



Celebrating 125 years since our founding in 1887 and 40 years as a constituent society of the Engineering Institute of Canada



Email not displaying correctly?
[View it in your browser.](#)



Nous célébrons 125 années d'existence depuis notre création en 1887 et 40 années comme société membre de l'Institut canadien des ingénieurs

Jim Kells, PhD, PEng, FCSCE
President, Canadian Society for Civil Engineering
Email: Jim.Kells@usask.ca
or president@csce.ca
Tel: 306-966-5340
or 514-933-2634, ext 29

WELCOME

The dream of a white Christmas is certainly going to be true for those of us living in the prairies of Canada, and perhaps even for most of us across the breadth of this great land. In Saskatchewan, my home, we've had a somewhat remarkable snowfall to this point in the winter season, which has also been accompanied by a good dose of rather chilly weather. But in the midst of all this, there remains lots of good work and conversation about the challenges that are before us, not the least of which is that associated with our infrastructure.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Over the first weekend of December, the CSCE Board and others gathered in Montreal for two days of workshop and the Board's mid-term meeting. All in all, it was a productive weekend in a variety of ways. The trip to Montreal also gave me a brief opportunity to visit our National Office and to spend a few hours meeting with several of our staff members.

The workshop, which was coordinated by President-Elect Yves Cadotte and led by a professional facilitator, was focused on actions that can or should be attended by the Board and/or our staff at the National Office in support of our Vision 2020 plan and the associated three strategic directions. The discussion was lively and informative, and all in all exhibited the expression of a lot of encouraging energy.

A total of 15 members of our 16 member Board were able to attend the workshop and meeting, with the only missing member not attending due to illness. This excellent turnout speaks well to the engagement of all members of the Board in the work of the Society. Notable for me, too, was the excellent turnout of and wonderful participation by a good

number of our Young Professional members. Indeed, the workshop and Board meeting were well represented by the various spectrums of our Society's membership, including geographically, age and position within the Society. It was also great to see our staff members come out to participate in the workshop and evening dinner that followed; it is important that we get to connect names and faces to those with whom we often have many e-connections throughout the year. I offer a vote of appreciation to Lois Arkwright, Executive Assistant, for ensuring that we were all well taken care of throughout the weekend, and notably for the Saturday evening dinner at the Hotel Nelligan.

By way of brief comment about the state of our Society, I am pleased to note that we closed off our fiscal year 2011-12 as of September 30 with a small financial surplus in a year for which a significant deficit had been forecast from the outset. Our reserve funds are about on target, although slightly below the revised goal that was just established at the recent Board meeting. We also had what is perhaps a record year for student memberships, with more than 1800 students joining the Society, which was up about 50% over the previous year. We also experienced modest but important growth in our associate member category, which essentially comprises those members who are in the engineer-in-training phase of their career. Overall, our membership numbers remain a cause for some concern, but we are optimistic that improvements are taking place.

As this edition of the President's e-letter is the last of 2012, and arriving just before Christmas, I offer a couple of important year-end comments to our CSCE community.

First, I wish all of you an enjoyable Christmas in whatever manner you might celebrate this significant event in our North American culture. In particular, I hope that you will take some time to reconnect with family and friends, and to step back from the busyness of life ... to reflect, to ponder and to celebrate. I also wish each of you a very Happy New Year.

While I am well aware that we live in a rather complex and sometimes troubled world, I remind you that we truly do have much to be thankful for and much reason to rejoice. Moreover, our work in civil engineering knows no bounds with respect to opportunity in all that we do; let us move forward in this work with conviction and determination!

Second, I offer a big vote of thanks to those of you from among our membership who volunteer to take on some of the leadership roles that CSCE has to offer. With the obvious exception of our group of dedicated staff members in our national office, the work of the Society is done by an army of volunteers who give freely and generously of their time. I can assure you that the Society's senior administrative team is tremendously appreciative of your contributions in this regard. To quote Elizabeth Andrew, writer and spiritual leader, "Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart." So, thanks for volunteering; thanks for giving of your heart! For those that have yet to serve as one of our volunteers, please give it some thought in the year ahead; we would dearly appreciate having you on board!

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

As we head into the New Year, I am mindful of the work that we have to do on moving

forward with our Vision 2020 plan for the future and to embracing the many opportunities that lie before us. Along with this, it is my intention to make concerted efforts to visit some of our Regions and Sections in the few months remaining in my term as President. More details will follow in due course.

By now, you should have received notice of your membership renewal for 2013. As with this e-letter last month, I invite you to take prompt action on remitting your membership dues and to encourage other members to do the same.

VISION 2020: Our plans for the future

The three strategic directions that will guide and inform our decision-making over the next several years in realizing our mission and vision include:

- Strategic Direction #1: enhanced services to members (focus on improved programming for our members, including many of our traditional activities)
- Strategic Direction #2: growing with youth (focus on students and young professionals and their career development aspirations and needs)
- Strategic Direction #3: leadership in sustainable infrastructure (focus on the improvement of the planning, design, construction and maintenance of public infrastructure)

All members, and perhaps particularly those engaged in leading the Society, are encouraged to actively participate in helping us to take action to make the strategic directions come to life. It is the sum of all of our efforts that will result in meaningful impact on the vitality of our Society; please do not underestimate the importance of your contributions to our work!

WORKSHOPS / CONFERENCES

Our first course of 2012-13, CAN/CSA-S6-06 Design of Aluminum Bridges and Footbridges, which we organized in collaboration with the Aluminum Association of Canada, was offered in Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. A total of 146 engineers and students attended. Presented by Dr. Denis Beaulieu, a CSCE past president, it was extremely well received. The course will be offered in Ontario and the Maritimes at a later date.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...The first CSCE historic site recognition was of the 1859 Hamilton Pump House, which was plaqued in 1983. It is all that remains of the original water supply system designed by Thomas Coltrin Keefer for the City of Hamilton, Ontario.
