

## **President's Message**

*by Fred Wagner*

As my term of office draws to a close, I am reflecting on what an exciting time this is for both the engineering profession and the American Council of Engineering Companies/Maryland (ACEC/MD).

With approximately 80 regular member firms belonging to the association, membership in ACEC/MD has reached a new high. ACEC/MD was one of only five member organizations recognized at the recent ACEC Convention for achieving at least a 3% growth in membership during the past year. Requests to serve on committees has greatly exceeded previous years. Providing the opportunity for people to serve on the committee of their choice is a fantastic problem for Incoming President Dan Cheng to have.

With major transportation projects on the horizon such as the InterCounty Connector (ICC) and Section 100 on I-95, the transportation sector is as strong as ever. Water and wastewater upgrades are earmarked for many of the state's local jurisdictions, and county and state budgets are flush with monies to upgrade and replace schools throughout the state of Maryland. Firms are approaching backlogs that have not been experienced in many years.

Finding personnel, especially experienced ones, is becoming an ever greater challenge. While it is difficult for ACEC/MD to "grow" experienced personnel for our member firms, strides have been taken to sow the seeds for future engineers.

Working with the faculty at UMBC, ACEC/MD was instrumental in initiating an HVAC course being instructed by James Posey Associates' Adam Sontag. ACEC/MD once again conducted school visitations and member firm representatives provided support for the TRAC program to demonstrate the principles of engineering and related fields to area middle and high school students. And this month, ACEC/MD is participating in an ambitious collaborative effort being launched by The Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering and the Engineering Society of Baltimore to persuade talented public school students to pursue a career in engineering.

Member firms are encouraged to take an active role both financially and through providing willing personnel to support these important initiatives.

In the political arena, representatives of ACEC/MD should be very proud to have provided the necessary support to gain passage of Certificate of Merit legislation in the first year of its introduction. Also this session, an important hurdle was overcome with the passage of compromise legislation that will provide for the necessary funding to continue with the ICC project. Later in this publication, please review the myriad of legislation that was considered and acted upon by your Legislative Committee.

There is certainly reason to celebrate. And celebrating the achievements of ACEC/MD will be on the top of the agenda at ACEC/MD's Seventeenth Annual Conference, being held June 22-24, 2005 at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa & Marina, in Cambridge.

Make your plans today to bring you family and friends to this world class resort. While participating in the educational program, we just might find some time to have a little fun!

## **ACEC/MD Golfers Once Again Break Out the Umbrella**

After a run of over 30 years without inclement weather, the ACEC/MD Annual Governmental Golf Outing is starting a streak of a different sort. For the third straight year golfers attacked the challenging course at Greystone Golf Course accompanied by rain showers and unseasonably cool weather. The sloppy condition, however, did not stop a record 111 golfers from competing for the trophy in this year's tournament.

Shooting a 73, Golf Chair Kevin Kreis (SITE-Blauvelt Engineers) successfully navigated the course to garner this year's trophy for Low Gross. Other top winners in this year's tournament included:

1<sup>st</sup> Low Net - Art Barrett (Gannett Fleming)

Least Number of Putts – Chris Payne (McDonough Bolyard Peck)

Men's Longest Drive – Perry Nutter (Greenman Pedersen)

Ladies' Longest Drive – Heidi Van Luven (A. Morton Thomas & Associates)

Closest to the Pin – Dale Coppage (EBA Engineering)

Closest to the Pin – Ian MacFarlane (EA Engineering, Science & Technology)

ACEC/MD member firm representatives once again opened their wallets for two very important causes. Golfers purchased \$785 worth of mulligans, which benefited the ACEC/MD Scholarship Fund. And for the second year the tournament included a silent auction, with proceeds going to the ACEC/MD CEPAC efforts. Attendees at the evening banquet bid on a variety of items generating \$1,950.00 to assist ACEC/MD in carrying the profession's message to Annapolis.

A special thanks to the following firms for sponsoring a hole, contributing items to this year's auction, and to the individuals that generously provided the winning bids.

**Hole Sponsors (alphabetically):**

A Morton Thomas & Associates

CBIZ

Century Engineering

Dewberry

DMJM HARRIS

EA Engineering, Science & Technology

EBA Engineering

Edwards & Kelcey

Gannett Fleming

George, Miles & Buhr

Gipe Associates

Glyndon Engineering & Tech. Co.

Greenhorne & O'Mara

Greenman-Pedersen

Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson

KCI Technologies

Kittelson & Associates

McCormick Taylor

McDonough Bolyard Peck

Moffatt & Nichol

Mueller Associates

RBA Group

Rickert Engineering  
Rummel, Klepper & Kahl  
Sidhu Associates  
SITE-Blauvelt Engineers  
The Traffic Group  
URS Corporation  
Wallace, Montgomery & Associates  
Weston Solutions  
Whitman, Requardt & Associates  
Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani

**Silent Auction:**

*Gift certificate for The Cheesecake Factory* donated by A. Morton Thomas & Associates; winning bid \$100 by Wade Felt (Greenman Pedersen, Inc.).

*One round of Golf at The Woodlands Golf Course-foursome* donated by Century Engineering; winning bid \$180 by Jim Montgomery (Wallace, Montgomery & Associates).

*Two nights at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa & Marina concurrent with the ACEC/MD Conference* donated by EBA Engineering; winning bid \$400 by Badri Satwah (Glyndon Engineering & Technology Company).

*A framed sports memorabilia of the Baltimore Ravens 2001 Super Bowl Victory* donated by Edwards and Kelcey; winning bid \$110 by Jim Montgomery (Wallace, Montgomery & Associates).

*Whiskey/cigar basket* donated by Greenhorne & O'Mara; winning bid \$200 by Tom Repsher (Daft McCune Walker).

*Gift certificate for PF Chang* donated by HNTB Corporation; winning bid \$100 by George Wirth (Schnabel Engineering).

*Case of Merlot Wine – 12 bottles* donated by Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson; winning bid \$125 by Harry Stephen (Century Engineering).

*Six tickets to July 25 Orioles game v. Texas Ranger* donated by KCI Technologies; winning bid \$150 by Paul Dorr (The Traffic Group).

*Gift certificate for M&S Grille* donated by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas; winning bid \$85 by Jim Montgomery (Wallace, Montgomery & Associates).

*Two tickets to Ravens game December 4, 2005* donated by Rummel, Klepper & Kahl; winning bid \$200 by Barbara Wise (ACEC/MD).

*Gift Certificate for Oregon Grille* donated by Schlenger/Pitz & Associates; winning bid \$120 by John Wiser (Greenhorne & O'Mara).

*Two box seats to May 25, 2005 Orioles game v. Seattle* donated by Wallace, Montgomery & Associates; winning bid \$80 by Dan Cheng (Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson).

*Gift certificate for Oregon Grille* donated by WBCM Construction Services, LLC; winning bid \$120 by Dan Cheng (Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson).

Due to the ACEC Conference occurring over the first Monday in May, 2006, next year's tournament will be held May 8, 2006. While we are not officially surrendering to the weather, we can only hope that the second Monday will provide the spring time weather that traditionally is the hallmark of ACEC/MD's tournament.

## **Passage of Certificate of Merit Legislation Highlights 2005 Session**

While the 2005 General Assembly session proved to be extremely contentious, with gambling interests once again dominating the landscape, ACEC/MD member firm representatives can take great satisfaction in gaining passage of revised Certificate of Merit legislation in the first year of its introduction.

Led by Legislative Committee Chair David Mongan (Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani) and Affiliate member firm representative Pat Attridge (King & Attridge), ACEC/MD gained passage of legislation by the legislature, with only one negative vote, that restores Certificate of Merit protection for not only individuals but design firms including partnerships.

The session also featured passage of compromise language that will provide for the necessary funding to proceed with construction of the long delayed InterCounty Connector (ICC). Under this plan, funding will be secured with less reliance on GARVEE Bonds and more money out of

the Transportation Trust Fund. According to MDOT Secretary Robert Flanagan, this change may have an impact on future projects, but the current program continues to be very solid.

In the spirit of compromise, the surveying profession also gained some relief when their statute of repose was decreased from 20 years to 15 years. Legislation had been introduced to reduce the duration to ten years, which would have mirrored the design professions in the state.

On the negative side, legislation that would have included engineering services under mechanics lien protection was defeated and the legislature passed the so called Fair Share Health Care Fund Act, which was eventually vetoed by Governor Ehrlich.

In addition to actively getting involved in pertinent legislation, your Legislative Committee reviewed in depth nearly 10% of the 2656 pieces of legislation introduced in the 2005 General Assembly session.

For a list of legislation of interest to ACEC/MD, contact the ACEC/MD office.

### ***Are Health Savings Accounts Right for You?***

The HSAs are coming; the HSAs are coming! If you haven't yet heard of Health Savings Accounts, just wait. By this time next year, HSA should be as familiar as HMO, PPO, and FSA. No one has yet come up with the best answer to address rising health care expense, but Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) is one affordable solution that individuals and employers might want to consider. Employers, employees and individuals can all find reasons to embrace HSAs.

There are two components to HSAs – 1. a qualifying high-deductible health plan (HDHP), indexed for inflation; and 2. a tax-advantaged savings account. Money put into a savings account is owned by an individual to pay for future medical expenses. The high deductible also means that insurance premiums will be much lower than traditional insurance. Participants can realize benefits without ever making a health insurance claim. In fact, rewards come from being healthy and making smart choices. Health care consumers are encouraged to exercise more control over health care expenses.

HSAs, formerly Archer Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs), were enacted as part of the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 as another tax-favored method of funding out-of-pocket medical expenses. They are available to individuals as a medically-underwritten plan or to employer groups. Planning Idea: HSAs are easy for employers because there are no plan documents to file, and administrative costs are low.

The tax law provides “IRA-like” tax treatment for deposits to Health Savings Accounts. Unused balances continue to accrue interest income tax free or tax deferred. Unlike Flexible Spending Accounts, HSAs must be pre-funded before use. Savings accounts are fully portable and always available to participants for qualified expenses. This is not a “use it or lose it” plan and, in addition to paying out-of-pocket expenses, can be viewed as a retirement supplement. Planning Idea: Maximize savings contributions, pay out-of-pocket expenses with after-tax dollars, and build up tax-free or tax-deferred savings.

The annual maximum contribution to the HSA savings account is 100% of the annual deductible. Individuals over age 55 may contribute an additional \$600 catch up for tax year 2005.

Contributions to savings may be made by either the employer or employee. This is a change from MSAs. Employees may use pre-tax contributions under a Section 125 Plan. Employers may save enough on premiums that they might want to contribute to employees' savings accounts. They will also save on payroll taxes.

Qualified major medical deductibles for 2005 are \$1,000 - \$2,650 for singles; \$2,000 - \$5,250 for anyone other than singles. Beginning January 1, 2006, all HSA plans must integrate prescription drug benefits with the annual deductible. The preferred group-plan design would cover 100% of covered expenses once the annual deductible has been met. Preventive care and accidents may not be subject to the deductible. The maximum out-of-pocket expense may go as high as \$10,000 when employers offer plans with out-of-network benefits. Planning Idea: Offer two plans. The rank and file may prefer to choose the lower-deductible option, but executives will appreciate the option to defer a higher amount into their savings.

Tax-free withdrawals may be made for most medical, dental, and vision expenses, including expenses not typically covered by health insurance. These qualified expenses are identified under IRS Section 213(d). Planning Idea: HSA funds may be used to pay premiums for tax-qualified long-term care insurance.

Non-medical withdrawals under age 65 are subject to ordinary income tax plus a 10% penalty. Non-medical withdrawals over age 65, or when the participant becomes disabled or dies during the year, are subject to ordinary income tax only. Planning Idea: Save as much as possible during your working years and fund that trip-of-a-lifetime from your savings account once you retire.

There are very good HSA options for healthy individuals, but group plans are evolving more slowly. They should be more widely available over the next few years. Consult your tax attorney, accountant, or other qualified advisor for more details. Can HSAs help reduce your healthcare expenses? Perhaps, that's why you can expect to begin hearing much more about Health Savings Accounts in the very near future.

The author, Linda J. Tice, CFP, is the ACEC/MD representative from Affiliate Member Firm PSA Financial Center. She can be reached at 410-821-7766 or [Linda@psafinancial.com](mailto:Linda@psafinancial.com).

## Member News

**A. MORTON THOMAS & ASSOCIATES** is pleased to announce that the firm is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June, 2005.

**BUCHART-HORN, INC.** announced that *John R. Griffin* has joined the firm as associate vice president and regional manager for the company's operations in Maryland and Virginia.

**CENTURY ENGINEERING** is pleased to announce that *Bryan Haynie*, Prof. L.S., and *Thomas Turner*, PE have become stockholders.

**DANIEL CONSULTANTS, INC.** is pleased to announce the addition of *Dr. Ra'id Breiwish* as associate director of the firm's ITS Division.

**DMJM HARRIS** has relocated to: 7 St. Paul Street, 17<sup>th</sup> floor  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-637-1700; fax 410-576-1305

**GANNETT FLEMING** appointed *Steven J. Hawtof* a senior associate of the firm.

**GEORGE, MILES & BUHR, LLC** is pleased to announce that *Denise R. Abbott* has joined the firm as Junior Accountant in the firm's Salisbury office. The firm also announced that Margot Rogerson and Jason Ludy were the recipients of two \$1,000 scholarships offered by the firm for students pursuing degrees in Civil Engineering and Architecture.

**JOHNSON, MIRMIRAN & THOMPSON** announced that *Michael C. Hild*, PE has joined the firm as a vice president in the firm's Maryland office.

**KCI TECHNOLOGIES** is pleased to announce the following additions:

*Tammy M. Jones* is the new Director of the firm's Human Resources Department.

*Lynn Bezilla*, with 34 years of experience in the aviation industry, has joined the firm as a senior associate in the Transportation Group.

*David M. Koss*, PE joined the Raleigh, NC office as Engineering Director.

**KIBART, INC.** is pleased to announce the following:

*P. Edwin Abbott, Jr.*, PE, President of the firm, has successfully completed the requirements to become a "Certified Commissioning Professional" in accordance with the Building Commissioning Association.

*Stephen Brzezinski* has been promoted to Mechanical Project Engineer.

*Karl Gumnick* has joined the firm as an Electrical Project Manager.

*Edward Andrew Tillman, III* has recently joined the firm as a Senior Mechanical Project Engineer.

*Aung Wai* has joined the firm as a Mechanical Design Engineer.

**PRIME ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE** has relocated their office to:

3106 Lord Baltimore Drive, Suite 106

Baltimore, MD 21244

Phone 410-265-1956; Fax 410-265-1954

Email [kumarb@primeng.com](mailto:kumarb@primeng.com)

**STV INCORPORATED** announces that *Joel Oppenheimer*, PE has joined the firm as Atlantic Region Transportation Manager.

**WHITNEY, BAILEY, COX & MAGNANI** is pleased to announce that *Jingying Yang* has won the designation 2004/2005 TRIG-STAR for Dulaney High School in the recent competition sponsored by the firm.

*It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of two local leaders in the industry.*

**Edward L. Lowman**, 72, vice chair and former president of John E. Harms, Jr. & Associates died on April 25, 2005. Drafted into the Army in 1953, Ed became a surveying specialist. After

being discharged in 1956, he joined the Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works where he rose to the position of Subdivision Design Reviewer. Mr. Lowman was hired by Harms and Associates in 1961 to design subdivisions. He left in the early 1970's to join C. D. Messick, Jr. & Associates, which merged with Harms & Associates in 1982. After the merger Mr. Lowman became a Division Manager in charge of Development Engineering. He served as president of the firm from 1989 until illness forced him to step down in 2002.

**J. Hambleton Palmer, 90**, was a founder of Palmer & Clark Associates. A Secretary in what was then the Consulting Engineers Council of Maryland, 1967 – 1969, Mr. Palmer also held national positions in both the American Consulting Engineers Council and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Upon graduating from Cornell University in 1935, Mr. Palmer took a position at a shipbuilding company in Newport News, VA, where he designed the piping for the USS St. Louis. After serving in the military he was employed by General Electric Company where he obtained eleven patents.

*Our deepest condolences go out to both the families of Mr. Lowman and Mr. Palmer.*

## **Seeking Employment**

The following individuals are seeking employment and have a complete resume on file in the ACEC/MD office. Please phone 410-539-1592 if you are interested in obtaining a copy.

1. Recent graduate from the Ohio State University with a Masters Degree in **Civil Engineering** seeks career employment or internship opportunities involving but not limited to traffic engineering, transportation planning, signal design, corridor parking studies and travel demand forecasting and transit systems.
2. Individual with Bachelor of Architecture Degree and **20 years experience in construction** and **quality control** seeks position.
3. Individual looking for **summer internship** that will provide opportunity to apply classroom experience in **system/CADD design** to real life.

## **Deadline Approaching for Businesses for the Bay Awards**

Applications for the 2005 Businesses for the Bay awards are due July 12, 2005. If you know of an organization that has implemented a successful pollution prevention project, please encourage them to apply. The application may be downloaded from [www.b4bay.org](http://www.b4bay.org).

Organizations that are not yet members of Businesses for the Bay, may join at the time of their application. There is no cost for membership.

## **Professional Development**

**June 21, 2005**

***WTS Baltimore Chapter Meeting***

Baltimore, 5:30 – 8:30pm. Featuring newly appointed Maryland Port Administration Executive Director Brooks Royster. To register, please contact Alison Williams at 410-288-8450, [awilliams@mdta.state.md.us](mailto:awilliams@mdta.state.md.us).

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**June 22-24, 2005**     *ACEC/MD 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference*

Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina, Cambridge.

**Wednesday, June 22**

ACEC/MD Past President's Advisory Committee Luncheon Meeting

ACEC/MD Executive Committee Meeting

Cruise & Crab Feast

**Thursday, June 23**

Buffet Breakfast

Golf

Leadership Program

Poplar Island Tour (on a space availability basis)

Political Action Workshop

Reception

Banquet

**Friday, June 24**

Buffet Breakfast

Session: "Navigating the Course – Through Stormy Weather or Calm

Seas" – Panelists include:

Keith Compton (Montgomery County Dept. of Public Works & Transportation)

Curt Smith (GSA Office of the Chief Architect)

Robert Harrison (Maryland State Highway Administration)

Robert Kleinhen (Maryland Department of General Services)

Jim Lee (Lee & McShane)

Reception and General Membership Luncheon

Daily registrations are available. To register, please contact the ACEC/MD office at 410-539-1592.

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**July 19, 2005**      *Tricks, Traps and Ploys Used in Construction Scheduling in Maryland*  
Linthicum. Offered by Lorman Education Services. To register call 888-678-5565 or go to [www.lorman.com](http://www.lorman.com).

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**July 13, 2005**      *Intro Geosynthetics*

**July 25-29, 2005**      *Traffic Engineering Short Course*  
College Park (both courses). Offered by the MD T2 Center. To register call 301-403-4623 or visit [www.ence.umd.edu/mdt2center](http://www.ence.umd.edu/mdt2center).

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