

# The Civilian

One Department, Two Great Programs: Civil and Mineral Engineering / Issue 11 / September 2011



## Downburst Strikes CAMP!

200km/hr Winds Damage Trees, Buildings

New Scholarships Announced

First Five Women in CIV Honoured with Named Awards

## welcome

It has been a very busy spring and summer, with 2 faculty searches underway, expansion of our staff cohort, renovation of the Lassonde Mining Building attic, development of a new CIV/MIN undergraduate materials laboratory, installation of a message board for students, staff and visitors, and preparation for the 2011-2012 academic year. I am very proud to say that the CIV/GEO/MIN attendance at Spring Reunion was outstanding, making up about 30% of the overall attendees! I was delighted to meet alumni from 1951 to very recent. It was suggested that now that we have almost completed the Civil Alumni Wall, we should start collecting class pictures from our GEO and MIN alumni (thanks for the suggestion, Marion). So, if you have your class composite picture, please send the original or a high resolution scan of it to us.

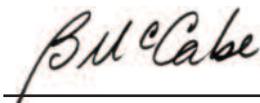
Due to our successful recruitment efforts, we have a record number of 2nd year undergraduate students in the Department with 30 and 150 expected in MIN and CIV respectively. Bursting at the seams, we anticipate running 3 sessions of survey camp next summer to handle this large group, so if any of you with surveying experience are willing to help us for 2 weeks in July/August 2012, let me know!

I will be speaking at a meeting of the Calgary Skule Alumni Chapter in November – I look forward to seeing all of you then. The Chapter was started by Ross Pitman (GEO7T4), whose contagious energy and enthusiasm has resulted in one of the most active alumni chapters anywhere.

We have been successful with many of our award nominations for alumni, staff, and friends of the Department. We send a heartfelt congratulates to these 2011 winners: Michael Butt, Nick Caccavella, Davis Doan, Anna Dunets Wills, Hank Edamura, Peter Halsall, Nancy Hill, Doug Hooton, Lloyd McCoomb, John MacDonald, Denis Mitchell, Dominic Pietropaolo, Nelly Pietropaolo, John Starkey, and Dawn Tattle. Our professors also received an incredible number of awards and recognitions this year; I am very proud to have them as colleagues. We will share these with you in the next issue.

I invite the classes of 2002 and 1987 to work with us to nominate someone from your class for the Engineering Early Career and Mid Career Awards respectively. We are also seeking nominations for the Engineering Hall of Distinction.

Remember to check out the Save the Date section of this issue. We have many events to appeal to our alumni and their families – I hope to see you at one soon.



Several trees crashed through the roof of Stewart Hall, exposing it to the elements.



**Brenda McCabe**  
PhD, PEng

Associate Professor & Chair  
Department of Civil Engineering



## Downburst Strikes CAMP!

By Prof. Kim Pressnail (CIV7T4)

On the afternoon of June 8, 2011, a violent thunderstorm unleashed what Environment Canada officials have called a ‘Downburst.’ Winds up to 200 km per hour scored a direct hit at the Gull Lake CAMP. Although no one was injured, buildings were damaged and many 100 year-old trees were destroyed. It will take years for the CAMP to recover.

The preceding news brief was presented to about 30 engineering students following their graduation ceremony at Convocation Hall on June 15.

The room was filled with students who were signing ‘The Promise to Future Generations.’

There was a collective gasp when photos of the tangled, twisted and gnarled trees were shown.

The storm cut two swaths through CAMP: one along the East Ridge and one along the West Ridge. The ‘wind event’ that followed the East Ridge sent three 24-inch diameter oak trees crashing onto the roof of Stewart Hall.

Three roof trusses were smashed along with roof sheathing, leaving Stewart Hall open to the elements.

Repair work is underway and is expected to cost around \$20,000.

Two trees also fell on the Schoolhouse, but by chance, landed directly on a truss so damage was minimal.

Except for damaged hydro-masts, no other buildings, including the must beloved bunkhouse were damaged.

The forest will recover, but it will be many years before the canopy of pine and hemlocks is restored.

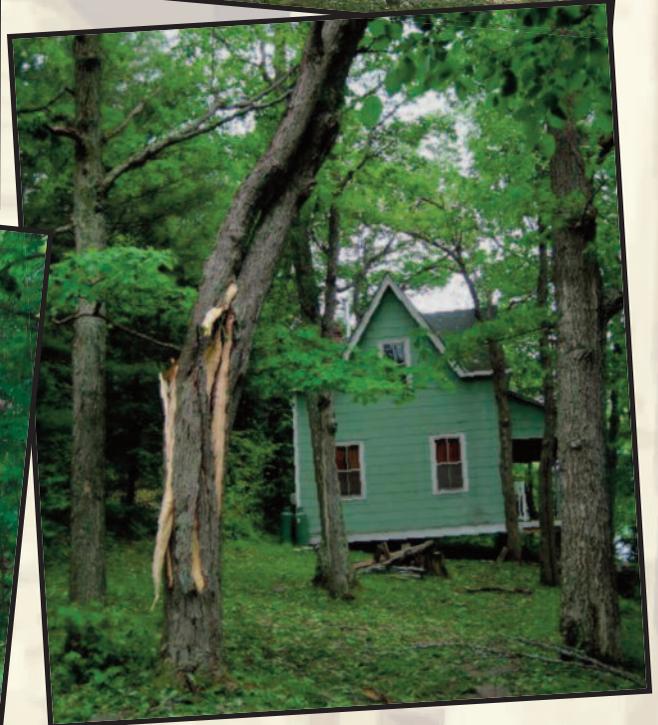
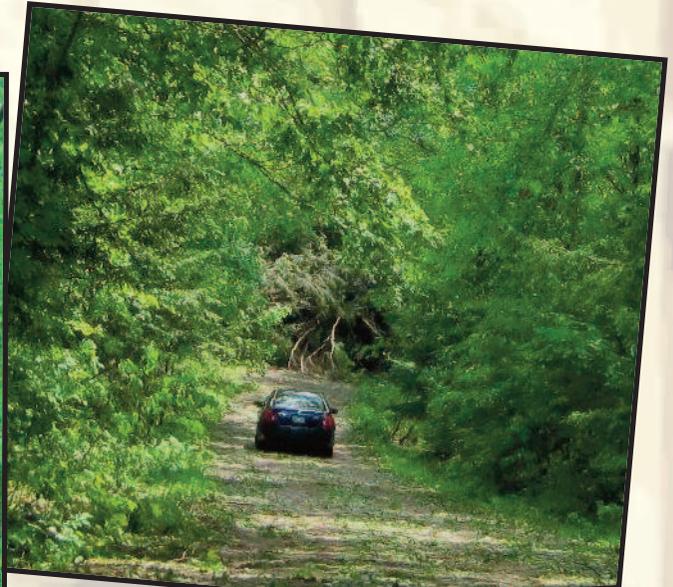
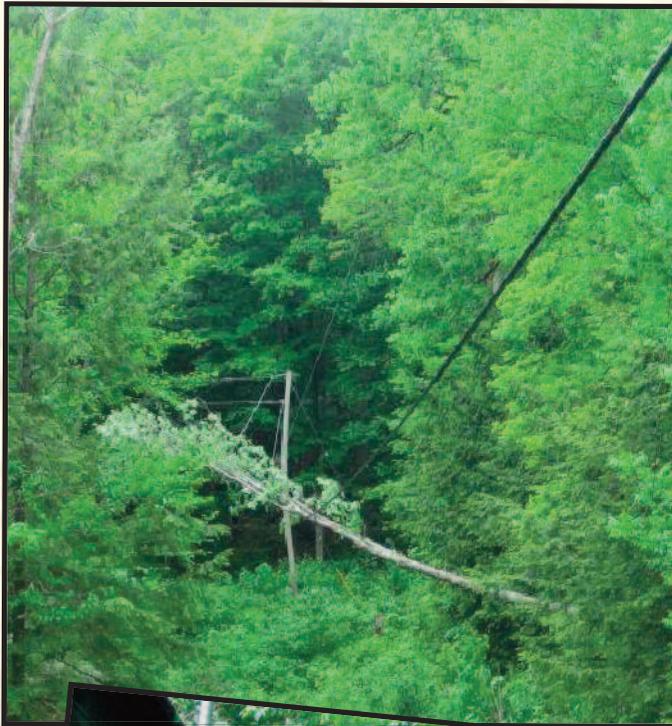
Fortunately, no one was in CAMP at the time of the storm.

Had this occurred during CAMP, this could have been a really sad note to write.

Following such an occurrence, one can’t help but recall the warnings issued by climatologists: global warming will lead to an increase in frequency and severity of such weather-related events.

On a bright note, the recently re-installed CAMP sign designed and built by the class of 9T9 still stands proudly. Engineered, and built to perfection. ◆





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## Survey CAMP Reunion

September 17th, 2011

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## CIV/GEO/MIN Career Fair

January 12th, 2012

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[www.civ.utoronto.ca](http://www.civ.utoronto.ca) for more information



## Civilian Online

Read more on our website  
[www.civ.utoronto.ca](http://www.civ.utoronto.ca)

New events and features  
added all month long

# New Scholarships Announced

## First Five Women in CIV Honoured

By Colin Anderson

When Sue Joel (CIV6T5) first decided that she wanted to come to the University of Toronto to study Civil Engineering, the engineers that were close to her balked. "Tell her not to go," they warned her parents. "We would never hire a woman, and nobody else will either."

That was in 1960. When Sue arrived, she was the only woman present – indeed, only 4 others had ever enrolled since Marcia Lamont Scott first broke the gender barrier in 1947.

Sue persisted as first year wore on, performing well academically and joining the men in extra-curricular activities such as Skule Nite, as well. Through a connection she made with Marlene Metzger (CIV6T0), another pioneering woman in engineering, she was hired on for her first summer at Frankel Steel.

Sue returned home at the end of first year to find another job offer waiting – this time from the same smug pair that had tried to dissuade her from taking up the profession in the first place. It was a favour to the family, a consolation of sorts.

She declined.

"It was more than satisfying to be able to say to them that I didn't need their job," Sue recalls. "I already had one at Frankel Steel."

46 years later, the Department of Civil Engineering is proud to announce the creation of 5 undergraduate scholarships in Civil Engineering.

The scholarships will honour the first 5 women to graduate from Civil Engineering at the University of Toronto, a milestone that took some 115 years to achieve.

While courses in Civil Engineering have been offered at the University of Toronto since the 1850s, it was not until 1947 that Marcia Lamont Scott finally rose to convocate with the men.

Today we honour the first five women in Civil Engineering with the following named scholarships for students entering second year:

**Marcia Lamont Scott (CIV4T7) Scholarship**

**Hanna Wejtko De Angelis (CIV6T0) Scholarship**

**Margaret Kende (CIV6T0) Scholarship**

**Marlene Metzger (CIV6T0) Scholarship**

**Sue Joel (CIV6T5) Scholarship**

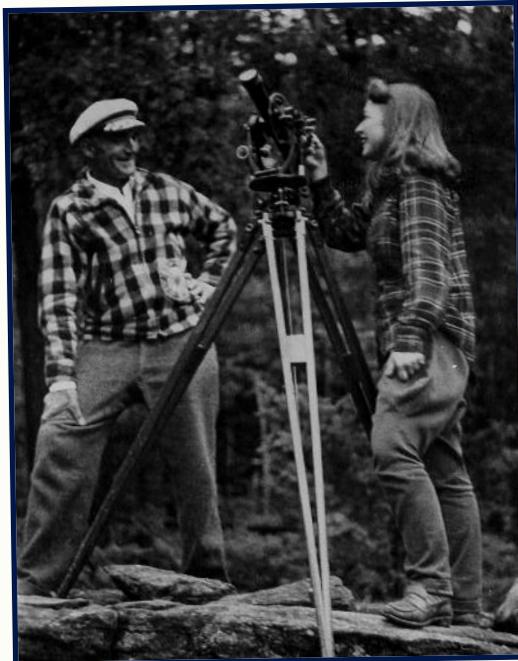


Photo: Marcia Lamont Scott ca. 1945, first female graduate of Civil Engineering

# Serving the Industry at PEO

The editors of this publication asked me to shed some light on the chapter system of the Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) and my new volunteer position as chair of the Willowdale/ Thornhill PEO Chapter. I was acclaimed as chair last March 15th. It is indeed an honour and privilege to serve my colleagues.

**By Nanda Lwin, MEPP, P.Eng.**

In an attempt to enhance membership outreach, the PEO initiated the chapter system in the early 1960's to strengthen its presence in various communities across Ontario.

Like the professional organizations or a political party with its riding associations, PEO depends on its system of local branches to gauge opinion as well as deliver benefits and services to its membership.

These include certificate presentations, seminar workshops, and tours of facilities pertaining to the engineering profession.

This is similar to the excellent work of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, which is specifically mandated to serve and voice the best interests of professional engineers in Ontario.

There are presently 36 chapters across the province, ranging from less than a hundred members to a few thousand.

Willowdale/Thornhill comprising

of the northern part of Toronto, and portions of York Region, ranks fifth in size, with over 4,000 members and counting (members include all professional engineers and engineering interns living in the area).

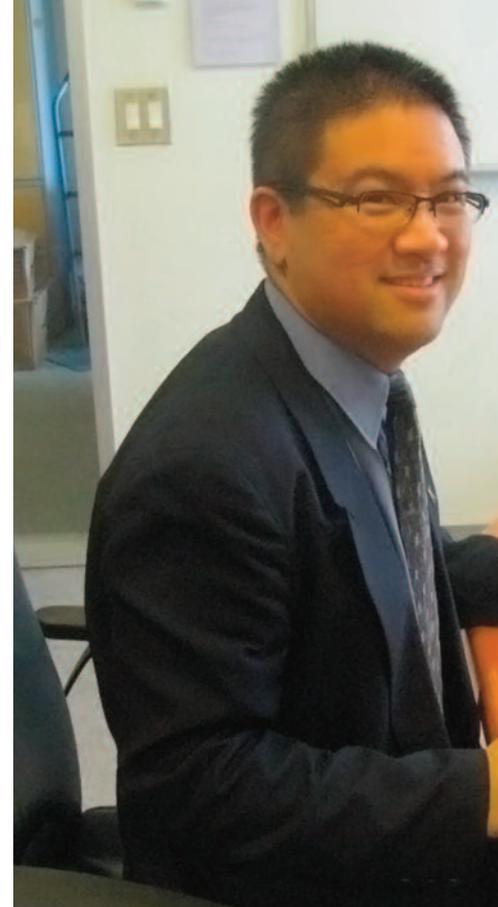
Every chapter is entitled to send a finite number of delegates to PEO provincial events such as the annual general meeting and various government-liaison initiatives.

Each chapter is governed by an all-volunteer executive of up to 20 members.

## THE PLATFORM

Being head of a volunteer organization, one has to be somewhat of a visionary. The position requires a vision and great ideas, and for me that was never in short supply.

I had been an executive of the chapter for six years before becoming Chair, including one year as Vice-Chair. I have had time to observe, think and formulate a plan upon the start of my term.



But that's not to say that it was easy.

I had two predecessors who laid out a strong foundation and implemented an ambitious program for the chapter.

As a result, some of initiatives I would have normally supported and seen through to their completion were already implemented and carried out fully by the time I started my term.



Photo: Nanda Lwin (CIV9T3)

- Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Willowdale/Thornhill.

- Revamp our seminars and workshops to reflect the changing engineering marketplace.

- Reach out to schools in the area – high schools, and Seneca College.

- Continue efforts to reach out to engineers-in-training and new Canadians.

### WHAT'S THE POSITION LIKE

Like any leadership position, serving as chair of the Willowdale/Thornhill PEO Chapter is time-consuming and challenging, but in the end, very rewarding.

At the time of writing, I've been in the position for five months, and I love every minute of it. It has been a learning experience that I will cherish; however, some really important lessons stand out.

Shortly after I became chair, an acquaintance told me that I can get my initiatives passed easily because I am the chair and being the chapter's chief executive, there will instantly be respect for me. All I have to do is explain my reasons for my plans.

How wrong that statement turned out to be.

Yes, there is respect, but don't think for a minute that getting my ideas passed the board is a synch. Although I work with wonderful volunteers who give up their time to serve on the executive, the job requires that I deal with a variety of personalities and opinions.

As such, it is common for me to deal with different viewpoints and competing interests. Much to my surprise, some of my proposals cause passionate debates during executive meetings at times. I view these passionate discussions as healthy and beneficial for the chapter as a whole.

However, consequently, I've spent some of my summer, quietly working behind the scenes lobbying my initiatives one executive at a time.

Overall, and in most cases, the position of chair isn't difficult, but it is time consuming. The position includes various tasks, such as overseeing several committees and various chapter events, preparing for meetings; and answering e-mails from various members.

As I write this message on a Saturday morning, I'm in a hotel room in downtown Vancouver on vacation, waiting to board a cruise ship to Alaska. However, I'm at work with PEO business planning for the fall.

Of course, the position of PEO chapter chair is not like my former job of structural engineer where one can deal with some complex issues that require a strong technical education and background. However, one does have to be a good manager, and have a real passion for the profession.

Nanda Lwin, MEPP, P.Eng., (CIV 9T3) is a professor of civil engineering technology at Seneca College and is serving his first term as chair of the Willowdale/Thornhill Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) Chapter. He was a journalist and is the author of several books on popular music. He can be reached at [nanda.lwin@wtpeo.org](mailto:nanda.lwin@wtpeo.org). 📧

On election day I hauled out a 55-point, six-page platform. Here are the main points:

- Attract more volunteers through an ambitious campaign of ads and notices.

- Improve the chapter's online presence through Facebook, Twitter, and an enhanced website

- Revamp the chapter's newsletter



Photo: A delegation of students recently visited Hong Kong to network with fellow engineering students about topical issues in Civil Engineering. Look for more in our next issue of The Civilian.

## Stay in Touch

[www.civ.utoronto.ca](http://www.civ.utoronto.ca)

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