and participated in a meeting with ACEC/Illinois leadership and prospective member firms.
- ACEC President Dave Raymond appeared in the editorial section of the *Washington Post* opposing the Administration's decision to delay action on a new surface transportation program.
- Outlined ACEC's concerns with the current draft of the AASHTO Audit Guide in a letter to AASHTO's Executive Director John Horsley and FHWA's Chief Financial Officer Elissa Konove.
- Met with AASHTO's Audit Subcommittee during their annual conference in Baltimore, MD and pressed our position on several unresolved issues within the current draft of the AASHTO Audit Guide.
- Successfully overturned an Air Force bridge inspection solicitation that failed to comply with QBS.
- Supported ACEC/Nebraska's request to FHWA for a two-year evaluation period of a potential change in state conflict-of-interest policy, which would have prohibited firms from performing both design and construction inspection on the same project.
- Reps. Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) and Sam Johnson (R-TX) introduced the Qualified Personal Service Corporations Clarification Act of 2009 (HR 3255), to preserve the ability of engineering firms to use the cash method of accounting.

Government Affairs

- Helped to secure House and Senate passage of a \$7 billion transfer from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to prevent looming cuts to state transportation programs.
- Initiated member grassroots effort to encourage Congress to make passage of a six-year transportation bill as a top priority this year.
- ACEC Federal Agencies and Procurement Advocacy Committee hosted representatives from the Department of Homeland Security to discuss plans and programs for design firms.

Also, make plans now for our sensational Palm Springs Fall Conference – October 7-10 – “Engineering America’s Recovery” – which will have an extraordinary business program with top-flight speakers and incredible social events including “the Rat Pack and Marilyn Monroe.