

The Beacon

Happy New
Millennium!

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Chairman's Message

New Year's Resolution

by *Brian Conroy, Chair*

It's hard to believe that 2000 is over and we're well into the year 2001. Have you written the wrong year on a few checks already? Well, the Maine Section of IEEE is ready for the new year with a fresh new slate of volunteers, along with a good mix of seasoned veterans. I'm already looking forward to having an active year with new and interesting programs.

We ended the 2000 Section year with another enjoyable and memorable Magic of Christmas social. Thirty-four members and guests enjoyed great company, a wonderful meal, and the angelic voices at the Portland Symphony. (And I don't mean our Section members during the Christmas carol sing-along!) The only business of the evening was to vote on the 2001 slate of Section officers and even that turned out humorous as the party next to us asked for a recount!

With a unanimous vote in favor, the slate of candidates as offered by our nominating committee was accepted. This slate, along with the

other committee members and Chapter officers for 2001, is presented on the following page.

I'd like to personally thank each of these volunteers for helping out this year. If you run into one of these folks please let them know you appreciate their trying to make our Section the best it can be.

As you can see from the volunteer list, there are many hands at work to keep our Section going. On closer inspection, you'll notice some folks holding multiple positions and also some vacant positions. We're always looking for a few good engineers to provide fresh ideas and perspectives. I invite anyone interested to join us at our next Executive Committee meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 24, 5:30 p.m. at Central Maine Power Company's NASC facility in Augusta. Wouldn't it be a great New Year's resolution to spend a little time networking with and helping out your fellow engineers...?

Maine Section IEEE Calendar

Mark your calendar for these interesting upcoming meetings.

Final meeting details will appear in later *Beacons*

Please visit our website at: www.ieee.org/maine for up-to-date listings and changes.

April 11, 2001 - Joint IEEE/PMI BIW tour followed by dinner and speaker. Tentative schedule:
4:15 PM Begin BIW Tour

6:00 PM Arrive at Taste-of-Maine for social followed by dinner

7:30 PM Program: Mr. Ken Rogers, IEA, "*The practical Application of Project Cost and Risk Management in EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) of Power Plants*"

May 18, 2001 - The 2001 Annual Maine Section Meeting will be held in Orono. The exact time is to be determined, but the first tour will start around 1 PM and there will be optional activities the following day (Saturday)

The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers

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ORDER OF THE ENGINEER "THE ENGINEER'S RING" FACTS

By Curt Beveridge

On November 15, 2000 I was inducted into the "Order of the Engineer." That may remind you of the Middle Ages and the Knights of the Roundtable, but it is a ceremony that actually takes place today. I call it the best-kept secret in engineering (with the possible exception of the Maine Association of Engineers). What follows is a reprint of an article that appeared in the October 2000 issue of "*The Engineers Opinion*", the newsletter of the Maine Society of Professional Engineers:

What is the Order of the Engineer?

The Order is a roster of engineers in the United States who have participated in an Engineer's Ring Ceremony and who have publicly accepted the "Obligation of an Engineer."

What is the purpose of the Order and its "Obligation?"

The purpose is to stimulate formal public recognition by engineers in the United States of two basic principles. These principles are that (1) the primary purpose of engineering is service to the public and (2) all members of the engineering profession share a common bond.

What is an Engineer's Ring Ceremony?

The Ring Ceremony is the public induction of candidates into the Order of the Engineer, during which the engineer candidates formally accept the Obligation of an Engineer and receive a stainless steel ring to be worn as a symbol on the fifth finger of the working hand.

What is an Engineer's Ring?

The Engineer's Ring in the United States is a stainless steel ring, worn on the fifth finger of the working hand by engineers who have accepted the Obligation of an Engineer in a Ring Ceremony. In Canada, the Engineer's Ring is a wrought iron ring accepted by the engineers inducted into the Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer in a secret ceremony.

Who can participate in an Engineer's Ring Ceremony?

Any engineer is eligible for induction if he or she has graduated from an ABET-accredited engineering program or holds a license as a Professional Engineer. Students enrolled in ABET-accredited engineering programs are eligible if they are within two academic terms of graduation. Other candidates may be considered eligible because of equivalent credentials, subject to the approval of the National Board of Governors. Anyone may witness the induction ceremony. Families are often invited as guests.

How is the Order of the Engineer governed?

The Order is governed at the national level by a National Board of Governor's, composed of as many as 21 engineers who serve three-year terms. The National Board establishes policy, directs the national office, and charters local "Links" governed by local boards of governors. Such "Links" are granted the right to conduct the ceremonies.

What is a Link?

A link is a local board of governors chartered by the National Board of Governors for the purpose of holding Engineer's Ring Ceremonies. Links have been established by universities, engineering societies and government engineering organizations.

What is the connection between Order of the Engineer and other American engineering organizations?

There is no formal connection between the Order of the Engineer and other organizations; it is independent. However, the Order recognizes ABET's accreditation of engineering programs as a primary measurement of educational credentials for an engineer in the United States. In addition, Links of the Order have been chartered to various local components of Tau Beta Pi, NSPE, ASCE, and many other engineering societies.

Where was the Order of the Engineer founded?

During the 1960's, Ohio engineers attempted without success to extend the Canadian Ring Ceremony into American engineering schools. The first Engineer's Ring Ceremony in the United States was conducted in 1970 by students at Cleveland State University's Fenn College of Engineering. In 1972, the Order of the Engineer was incorporated in Ohio, and tacit approval was obtained from the Canadian Wardens. The Order's national office remained in Ohio until 1987 when it was relocated to the United Engineering Center in New York.

What are the membership activities of the Order of the Engineer after induction through the Ring Ceremony?

There are no dues and no meetings of the Order of the Engineer. Inductees are encouraged to wear the ring and to display the signed Obligation Certificate as visible reminders of the publicly accepted Obligation as a contract with themselves.

Is the Ring Ceremony program aimed at engineering students or at practicing engineers?

Both. The impact of the formal program is likely to be greatest if inductees are engineering students about to enter the profession. However, until there is a preponderance of practicing engineers in the U.S. who have participated, as there is now in Canada, there will be a place for Ring Ceremonies at engineering functions. Although older practicing engineers may not be as impressionable as graduating seniors, the reminder of the common purpose of all engineers is a message that cannot be too often repeated. There is a \$10 application fee and anyone interested in becoming a member of the Order of the Engineer can write to either of the following individuals:

Russell G. Martin, PE
53 Front Street
Bath, Maine 04530

Kenneth W. Campbell, PE
142 Mills Road
Kennebunkport, ME 04046

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