



Members from AEP, APA, and WEC joined together to celebrate the holidays at the Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery in the Gaslamp.

## HOLIDAY PARTY PROVIDES AN END TO SUCCESSFUL YEAR | BY LISA LIND

The joint AEP/APA/WEC Holiday Party on December 8 had a record turnout. Held at Rock Bottom in the Gaslamp, there were more than 120 members from AEP, APA, and WEC.

The festivities included appetizers and raffle prizes thanks to our sponsors: URS, DUDEK, GeomorphIS, HELIX Environmental Planning, Linscott, Law & Greenspan Engineers, Sophia Mitchell & Associates, and the UCSD Extension Program. In addition, members were encouraged to bring cans of food to support the San Diego Food Bank, and we are proud to report we filled two of their barrels.

The holiday party provides an opportunity to gather, celebrate, and network. Co-host and organizer Vanessa Brice interviewed several attendees at the event who remind us why we are all involved with AEP.

*I believe we all have a responsibility to nurture those entering an environmental career field. It's especially rewarding to have opportunities like these to meet the new "up and coming" environmental professionals. – Wendy Worthy, Dudek*

*My favorite part was meeting new people in the field, as well as getting to see people I've met before at AEP events. It was fun to socialize and network in a festive atmosphere! Sabina Baker, University of San Diego Student Chapter Co-President*

*It's great to get to spend time with a group of such like-minded people with similar interests in a more relaxed atmosphere. Katherine Godfrey, University of San Diego Student Chapter Member and 2011 San Diego Chapter Scholarship recipient*

*It's always fun to reconnect with old friends at the Holiday Party! Bruce McIntyre, HELIX Environmental Planning*

*Although there are other networking opportunities in the region, the AEP/APA/WEC Holiday Party is unique with its celebratory holiday spirit that breaks down barriers to genuine conversation.*

*As a result, you will often find yourself engaged in fascinating conversations with the region's top professionals — a rare and invaluable opportunity that should not be missed.*

*Continued on page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 **Holiday Party Provides an End to Successful Year**  
by Lisa Lind
- 3 **Message from the Board**  
by Cara Leone, Treasurer
- 4 **Meet A Member: Sharon Toland, USD Student Chapter Liaison**
- 5 **Legislative Update Provided At November Luncheon**  
by Mindy Fogg
- 6 **December-January Announcements**
- 8 **Campus Connection**

The editors of The Environmentor are accepting environmental photographs for publication. Please send your photographs to Lisa Lind, Newsletter Editor: [sdaepnews@gmail.com](mailto:sdaepnews@gmail.com)



HOLIDAY PARTY PROVIDES AN END TO SUCCESSFUL YEAR | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Of course, the food and venue are excellent as well, but it's the chance to build lasting relationships with a diversity of professionals that makes the holiday party truly special. Adam Erickson, Young Professional AEP Member

The holiday gathering marked the end of a successful year of activities and programs for the San Diego Chapter of AEP, including The Environmentor.

We appreciate all those who have contributed to 2011 issues of the newsletter by sharing their perspective on CEQA and emerging trends, photography, and noteworthy projects.

In addition to the writers, we wish to recognize our newsletter sponsors: GeomorphIS, LLC, BRG Consulting, Inc., KOA Corporation, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers, AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc., RECON Environmental, Inc., LSA Associates, Inc., Helix Environmental Planning, Inc., Krout & Associates, Arcadis, and Sophia Mitchell & Associates, LLC.

We will continue to build on the success in 2012 with a new format for news and timely announcements. We also look forward to bringing you highlights from AEP programs and better integration with a redesigned and updated chapter website.

Thanks to all our members for your support!

*Lisa Lind is a principal at RECON Environmental and the newsletter editor for the San Diego Chapter of AEP.*



AEP/APA/WEC members celebrate the holidays in the Gaslamp.



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD | BY CARA LEONE, TREASURER

The San Diego Board has had a rather successful year in terms of strategizing on how to improve our membership benefits. It is a key topic at every monthly board meeting. Significant effort has gone into planning for future events and inquiring for member feedback on each event held.

San Diego member input is crucial to us to help determine the events that were enjoyable, educational, provided adequate networking opportunities, or were unfavorable. As 2011 ends and we enter 2012, I thought I would look back on the goals set by the San Diego Board finalized in the beginning of 2011 to provide enhanced member services and the local chapter changes that may or may not have resulted.

**NEPA Workshop:** Although an official workshop was not held this year, NEPA topics were incorporated into different AEP programs, including the Summer Advanced CEQA Workshop and the June luncheon hosted by Jamie Le Dent of Caltrans who defined NEPA Delegation as the direction given by the Federal Highway Administration to Caltrans to apply the NEPA decision-making process to federal nexus projects.



Cara in Haarlem, Netherlands

**Effective presentations – luncheons:** We hit our target of providing eight luncheons for the year with the other four months dedicated to special event-type member activities. Luncheon topics covered the judicial perspective on CEQA, the California Green Building Code, a Sustainability Project in Haiti, the San Diego Water Conservation Ordinance, Caltrans NEPA Delegation, Atomic Archaeology and the Study of the Hanford Construction Camp, the Status of Seawater Desalination in California, and a Legislative Update on AEP’s involvement in State affairs. We continue to review the surveys our members complete at the end of the luncheons and strive to

provide informative and effective presentations in 2012.

**CEQA – proposed changes in guidelines:** Three CEQA workshops were held this year to cover the latest CEQA trends, legal and legislative updates, and a review of many notable 2010 cases. The advanced workshop was broken into two half-day events, which received mostly positive feedback.

**Membership Appreciation Event:** As a result of the input from the member survey and an increased budget, a tour of the Stone Brewery followed by an outdoor happy hour

*Continued on page 4*

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## MEET A MEMBER: SHARON TOLAND, USD STUDENT CHAPTER LIAISON

### How did you become an environmental professional?

I was introduced to CEQA through Wendy Worthey’s environmental analysis class at the University of San Diego. She suggested I try to start a student chapter of AEP at USD. Kelli Miller and I got the club going and started attending the monthly AEP luncheons and talking to professionals in the field. At one luncheon, I met Kim Howlett and gave him my resume. He offered me an internship at PBS&J (now Atkins), which led to a full-time position. I’ve been at Atkins for almost five years now.

### What do you enjoy most about your work?

The variety! No two projects are the same, so there is always something new to learn or figure out. I cannot believe how much I’ve learned about San Diego County in the last few years.

### What are some of the goals or projects the USD chapter is looking forward to in 2012?

Student leaders Sabina Baker and Emily Gardner are doing a great job keeping the club busy. They plan on hosting a variety of guest speakers and field trips to give student members a sampling of the many environmental careers available and give them an opportunity to ask questions and find out what these jobs entail. They are looking forward to planning another resume workshop this spring.

### What do you value most about your AEP membership?

I really enjoy going to AEP events and talking to other AEP members about their projects. Everyone has something interesting that they are working on. The mix of members is great. I like being able to catch up with clients, other CEQA consultants, and our subconsultants at the same



time. Also, after emailing back and forth with someone at another company, it’s great to finally put a face to the name!

### What are some of your favorite San Diego activities/escapes?

I love going hiking with my husband and our dog. We’re lucky to have so many different parks and trails so close. I love William Heise County Park. It’s so close, but it feels like an escape. It’s easy to camp for the weekend, hike, and pick up a Julian pie to take home. Dog beach in OB is a close second favorite. Lake Arrowhead is my local favorite escape. We’ve just started exploring the San Bernardino National Forest and its beautiful!

### What are some of your interests and hobbies?

I love running and try to always have a race or event that I’m training for. I love cooking and baking and I’m usually on a mission to figure out how to make a favorite dessert a little healthier for me. I’m also excited to finally start planning a Kauai honeymoon!

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## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

was scheduled. We also provided chartered transportation to and from Stone. The event was a tremendous success!

Serving as Chapter Treasurer, it is my responsibility to help determine if the benefits we desire to provide our members with are financially feasible.

We set our budget to provide better luncheons and member events at a cost greater to the Chapter knowing we had the reserves to do so. It only seemed logical considering the economic woes faced by San Diego the past few years and the effects incurred on our industry. Using the savings we had accumulated from

successful years past allowed Year 2011 to be a rewarding year for our members and the Chapter Board and we hope to continue these planning efforts into 2012.

*Cara Leone is a transportation planner at LLG, Engineers and has served as treasurer for the San Diego Chapter of AEP since October 2008.*



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE PROVIDED AT NOVEMBER LUNCHEON | BY MINDY FOGG

November's Luncheon featured a presentation from AEP Legislative Policy Director/Lobbyist, Allan Lind. Allan opened with an overview of AEP's Public Policy Program and how the Legislative Review Committee works on behalf of our interests. Additional detail on this program is also available online at <http://tinyurl.com/75nezyw>.

The heart of the presentation was to get us caught up on some of the latest legislative changes. Senate Bill 292, regarding the Los Angeles Stadium, has led to new statutes that establish expedited administrative and judicial review procedures for CEQA review of the proposed Convention Center Modernization and Farmer's Field Project located in the Central City planning area in downtown Los Angeles. Assembly Bill 900 is the "Jobs and Economic Improvement Through Environmental Leadership Act of 2011." AB 900 expands on the idea behind SB 292 and establishes expedited administrative and judicial review procedures for CEQA review of Environmental Leadership Development (ELD).

A third bill having perceptible effects on CEQA is Senate Bill 226, which exempts roof-top solar photovoltaic (PV) and hot water system projects from CEQA; limits the scope of CEQA review for urban infill projects; dictates that a project's GHG emissions alone shall not cause the project to be ineligible for a categorical exemption, and a number of other detailed provisions. A full summary of the legislative changes has been provided at [www.califaep.org](http://www.califaep.org).

Allan also gave us an overview of

the Enhanced CEQA Action Team (ECAT), a collaboration of AEP and the American Planning Association California Chapter to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the environmental review process. This team will likely be taking proposals forward in 2012, so it is more important than ever to stay involved with AEP, either by participating in

the state conference (Sacramento May 6-9) or by contacting our Legislative Committee Representative for San Diego, Betty Dehoney at [betty.dehoney@hdrinc.com](mailto:betty.dehoney@hdrinc.com).

*Mindy Fogg works in the County of San Diego's Department of Planning and Land Use at and serves as Vice President of Membership for the San Diego Chapter of AEP.*

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## MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2012 BOARD ELECTION RESULTS RELEASED

The following individuals were elected to the 2012 San Diego Chapter Board: President - Julie Wang, Vice President of Membership - Mindy Fogg, Co-Vice President of Programs - Vanessa Brice and Corinne Lytle Bonine, Chapter Director - Marilyn Pongeggi, Treasurer - Cara Leone, Newsletter Editor - Lisa Lind, Student Membership and Outreach Director - Emily Hart, and Secretary - Seth Torma. Congratulations to all and we look forward to a successful year in 2012!

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR 2012 STATE AEP AWARDS

With the local awards event behind us, we look forward to the state competition. Nominations are currently being accepted for the 2012 AEP Awards Program.

The deadline to submit a nomination is January 31, 2012. For detailed descriptions of each award category as well as detailed requirements for submitting a nomination, please visit <http://www.sandiegoaep.org/events.html>.

### NEXT LUNCHEON SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 19

Please join the AEP San Diego Chapter for a luncheon event at the Holiday Inn Mission Valley Stadium located at 3805 Murphy Canyon Road, San Diego. This month's luncheon will feature a presentation by Chris Gray from Fehr & Peers on the benefits of applying the mixed-use development (MXD) model to predict the traffic impacts of mixed-use development.

The luncheon will be held on Thursday, January 19 from 11:45 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Please RSVP by January 13 at <http://tinyurl.com/SDAEPJan2012Luncheon>.

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The Environmentor is published 11 months a year. Articles and other contributions are due by the 15th of the month and are welcome free of charge, but must be of particular interest to the membership. Preferred format for the submissions is Word via email to the Newsletter Editor at sdaepnews@gmail.com. Free job announcements (approximately 150 words) are published in the newsletter, space permitting, and posted at [www.sandiegoaep.org/prospects.html](http://www.sandiegoaep.org/prospects.html).

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**THANK YOU TO OUR NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS**

The San Diego Chapter of AEP has more than 300 active members – thank you to our new and returning members:

- |                    |                   |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Melissa Bal        | Cody Hooven       | Oscar Romo        |
| Laura Ball         | Erin Lannon       | Dan Root          |
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## CAMPUS CONNECTION



### EXPERIENCE IN PERU SPARKS CAREER | BY AUSTIN MELCHER

In a rural town of the Peruvian Andes called Huamachuco, 80 percent of the population lives on less than two U.S. dollars a day. Electrical transmissions are costly and intermittent, nighttime temperatures regularly dip below freezing, and hot water is an essential yet scarce resource.

These factors often create situations with adverse economic and health consequences for the residents, as well as the hospital of Huamachuco. Additionally, use of nonrenewable energy sources are also contributing to Peru's rising temperatures that are rapidly melting the mountainous glaciers. This great need, along with the incredible resilience, motivation, and ingenuity of the local people provided an opportunity to develop sustainable solutions to aid in resolving these issues.

As an undergraduate at Michigan State University, I had the privilege of applying the environmental principles I had learned in the classroom directly to the community through a study abroad experience.

Once there I assisted in the construction of three different solar water heater designs using local materials, tools, and labor and installed them in the local hospital. Through this process, I collaborated with local university students, entrepreneurs, and workers to ensure that the designs could be easily reproduced.

The positive effects continue to be felt throughout Huamachuco as they provide health benefits, cut economic costs, reduce GHG emissions, and support the local economy. Furthermore, this experience also positively affected my life, as it reaffirmed my passion and desire to work professionally in the environmental field while promoting sustainability both locally and globally.

As I continue on after graduation, I am constantly reminded of this life-changing experience that I have been fortunate enough to pursue as a profession.

*Austin Melcher joined DUDEK as a planning research assistant in October 2011.*

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