



# AICHE Orange County

NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE COUNTY SECTION, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERS

No. 95

<http://www.aiche-orangecounty.org>

January, 2002

## JANUARY DINNER MEETING

### So You Would Like to Start Your Own Engineering Company?

Dennis England

**Tuesday, January 22, 2002**  
**5:30 PM**

Dennis England will provide some insights into the problems and rewards of starting and running your own business. Dennis is president of the privately held environmental engineering corporation, England Geosystem, Inc. In 1989 Dennis and his lawyer-wife, Linda, and two others started the business under the name England Shahin & Associates and later changed to England & Associates. In 2000 the company merged with Geosystem Consultants, Inc. and changed the name to England Geosystem, Inc. The company has 50 employees and its clients include many Fortune 500 companies in oil, chemicals, and manufacturing industries.

Dennis will discuss such topics as:

- why he started the business and what problems had to be overcome to get it going and keep it going,
- marketing issues, how clients and market sectors were identified and why clients have remained loyal,
- employees, finding and keeping exceptional employees, motivation and personnel problems,
- keeping the employees and the company up to date, and
- is it worth all that one has to put into it, and would he do it again?

Dennis has a Ph.D. degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Washington. Before becoming a consultant, he worked in process design and evaluation for 9 years for Shell Development Company and Shell Oil Company, followed by 6 years as Manager of Process Engineering at Occidental Research Corporation.

### Meeting Schedule:

5:30 p.m.	Social Hour
6:30 p.m.	Dinner
7:20 p.m.	Break
7:30 p.m.	After-Dinner Program

**Place: Wyndham Garden Hotel, Costa Mesa**

**Directions:** From Interstate 405, go north on Bristol Ave., right on Anton, left on Avenue of the Arts. The Wyndham is on the right at 3350 Avenue of the Arts, Costa Mesa.

**Reservations: Please make a reservation at (949) 261-2622 by voice by Friday, January 18. Or, you may email your reservation to [janice.west@ps.ge.com](mailto:janice.west@ps.ge.com).** Please specify your preference for either the main menu or the vegetarian menu when making your reservation.

**Cost:** Members, **\$20** with a reservation, **\$25** at the door; Non-Members, **\$25** with reservation, **\$30** at the door; Students/Unemployed/Retired, **\$15** with reservation, and **\$20** at the door.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As your President for 2002, I would like to welcome everyone back for another exciting year of the Orange County Section of AIChE. Last year our talks focused on the energy crisis. This year we'll focus on the Entrepreneur. I am looking forward to another great year of informative and inspirational talks. We hope you enjoy them too. This year's Executive Board is full of familiar faces, along with a few new faces, ready to make this year another success. Their dedication and planning, along with your support, are sure to make this happen.

For those of you who don't know me, I graduated with my BS in chemical engineering from Cal Poly Pomona in 1997. While in college, I worked as a summer intern for Unocal at the Los Angeles Refinery. Upon graduation, I was hired full time, at that time it was owned by Tosco. I still work for the same Refinery, only now it is Phillips 66 and who knows what name change will occur in 2002 (possible Conoco Phillips merger). I have worked in process engineering, the Marine Terminal, butane storage, water treatment and most recently in the Sulfuric Acid Plant and the Sulfur Plant. I got into chemical engineering because I knew I needed to support myself (ChemE's get paid well), I needed a career that would last (ChemE's are very well rounded) and because my dad is one (so I knew what one did). When I first started college, I thought I might be an architect or a veterinarian, but looking back I know I made the right decision.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at the January meeting. I hope everyone had a happy and safe holiday and best wishes for 2002.

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## EDITORIAL

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### Can Engineers Predict the Future?

Last year, we had speakers telling us about the California energy crisis. Al Gualtieri, former president of Powerine Oil Company, predicted in May that we would have \$3.00 gasoline in 2001. All it would take is one refinery accident to cause a price jump. With respect to evangelist Pat Robertson's attempt to reopen the old Powerine refinery, Mr. Gualtieri opined that only someone who doesn't know the business would buy a refinery. Since then, Communities for a Better Environment sent a letter to many Californians with a personal endorsement by Erin Brockovich, asking us to join them in a series of lawsuits. The letter warned that Pat Robertson's refinery would "endanger the health and perhaps even the lives of tens of thousands of area residents – many of them children." The letter also questioned "Is there really a 'power crisis' in California?" Overall, I would give Mr. Gualtieri a score of about 70%.

Economists should envy a 70% score. The January 4, 2002 Wall Street Journal, quotes a study of 19 years of Wall Street Journal economic predictions that found economists **failed** to predict the right **direction** of long-term interest rates 71% of the time. The same Journal announced that the power industry has cut plans for new plants since Enron's sudden fall. About 18% of previously planned plants are effectively dead. This figure understates the reality because delayed plants weren't counted. California has lost four major projects and roughly two dozen peaking plants. So I ask – Can anyone predict the future?

This month, Scientific American looks to the future with an article by three nuclear engineers demonstrating that advanced nuclear power plants might be the safest way to meet future energy needs without worsening global warming. You may remember nuclear engineers used to tell us that nuclear power would be too cheap to meter. Again, the technology is ready, only our society isn't. The state of Nevada has just vowed to stop the Yucca Mountain repository, which after at least 15 years of study remains the only U.S. permanent site for spent nuclear fuel. The biggest resistance to Yucca Mountain comes from lobbyists of the gambling casinos who get their money from tourists lured by all those bright lights. Most nuclear engineers are senior citizens who told their sons and daughters, "It's too late for me to change, but save *yourselves*". So, if the DOE does meet it's promise to open Yucca in 2010, where will they find the engineers to design and run advanced nuclear plants?

I predict an energy problem.

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## Southern California AIChE Meetings

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The Southern California Section has a dinner meeting in LA County on the third Tuesday of the month at the Quiet Cannon Restaurant in Montebello. Ash Husain will speak January 15<sup>th</sup> on Engineers' Role in the Food Industries. See their website at [http://www.geocities.com/aiche\\_sc](http://www.geocities.com/aiche_sc).

### Legal Corner

by Peter Hsiao and Siegmund Shyu,  
Morrison & Foerster, LLP

#### Ninth Circuit Passive Migration Case Reversed

Updating the continuing saga, the full Ninth Circuit court reversed the previous three-member panel decision that had adopted the passive migration theory of hazardous waste liability under Superfund (Carson Harbor Village Ltd. v. Unocal Corp., previously reported in the January 2001 and April 2001 newsletters). The full Ninth Circuit held that the definition of "disposal" under Superfund does not include passive soil migration. A minority of jurisdictions have adopted the passive migration theory of liability, which holds a previous owner or operator of a site liable even if it did not actively release hazardous substances since it was present when the hazardous substances moved in the soil or groundwater. The Ninth Circuit stated that passive migration did not meet the statutory definition of disposal, which commonly refers to depositing, spilling, and leaking, and that while passive migration may be closest to leaking, under the plain and common meaning of the word it was not equivalent.

#### California Air Resources Board Proposes Regulations Requiring Manufacturers To Provide Motor Vehicle Emission-Related Service Information To Automotive Repair Industry

Pursuant to the state Clean Air Act, the California Air Resources Board ("CARB") is directed to adopt regulations that require manufacturers of 1994 and later model year passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty vehicles to provide emission-related service information to the automotive repair industry. CARB has proposed these regulations to implement the service information requirements and create a process for administrative review of agency determinations of non-compliance. The regulations would require, among other things, that manufacturers provide initialization procedures used by dealerships equipped with integrated anti-theft systems when necessary for installation of on-board computers or in making other emission-related repairs; make service information available on the Internet in full text; and to make the information available at a "fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory price." Background information on these regulations is available at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/regact/cmvsip/cmvsip.htm>.

#### Something Completely Different

Customs officials and federal prosecutors are serious about illegal smuggling of caviar from endangered species. As reported by Reuters, an American gourmet smuggler in Florida was sentenced to 13 months in jail and two years probation for attempting to smuggle 110 pounds of Russian Beluga caviar into the United States in his luggage. The beluga, a large white sturgeon from the Black and Caspian Sea, is a protected species under international wildlife treaties and the Endangered Species Act. Beluga caviar sells for up to \$1,000 a pound in the United States. Individuals can bring up to 8.75 ounces of the product into the United States for personal use. However, the convicted smuggler declared on his Customs form that he did not carry any food or commercial goods, and was arrested when Customs inspectors discovered 100 17.5-ounce tins of the caviar in his two suitcases.

*Legal Corner reports on recent news, and is not intended to be legal advice. The reader should consult an attorney about the specific facts before acting upon this information.*

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### LOOKING FOR PATENT HOLDERS

Your Program Chair wants to have a session on whether having a patent helps your career or puts money in your pocket. If you hold a patent in your name, please call Dominic Meo at (714) 377-8887, or e-mail at [dmeo@socal.rr.com](mailto:dmeo@socal.rr.com). We will probably have a panel discussion, with patent holders leading the discussion. Thanks for participating.

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### Professional Engineering Employment Update

**Job Seeking Members** can now receive a list of web sites of area companies that sometimes hire chemical engineers. Special thanks to Ron Ambrosini, Alexandre Dokoutchaev, Edgar Lara, and Dung Phan, who volunteered to help with this list. Contact the Newsletter Editor to receive this list by e-mail as an Excel or Word file.

**AIChE is coming to Newport Beach**  
AIChE Professional & Technical Training is coming to Newport Beach, February 4 through the 8th. So you can take advantage of AIChE courses designed to provide you with immediate solutions to on-the-job problems. You may see the newly-expanded listing at <http://www.aiche.org/education>.

## Advertisements

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## Job Opportunities

We are seeking an experienced **process engineer** with laundry care experience for a management position in R&D. This individual should have experience in both dry and liquid laundry processes, strong leadership experience and management skills **Work Experience:** This is the most important criterion. It is expected this individual will have a minimum of at least 15 years experience in R&D with at least 10 years experience in laundry detergent (both dry and liquid) processes. This person should have at least 5 years experience in managing other engineers. It is preferred that the individual comes from a large to medium size consumer goods company where new products and processes are regularly rolled out. Assignments in manufacturing and engineering in addition to R&D are a plus. Salary range is \$80,000 to \$110,000,+ bns and stock grants. Base could go a little higher for the right person.

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### Part-Time Lecturer CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH Department of Chemical Engineering

**EFFECTIVE DATES:** Spring Appointments Only. (January 23, 2002 – May 31, 2002)

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** Ph.D in Chemical Engineering or Master's degree in Chemical Engineering with industrial experience. Ability to teach chemical engineering courses Ability to communicate effectively with an ethnically and culturally diverse campus community.

**Visit the OC AIChE Web Site for further information.**

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**DATED MATERIAL**

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