



**California/Nevada Section
Bimonthly Update
November 2, 2009
Twenty-Third Edition**

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- * **5th National Decennial Irrigation Conference**
- * **CSU Fullerton Extension Courses**

- * **ASABE CA/NV Meeting – February 10, 2010 in Tulare, CA**

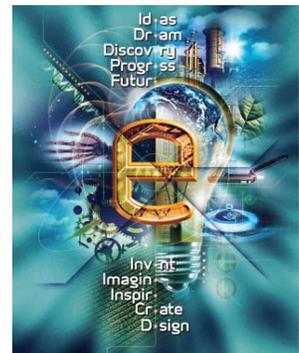


Mark your calendars now for our annual meeting in February in conjunction with the Tulare Farm Show/World Ag Expo (www.worldagexpo.com). If you are interested in becoming an officer of the Section, please contact Past Chair Victor Duraj at vduraj@ucdavis.edu. Those of you that will be hosting a booth at the Tulare Farm Show, let us know so we can look you up, advertise for you in the January Bimonthly Update, and/or drop on by during the show.

The nomination form for California/Nevada Section Engineer of the Year can be downloaded from www.asabecanv.org. Submissions must be postmarked by January 1, 2010. To request a hard copy of the form or for any Award related questions, please contact Richard Cavaletto at rcavalet@calpoly.edu or (805) 756-2383.

- * **E-Week – February 14- 20, 2010**

Visit <http://www.eweek.org/GetInvolved/GetInvolved.aspx> and/or contact Carolyn Jones at carolyn.jones@ca.usda.gov if you would like materials for a National Engineers' Week presentation. You could bring a student to work for a day, do a presentation in a grade school class, display E-Week posters in your workplace, participate in a career fair, wear Society logo apparel, or participate in existing E-Week activities. If you do participate in any of the above listed activities, please let us know about it for an upcoming CA/NV Update. We'd like to hear about it!



- * **Modesto Junior College ¼ Scale Tractor Team**



Responsibility, drive, and teamwork are three core qualities developed by the Modesto Junior College's Quarter Scale Tractor team. This year's team consists of twenty-four members, who dedicate a large portion of their Fridays to preparing for this competition. There are two student co-chairs: Trent Voss and Edward Freitas. Mr. Amador, the quarter scale instructor has always believed that Modesto Junior College is continuously striving to give students the opportunity to increase their practical experiences and apply new concepts through "hands-on"

learning. His quarter scale class does exactly this. The work is delegated each morning and the students eagerly start their tasks. The funds for this project come from community donations. Every year MJC is amazed to see all the continuous support that is received!

Being the only junior college in the competition, MJC works hard to establish a high reputation. Last year's team placed 9th overall and won the sportsmanship award. This year the team goal is to place in the top 5 overall. Trent Voss, a student co-chair states, "What makes this class so great is that we get to do the work. If we need help we ask. Otherwise, it is up to us." These students learn to rely on one another, work as a team, and, most of all, utilize their strengths to make the project a success. So, what will this year bring? That is a question that can only be answered this June in Peoria, Illinois.

*** In Memoriam, John B. Dobie**



John Birge Dobie was born November 17, 1915 at in Yakima, Washington. He died August 1, 2009 in Davis, California at the age of 93 years. John was the youngest of four children from a Scottish father and Nebraskan mother. John attended Yakima Junior College and transferred to Washington State College, Pullman, to study agricultural engineering - specializing in rural electrification, and graduating in 1938 with high honors. He was a member of Tau Beta Phi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Sigma Tau honorary societies. John married Lois Virginia Neal on December 14, 1939. John and Lois' daughter, Joanne Elizabeth was born in Pasco, Washington in 1942 and son, Paul, was born in Davis, California in 1948.

John's first job was with a farm equipment dealer followed in 1939 by work as a Rural Service Agent for the Pacific Power and Light Company. In 1942 John took the position with Washington State University, Pullman, as 'Rural Electric Investigator' for the Committee on the Relation of Electricity to Agriculture (C.R.E.A.). He worked on poultry lighting and cooling as well as in-barn hay drying. John concurrently completed his Master of Science degree in 1946. Shortly thereafter he took a similar position with the California C.R.E.A and he joined the Agricultural Engineering Department at UC Davis as a Specialist. He served on the Board of Directors of the UC Davis Faculty Club and was elected President of the Board from 1954 to 1956. In 1962 he earned tenure with the titles Agricultural Engineer in the Experiment Station and Lecturer -positions he held until he retired in 1980. In 1967 John succeeded James Tavernetti as Secretary of C.R.E.A. The Committee was composed of representatives from California electric utilities, farm organizations, state regulatory agencies, electrical companies, and the University of California. California power companies provided annual grants each year between 1924 and 1996. John completed a 50-year history of C.R.E.A. in 1975, which was followed by a five-year update in 1980.

At UC Davis John worked on in-barn hay drying, poultry water heating, mechanical egg gathering and handling, dust control, infrared energy for food dehydration and on the development of material for 4-H electric projects. Over time John's work became focused on the processing of livestock feeds - mainly forage. One project with Fred Jacob and Leroy Kleist effectively removed tramp iron (baling wire, discarded nails, etc. that cause gastritis if eaten by cattle) from chopped hay prior to feeding. The group earned an ASAE Superior Paper Award in 1954. Because of California's dry summer climate, pure stands of alfalfa, highly developed trade between hay producers and livestock operations as well as proximity to shipping ports, John's expertise and Davis' location became the world center for research on hay pelleting or cubing in the late 1950's. This provided the bases for John's two sabbatical leaves to England's National Institute of Agricultural Engineering in 1968 and the other in Hawaii in 1978. John was elected Fellow of ASAE in 1974.

In the 1970's John worked on methods for removing rice straw from the field for use as livestock feed and fuel rather than open-field burning of the straw with its adverse environmental consequences. This important project with the California Solid Waste Management Board occupied John's efforts into his retirement.

In retirement John actively pursued his favorite hobby, golf, with the El Macero Country Club. John was preceded in death by his wife, Lois, and son, Paul, a successful landscape and irrigation contractor. John's daughter, Joanne, recently retired as a Presbyterian Minister.

Prepared by J. R. Goss and W. J. Chancellor
October, 2009

*** 1-2-3-4-5 Member Highlight – Betsy Gerwig, PE, JM Lord, Inc.**

Betsy Gerwig has been a Registered Agricultural Engineer in North Carolina since 2003 and in California since 2007. Betsy has worked for JMLord, Inc. in California since 2006. She received a B.S. in Agricultural Engineering in 1995 from Clemson University in South Carolina and an M.S. in Biosystems Engineering in 1998 from Clemson University. She has had the opportunity to work in the government, research, and private consulting industries. Betsy has specialized in environmental compliance, design, and permitting for the confined animal industry. The variety of work opportunities has allowed her to see the industry from all sides. Her favorite part of the job so far has been the challenge of finding practical and economic solutions to environmental regulations applied to the animal industry over the past 10 years.

One - piece of advice I'd give new graduates:

1 - Take every opportunity to learn from those around you with more experience.

Two - things I learned on the job that I didn't learn in college:

1 - How to communicate with people who do not have a technical background. Not everyone thinks like an engineer.

2 - Be willing to ask for help or advice. There is almost always someone who is willing to help if you ask.

Three - concepts I learned in college that I use regularly:

1 - Double check your work.

2 - Be detailed in everything you produce.

3 - Find a way to work with project member or clients, no matter how difficult.

Four - favorite technical aspects of my job:

1 - Working with clients to understand regulations, design options, or record keeping options.

2 - Being able to work with a wide range of people in the agricultural industry, not just engineers.

3 - Developing new ways to address a problem or challenge.

4 - Working on designs to meeting both client needs and regulatory compliance requirements.

Five - places I've been or things I've seen in my career:

1 - Visited farms in Eastern North Carolina that were completely underwater after Hurricane Floyd.

2 - Surveying stream damage in NC Mountains after a hurricane dumped 18" of rain in about an hour.

3 - Evaluating irrigation systems for a wide variety of crops in the Santa Clara Valley, CA.

4 - Visiting the composting facility for all waste generated in Sevierville, TN, home of the Dollywood Theme Park.

5 - Seeing the difference in cotton production from the use of swine sludge as a fertilizer in Eastern NC.

*** ASABE at Ag Connect Expo – January 13- 15, 2010 in Florida**



As a key sponsor of Ag Connect Expo, ASABE will be an integral participant in the new global trade show debuting January 13-15, 2010 in Orlando, Florida at the Orange County Convention Center. ASABE's annual AE50

"innovation" awards will be announced at the event, and the AE50 award-winning products will be spotlighted at the show. ASABE will also hold its annual Agricultural Equipment Technology Conference (AETC) in conjunction with Ag Connect Expo. AETC takes place January 10-13.

"ASABE, its AE50 awards, and Ag Connect Expo are all about cutting-edge innovation for productivity in agriculture," said Charlie O'Brien, vice president of agricultural services for the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM). "Ag Connect Expo is a great context in which to recognize the product engineers who are making such significant contributions to dynamic efficiencies and to the future of agriculture around the world." AEM, show owner and producer, is pleased to have a long history of cooperation with ASABE and with ASABE's support of the show. "Ag Connect Expo will provide access to the latest innovations, products, services, and technology in agriculture, and ASABE's emphasis on innovation and excellence echoes the show's focus," O'Brien added.

For more information on attending Ag Connect Expo 2010, go online to www.agconnect.com.

*** 5th National Decennial Irrigation Conference**

The 5th National Decennial Irrigation Conference abstract submission deadline is October 30. This conference is scheduled December 5-8 in Phoenix, Arizona and will be held in conjunction with the Irrigation Association Show 2010. Learn more.

*** CSU Fullerton Extension Courses**

CSU Fullerton hosts extension courses in Pharmaceutical Engineering, Industrial Controls Technology, and Green/Sustainable Building Practices. Please visit their website at <http://www.csufextension.org/Classes/Certificate/> for more information.

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- For previous editions of the Update, please visit www.asabecanv.org.
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