



Delta Section

NEWSLETTER



Volume 33 No. 5

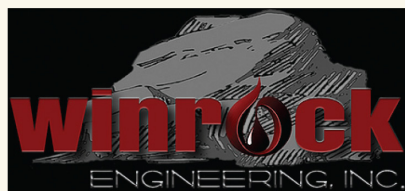
January 2017

"The Petroleum Engineering Professional Registration Process"

Thursday January 26th

6:00 - 7:00 pm

Waldemar S. Nelson & Co.
1200 St. Charles Ave. • New Orleans, LA 70130



Professional Engineer licensure is an important step in an Engineer's career path, and mandatory for many functions in the industry. P.E. licensure is also a powerful resume builder in this difficult job market.

In this session, SPE Distinguished Member and author of the SPE book *"A Guide to Professional Registration for Petroleum Engineers."* Bing Wines will be giving a presentation on the process of becoming a certified Professional Engineer.

Additionally, the Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board (LAPELS) will be attendance to present on the Louisiana specifics of licensure and to answer any additional questions.

Lauren Woitha, a new P.E. as of 2016 will also be in attendance in order to give a fresh perspective on the process.

Parking is available in the visitor's lot on the Clio Street side of the building. Use the entrance to the building on Clio Street



BING WINES

SPE Distinguished Member
Author of *"A Guide to Professional Registration for Petroleum Engineers"*

Save the Date!

SPE ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

March 24, 2017

**Carter Plantation
Springfield, LA**

8:00 am Shotgun Start

For more information or if you would like to volunteer on the committee, get in touch with Matt Wandstrat at mattw@llog.com

GREAT NEWS FOR FUTURE ENGINEERS!

The LA Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BSEE) is changing the grade level expectations (GLE) to include engineering. Until present, engineering was not included within GLE requirements.

ENGINEERING WEEK

Engineering week is February 20. On that Tuesday, UNO is hosting an engineering event for grades 6th-12th. Plans are to structure the event similar to that held at Zephyr Stadium last spring with societies and organizations providing oil and gas related demonstrations. Last year our SPE volunteers showed experiments about porosity and permeability of rock along with density of oil versus water. We are seeking volunteers to help on Tuesday, February 21 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Join us yourself or volunteer a friend to take your place!

ASCE – Oil & Gas Session at Annual Conference

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) will be holding their annual conference in New Orleans this year on October 8-11. They are planning a session of tracks related to the history of oil and gas in the New Orleans and Gulf of Mexico area. This will be a new topic for the society. As plans progress, there should be opportunity for societies and individual volunteers to help out.



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SPE: ON THE HORIZON

SPE Events:

- Jan. 24-27 **SPE Hydraulic Fracturing Technology Conference** • The Woodlands, Texas
 Keynote Speaker: Alex Epstein, Author and founder of the Center for Industrial Progress
 Presentation: The Moral Case for Hydraulic Fracturing
 Early Bird Registration: January 10, 2017
 For more information: www.spe.org/events/hftc/2017
- Feb. 20-22..... **SPE Reservoir Simulation Conference** • Conference Center at La Torretta, Montgomery, Texas
 For more information: www.spe.org/events/rsc/2017
- Mar. 24 **SPE Annual Golf Tournament** • Carter Plantation in Springfield, Louisiana
 For more information or to volunteer: Matt Wandstrat at mattw@llog.com

Other Events:

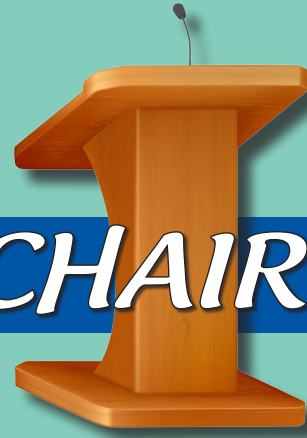
- Jan. 30 - Feb. 2..... **API Inspection Summit** • Galveston Island Convention Center, Galveston, Texas
 Keynote Speaker: Ryan Sitton, Railroad Commissioner
 Presentation: Equipment Integrity, Reliability, and the Future of Energy
 For more information: www.api.org/events-and-training/calendar-of-events/2017/inspection

SPE's NEWSLETTER HAS GONE DIGITAL!

Check our website <http://connect.spe.org/delta/home> or your email for the latest edition.



from THE CHAIR...



Welcome to 2017!

I hope you were able to have some time off during the holidays to relax and recharge your batteries. For those of you who remained on duty and kept things running during the holidays, our thanks to you.

January marks the half-way point for the current Delta Board term of service. I highlighted many of their accomplishments and activities thus far in the December newsletter. We are committed to continuing to deliver engaging lectures, networking opportunities and service to the membership and other deserving organizations. This spring the Delta Board is looking forward to hosting the Annual Golf Tournament, two continuing education events, awarding SPE scholarships to talented college students, continued support of local STEM functions, and the Deepwater Symposium (summer), all of this in addition to the general luncheons and awards banquet. So there is much to look forward to this spring and summer. I encourage you to come out and participate in these activities either as a participant or as a volunteer.

Note there will not be a general meeting in January. Due to unanticipated issues, the decision not to host a meeting in January was made. The general meetings will resume in February and will conclude in May. This year's Annual Awards Banquet will be held in April as opposed to typically being scheduled in May.

This change of date is due primarily to guest speaker availability. An additional driver for this change is synergy with an environmental conference that will be in session at the same time in April. This synergy focuses on the environmental constituents of our O&G industry.

I am sure many of you have kept up with current industry events to include OPEC's agreement to curtail production in 2017. Of course none of us can predict what the future holds, but I, like many of you, are encouraged by this agreement and am hopeful for our industry. I was given a good piece of advice last year regarding oil prices, "No good will come from worrying about what the price of a barrel of oil is today and what it could be in the near future. Rather focus on what you do at your job and be sure to do your best."

A reminder to all to keep your membership current and to encourage your colleagues who are not currently members to renew or join. It is your involvement and dues that enable the Delta Section to continue to deliver support to the local community and the industry. I also encourage you to sign up and attend the monthly technical luncheons. Come out and meet your industry colleagues, eat a good lunch and learn something new.

Cheers,

Daniel A. Durey

Your 2016-2017 SPE Delta Section Chair

SPE-Delta Membership Report

Submitted by: Angie Gobert (Membership Chairperson)

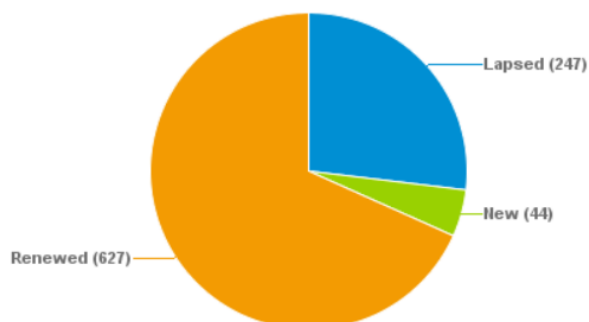
As of January 2017

Total Full Members	671
New Members	44
Unpaid Members	247
Total Student Members	663

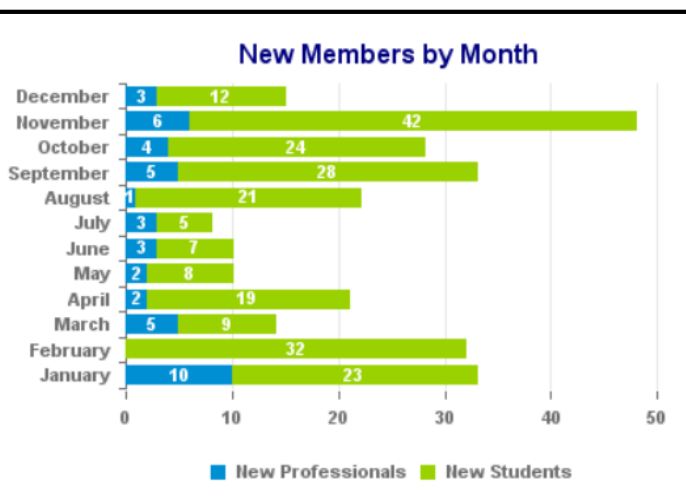
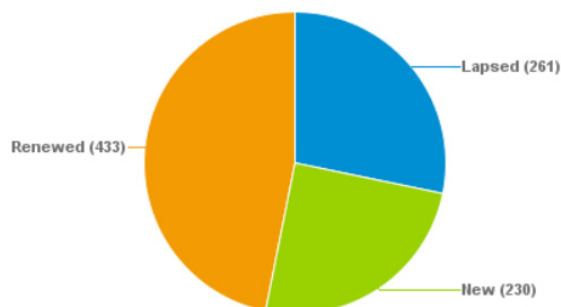


Delta Section

Professional Membership



Student Membership



Student Chapters	Total Current Members	New	Renewed
Florida State University	44	16	28
Louisiana State University	547	181	366
Nicholls State University	64	30	34
*Students Without a Student Chapter	8	3	5
TOTAL	663	230	433

The Fracking Meme

Howard Duhon, P.E.

This article first appeared in Feb 2015 in the *Oil and Gas Facilities* magazine, <https://www.spe.org/en/ogf/issues/february-2015/>

You have probably heard that the Eskimo language has several dozen words for 'snow'. That is a very frequently repeated and very well-known statistic.

But it is not true! The Eskimo language has about the same number of synonyms for snow as does the English language.

The claim that the Eskimo language has several dozen words for 'snow' is a meme, and a pretty successful one.

What is a Meme?

Simply put, a meme is a snippet of culture that is learned by imitation; and that is hence passed on by imitation or repetition. The 'Eskimo snow' meme thrives because it is repeated in casual conversation by people who believe it, think it is interesting, think it is worth sharing with friends. These people do not know the Eskimo language and have no basis for believing the meme other than the fact that it sounds plausible.

"We use only 10% of our brains" is a meme. There is no scientific basis for the claim. Scientists regularly debunk it. Many people are familiar with the "10% of your brain meme." Very few are aware of the debunking. The former is a stronger, more successful meme than the latter.

"97% of climate scientists believe in global warming." That's a successful meme; often repeated and widely believed. I'm not suggesting that that is not true – only that most of the people who believe it have no way of knowing one way or the other.

In a world with a finite number of brains and an infinite number of potential memes, memes compete for brain space. Successful memes reproduce and prosper; unsuccessful memes die out.

Memes are Selfish

Memes spread themselves around indiscriminately without regard to whether they are useful, neutral or harmful to us. A brilliant new scientific theory may spread readily because of its usefulness, but harmful memes spread as well.

In *The Selfish Gene*, Richard Dawkins famously claimed that genes are selfish. They are "interested" in only one thing – getting reproduced. The first rule of memes, as it is for genes, is that replication is not for the good of anything. There is no grand plan, no drift in the direction of perfection. Memes are self-replicators and they are good at only one thing – replicating. There is no necessary

connection between a meme's fitness for replication and its contribution to our fitness.

Which Memes Succeed

The only measure of success for a meme is how many copies of itself it produces. What sorts of memes are successful at replication?

- Memes about sex. Salacious memes. Gossip.
- Memes believed by altruistic people or that support, or seem to support, altruistic goals
- Means that are easy (mathematical memes have a hard time)
- Memes that support pre-existing opinions
- Memes believed by powerful, influential people
- Memes believed by people similar to us
- Good, true, useful, beautiful memes (such as songs, poems, etc.)

Or to put it another way, the successful memes are those

- that grab our attention,
- that we are likely to believe/support, and
- that we are likely to share with others.

Memes that we think about, that get rehearsed in our brain and get spoken to others are successful.

The Fracking Meme

Public opposition to fracking is meme-driven. We could list several variants of the meme. Perhaps the most common is "fracking pollutes ground water." For the discussion that follows, let's settle on the general meme "fracking is bad."

It should be obvious to you that "fracking is bad" is a meme. Truth is not important to this meme (truth is not important to any meme). It only wants to be copied. And it is very effective at getting itself copied in the general population.

It does not take root in the minds of oil field people. It is as though we've been inoculated against it. If we are to combat this harmful meme, then we should attend to the issues that support and nurture it in the general population.

Why is the Fracking Meme Successful?

It's not about sex, but it sounds like it might be, so that may be part of the subliminal appeal.

It does support pre-conceived notions that the public holds about the oil industry. The oil industry is one of the least liked industries in the world. Indeed, we are frequently ranked dead last in opinion polls. So it should be no surprise that stories that put us in a bad light will be repeated.

Altruism is an especially valuable meme property. Memes that support altruistic causes are very powerful. The fracking meme uses the altruism trick in reverse. It portrays the big, bad oil company as putting profit above all else including the environment (especially groundwater) and neighborhoods. It portrays us as the opposite of altruistic.

Another way that oil developments controvert the altruism meme is in the unequal distribution of rewards. Oil and gas developments enrich only some of the people in the impacted community and may be costly to others.

Many celebrities are on record opposing fracking.

It is probably pretty easy for members of the public to find people opposed to fracking and difficult to find people who openly support it. The “fracking is bad” argument is successful meme partly because it is easy. “Fracking is good” is an unsuccessful meme probably largely because it is hard. Memes that involve math or science do not generally fair well.

What Can We Do About This?

Clearly the deck is stacked against us and there is no easy answer.

I want to stress first that educating the public is not the answer. We naturally assume that we have positive views of fracking because we understand fracking and that the public would share our views if only they understood. That is not correct. Jen Schneider effectively debunked that notion in this column (Apr, 2013 issue). Who can forget her classic line “deficit models operating in a post normal situation are both counterproductive and undemocratic.” Our opinions of fracking are not based solely, or even largely, on facts. These opinions are socially constructed and based on values and on trust. Education cannot meaningfully change risk perceptions that have been generated socially.

Also, reflect back on my summary of Ulrick Beck’s Risk Society (this column Dec, 2013) which noted a declining faith in science and corporations. A large corporation making scientific arguments is not a good recipe for a successful meme.

It is not abundantly clear to me what the answer is, but I can suggest a few points to have a conversation about.

1) Let’s work harder to understand communities. Our focus as an industry has been to explain ourselves. Let’s spend more time listening to communities to understand their real issues. “Fracking is bad” is a meme, not an issue. If we work the real issues effectively the meme will suffer neglect. Neglect is the ultimate threat to a meme. Understanding creates trust. Trust is the enemy of the fracking meme.

2) Let’s work to improve the image of the industry in general. If we had a better image, unflattering memes would not stick so readily. We might even get people

spreading positive memes! OK, this will take some work, but there are the makings of successful memes in what we do. The oil industry has changed the world in wonderful ways.

3) In any industry that has been so successful that it changed the world, there will be some undesirable side effects. We have to own the negative side effects and work to mitigate them. The Louisiana swamps are disappearing due in part to oil exploration. The industry should be out front on that issue. Global warming is real (and it is a very successful meme). We need to be working on that.

4) And yes, let’s continue to educate the public. Let’s continue to correct erroneous claims. Let’s seek better ways to do that. But let’s also be aware that these initiatives are not likely to be very effective.

5) And let’s start spreading positive memes about the industry.

For instance, here’s a meme that might stick:

Oil Saved the Sperm Whale

Prior to the invention and widespread adoption of electric lighting, light was provided largely by candles. A variety of materials can be used for making candles. Bees wax was generally very expensive and was used only by the upper classes. For centuries everyone else used tallow (animal fat) candles. They were smelly, smoky and not very bright.

In the early 1700’s it was learned that sperm whales contained about 500 gallons of a white oily substance in their heads. This material yielded excellent and relatively inexpensive light. The extraction method was dangerous and disgusting. After harpooning a whale and bringing it onboard, sailors cut a hole into the animals head and crawled inside to scrape out the oil. Thousands of men died hunting whales. Hundreds of thousands of whales were killed.

Oil was discovered in Pennsylvania just in time to save the Sperm whale from extinction.

References:

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- Beck, U. 1992. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, first edition, Sage Publications
- Jen Schneider, J. 2013. Barriers to Engagement: Why It Is Time for Oil and Gas to Get Serious About Public Communication. *Oil and Gas Fac 2* (2) 25-27
- Duhon, H. 2013. Risk Society: The Distribution of “Bads”. *Oil and Gas Fac 2* (6):48-60
- Johnson, S. 2014. *How We Got to Now, Six Innovations that Made the Modern World*, first edition, Riverhead Hardcover



SPE Hydraulic Fracturing Technology Conference and Exhibition

24 - 26 Jan 2017 | The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel & Convention Center | The Woodlands, Texas

The **SPE Hydraulic Fracturing Technology Conference** will showcase existing and new hydraulic fracturing technologies, using experiences from fracture-stimulated wells and application of global learnings.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ALEX EPSTEIN

PRESENTATION:

THE MORAL CASE FOR HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

Author and founder of the Center for Industrial Progress, Alex Epstein will kick off the event with a presentation on The Moral Case for Hydraulic Fracturing. Epstein debates environmental organizations and persuasively makes the case for coal, oil, and natural gas. The McLaughlin Group named Epstein the "Most Original Thinker of 2014" for his *New York Times* best seller, *The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels*.



WHY ATTEND?

- Robust Technical Program
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- Dynamic Training Courses
- Over 80 Exhibitors
- Topical Plenary Session
- Legend Award Presentation



**Early Bird
Registration Deadline:
January 10, 2017**

REGISTER NOW!

www.spe.org/events/en/2017/conference/17hftc/register.html



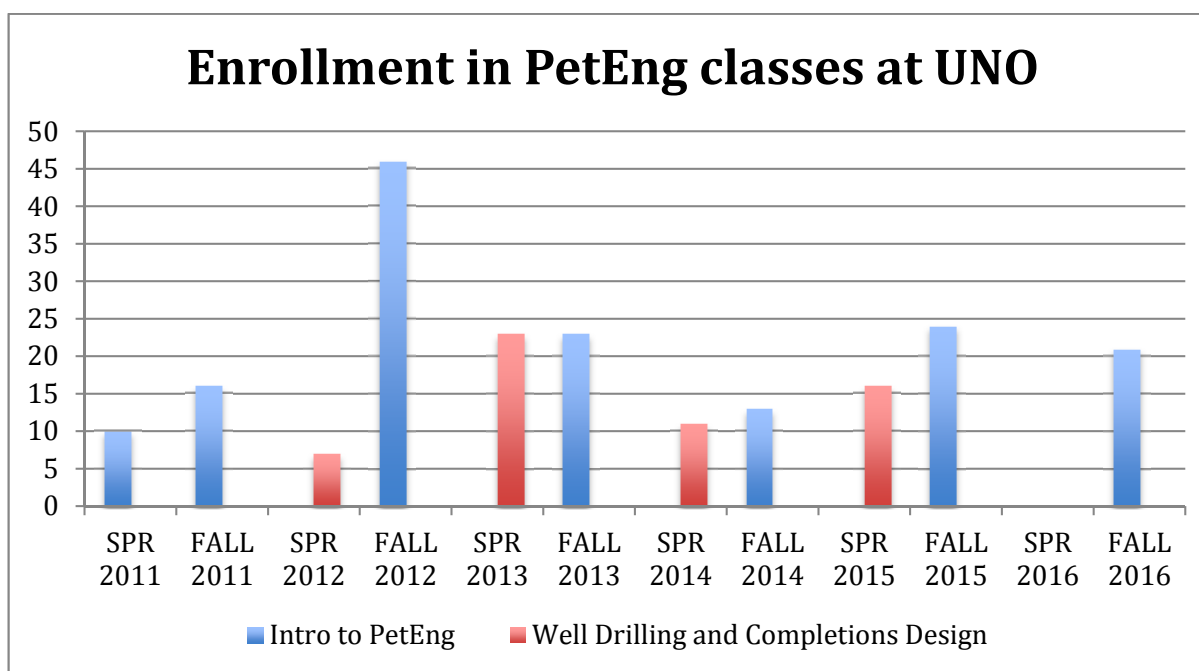
UNO Petroleum Engineering Program

Sponsored by SPE and AADE



Starting in the Spring Semester of 2011, the boards of SPE/AADE have voted to sponsor the following courses to encourage more awareness about the oil industry and its many potentially local and diverse job opportunities. Over 200 students have enrolled since 2011. As a result of these courses, a number of past students are now working in industry related fields. Despite the downturn in the industry, interest and enrollment remains steady.

These are offered within the Department of Mechanical Engineering Department as Electives.



- **ENME 4765: Introduction to Petroleum Engineering**

Offered in the Fall Semester

An introductory course on the oil and gas industry, with focus on the upstream sector. Topics include petroleum geology, exploration, drilling, completions, production, subsurface management, risk and cash flow analysis and the importance of the Environment, Health and Safety.

- **ENME 4096: Well Drilling and Basic Completion Design**

Offered in the Spring Semester

Covers the tasks performed by a Drilling Engineer in the drilling and completion of an oil or gas well. Topics include the basic components and processes of a drilling rig, the requirements for designing a well drilling and completion program, cementing, well control, including the various calculations required in the operation.

In conjunction with AADE we are investigating the possibility of introducing an additional class during the Summer Semester to introduce additional topics to the curriculum.

If you would like to know about this program or are interested in participating in any way, please contact pamoses1@uno.edu

Dues Waiver

SPE offers a dues waiver for renewing members who have lost their jobs due to the industry downturn and other circumstances. To qualify, submit a written request by either postal mail or email to service@spe.org

Out of Work?

Check out the Members in Transition Toolkit at <http://www.spe.org/members/transition/>. Learn how to optimize your job search, develop your network, enhance your skills, and thrive in a downturn.