



# Nebraska Society of Professional Engineers

A state society of the National Society of Professional Engineers  
Eastern Chapter

Fall 2011

2011-2012

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### 6 Months Free

NSPE Membership applications may be obtained at

[www.nspenebraska.org](http://www.nspenebraska.org)

## Moving Westward

With the ever expanding suburbs, traffic keeps backing up as you move west. Douglas County's Dan Kutilek and Olsson Associates' Mike Piernicky presented the Q Street Widening Project at the September 27<sup>th</sup> NSPE meeting. Their presentation highlighted the projects key issues of funding, communication with the public, construction phasing, and tricky retaining wall construction. Of the \$8 million dollar project, the 5 retaining walls accounted for approximately 15% of the total cost.



Mike Piernicky, Olsson Associates – Presenting the traffic needs of the Q Street Project.

## Upcoming Events

**Tues., Nov 22<sup>rd</sup>: Chapter Mtg.**  
**Welcome New Registrants**  
**NUCA Presentation**

**Tues., Dec 20<sup>th</sup>: Joint IEEE/NSPE**  
**Fort Calhoun Plant Flooding**  
**Breakfast Meeting – 7:00am**

**Non-members welcome!!**

**Scott Conference Center**  
**6450 Pine Street**  
**11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. +/-**  
**PDHs available**

The use of Stone Strong walls in close proximity to a meandering channel resulted in some unique challenges for both the design team and the contractors.

## Membership Drive

Recruit a new paying member and receive \$50 from NSPE.

## ***Water, Water Everywhere!***

At the joint LOCATE/NSPE meeting held October 25<sup>th</sup>, Marty Grate –City of Omaha, and Dan Owens – Lamp Rynearson & Associates, presented on the summers Missouri River Flooding and various impacts to the local infrastructure. This was one of our best attended meetings.

Marty spoke of the multiple pumping stations installed along the City's boarder with the River. How the City forces built their own levee near the South Water Treatment Plant, and how they dealt with the lower level street flooding and sewer backups.



*Marty Grate, City of Omaha – Presenting how the City responded to the flooding.*



*Dan Owens, Lamp Rynearson & Assoc. – Presenting on Epply Airfield.*

Dan Owens presented on the Epply Airport flooding concerns. He discussed the many pumping stations and continual observations of the levee for sand boils and potential weak points.

Both spoke of the multiple engineering firms and contractors involved in the efforts and of the significant cost associated with this summer's event.

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## ***Special Thanks To 3M!***

The Eastern Chapter recently received a generous MathCounts donation of \$1,000 from 3M Valley. The Valley division of 3M has been a longtime supporter of our MathCounts competition and only through their generous donations are we able to put on such a great event. Thank you 3M Valley!

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## **MathCounts Date Set!**

Please join us for the 2012 Eastern Chapter MathCounts Event schedule for **February 18, 2011**. It will be held at the 72<sup>nd</sup> & Grover Ramada again this year and we look forward to your support in putting on the great event once more. Keep an eye out for the volunteer request.

## ***Member Highlights***

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**Kevin D. Hicks, P.E.** – Director Track Maintenance – Union Pacific Railroad

**Duties:** I lead a staff of engineers and technicians who are responsible for design and track maintenance standards, track maintenance procedures, vendor quality, and infrastructure condition assessment throughout Union Pacific's 23-state system. We also make recommendations, using our condition assessment information, on what capital upgrade projects are required each year to keep the railroad running safely and efficiently.

**Years at current company:** 18 years

**School(s) attended and year(s) of graduation(s):** BSCE University of Missouri – Rolla, 1993



### **How did you get into engineering?**

I was one of those kids in high school who enjoyed math and science, so I was naturally pushed toward engineering. Having grown up on a farm, I liked being outside getting my hands dirty, so I ended up in Civil Engineering. I have a family background in railroading, so I decided to continue that tradition and I ended up in Omaha at Union Pacific.

### **List career highlight(s):**

One of my biggest accomplishments was being involved in the design and construction of a huge capacity expansion project at Union Pacific in the late 1990's where we built several hundred miles of additional main line tracks between Kansas City and the Powder River Basin in Wyoming to support our coal business growth.

### **Interesting projects you have worked on or are currently working on?**

I am currently involved in a higher speed passenger rail project to upgrade tracks for 110 mph service between St. Louis and Chicago. Since this project was heavily promoted by the Obama administration, timelines are very important. My company normally funds our own infrastructure improvements, so it's been a learning experience working with the various governmental agencies that are involved in this project.

### **Interesting challenge you've had in your career:**

I love the fact that I work in a profession that allows me to work on projects all over the country every day. I've had the benefit of working in almost every state west of the Mississippi, even living in quite a few of them, which has given me the opportunity to learn about the people and practices of those places, and how they differ in subtle and not so subtle ways.

### **Is there anything else others might be interested in knowing about you?**

I am proud to be one of Omaha's biggest fans of the World Champion St. Louis Cardinals. Go Cards!

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