

The Lobby

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A newsletter for the students, faculty, and staff of the Mechanical Engineering Department at the University of Wisconsin – Madison.



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Fall Officer Retreat: Welcome to Wausau

By Tom Pocrnich

Vice Chair

Each academic year, ASME kicks things off with the fall officer retreat. Retreat location is constantly in flux, and choice of venue is an adventure in itself. Fall 2011 was no different. A location eluded the group until our primary remote consultant and co-founder of the semi-popular term “browndog,” Nick Malahy, stepped forward

to offer his lush Wausau bachelor pad for use of the group. There was no hesitation in locking in the location.

We arrived to a quaint apartment complex, characteristic to the functional styling of the American heartland. As Malahy himself would likely put it, “you don’t need a lot of bells and whistles, just a place to grow your beard and get out of the cold.” He stays true to this outlook and doesn’t even own a television. The air was a little thick in the early proceedings, due in part to the

inevitable new officer apprehension, as well as the extremely high room temperature. In accommodation, windows were opened, both literally, as well as in the ASME spirit of welcoming new initiates.

Undoubtedly, the brainpower in the room was at its highest historical level. If not because of the per capita intelligence, it was high due to the sheer number of people we packed in there. The collective brainpower was drawn upon for business proceedings, where many ambitious and novel ideas were presented. It was then determined that too many intelligent ideas were being entertained, so we decided to entertain some other activities. We decided to dumb things down a bit.

Most notably, the home apartment contender, Nick Malahy, put on a clinic in the traditional ASME bite-the-bag competition. While Nick does not boast a TV in his Wausau dwelling, he does embrace a two bedroom floor plan; twice as much as a real northern man needs. He furnished the extra space with dust gathering dumbbells, and unfulfilled fitness goals. Or so I thought... His display of controlled contortion rivaled that of legendary bag biter Eric Mueller. We may never find out what would happen if Jordan and LeBron went one on one, but we can still hope for a head to head Mueller vs. Malahy bag biting extravaganza. The surprisingly limber Eric is currently out of the country, but only one king can reign upon his return.

Due to darkness and residential concerns, some competitions were left out of the proceedings this year, including: the footrace "straight up", and pants-on-the-ground dance-off. We are confident that these traditions will resurface in future events.

Morning came early to the ASMEers at this particular retreat. Though maybe they should, the badger football team does not suspend kickoff until the ASME contingent arrives. The officer core was roused from slumber early, and forced to adjust their compasses back to Madison for Saturday's game. The group recounted the night's proceedings over bagels and cream cheese, as is tradition. We fondly bid adieu to Nick's apartment. We left with memories of the gander mountain inspired art, late night French toast a-la-Greg, and a little bit less dignity. As usual, the ASME fall retreat was an effective team builder. It set the stage for another successful semester, and helped to forge new friendships, and reinforce old. Let us all ensure that ASME officer retreats will continue to be relentlessly awesome events.

Fall Semester Outreach

By Matt Weinheimer
Outreach Chair

Over the course of the fall semester, ASME has been privileged enough to volunteer with various organizations throughout the community. These experiences have been extremely rewarding, not only for those that we get to help, but also for those who give up their time to serve others. During Halloween, ASME participated in two different events, both of which allowed us to go out and directly interact with community members. On October 22nd, a number of volunteers walked over to the Henry Vilas Zoo, where we participated in their Halloween at the Zoo event. This event allows children from throughout the community to trick or treat throughout the zoo itself, which is one of their biggest events of the year.

ASME volunteers also got the chance to trick or treat for themselves during the annual Trick or Treat for Canned Goods food drive sponsored by the UW College of Engineering. After posting flyers around our assigned neighborhood, a number of volunteers went out and collected nonperishable food items from those willing enough to donate. After all was said and done, we had collected over 750 lbs of food to be donated to the River Food Pantry. We also made two trips to the food pantry last semester, where volunteers got the chance

to actively assist in the running of this pantry. Over the course of the night, volunteers were able to serve a hot meal and assist with their “grocery store.” No matter the opportunity, volunteering within the community is always a rewarding experience.

Sudoku Puzzle (answers on page 5)

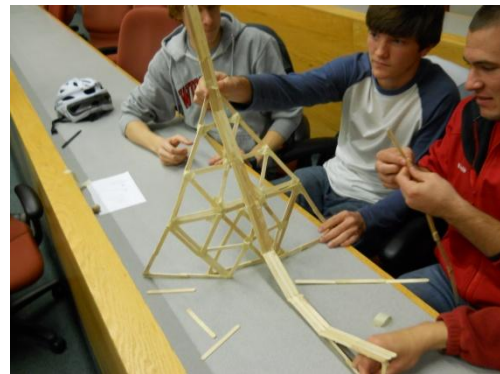
3			7	9			6	
	5				6			
4	6	9			5	3	1	
			5	6			4	1
6	1			7	8			
	2	1	9			6	3	8
			6				2	
	3			1	2			5

**Buy an ASME T-Shirt during
today’s meeting or during
ASME office hours!**

Fall Banquet

By Mark Gavin
Banquet Chair

ASME's fall banquet this year was a great success! This event, while geared towards new members, is one of many great traditions for all of ASME. The fall banquet is an opportunity for new members to become officially initiated into the student organization, and also a way for current ASME members to talk with them. Banquets are a great way for ASME members and UW-Madison faculty to meet and participate in lively conversation. With the comfort of cake and punch everyone gathered while Professor Pfefferkorn gave us great insight as to what it means to be an engineer with his talk on "ethics". All-in-all it was a successful event; not only bringing ASME members closer together, but also welcoming new students into the rewarding program that is ASME.



Ball Launch Design Competition at a General Meeting



Mario Kart at the ASME Study Break Night

Student Design Competition Update

By Greg Smetana

Contest Co-Chair

The UW-Madison ASME Chapter has had a long history of competing in the ASME Spring Conference Design Contest. In the recent past we have built a machine that imitated a Mars land rover that needed to pick up rocks of various shapes and sizes. A few years earlier, a bicycle that purified water as you pedaled it, and just last year, a device that harnessed energy from falling water to propel a small car.

This year we have been tasked with designing four devices to complete an “Energy Relay” in the shortest period of time. Each device must contain an on-board energy source and trigger the motion of the next device after traveling a distance of 3 meters. The scoring formula is heavily weighted to favor teams that assemble a relay using devices powered by different energy sources.

Although, the Spring Conference in Ohio is not until the end of March, the design team has made significant progress this semester, and the project has proved to be a great independent learning experience and a way to apply concepts we have learned in the classroom. In one of our first brainstorming meetings, we agreed that the most challenging part of the competition would be the triggering the next device in the relay. After considering many possible options, we designed and constructed an effective solution in a laser trip-wire made out of a photo-resistor and transistor switch.

Unfortunately, the team has been troubled this semester by poor communication and scheduling, which Jackson and I aim to fix this spring. This semester, we will hold design team meetings after ASME general meetings to get more ASME members involved in the project as we get serious in our preparation for the upcoming Spring Conference

Answer to Sudoku Puzzle

5	7	4	2	1	8	9	3	6
9	2	1	7	3	9	8	4	5
8	3	6	4	5	6	1	2	7
3	6	2	8	7	4	5	1	9
6	5	7	3	2	1	4	9	8
1	4	8	9	6	5	3	7	2
7	1	3	5	8	2	9	6	4
2	8	9	6	4	3	7	5	1
4	6	5	1	9	7	2	8	3

Industry Tours: Design Concepts and Skana Aluminum

By Michael Szewczyk and Adam Ringstad
Industrial Relations

Every semester, the ASME chapter at UW-Madison offers a wide variety of opportunities for its members. The tours are always some of the best and most fun events of the year. This past fall semester, ASME had two industry tours (Design Concepts in Madison and Skana Aluminum in Manitowoc) and a tour of Capital Brewery. Besides being educational and fun networking opportunities, the tours are always free to our members.

Our first tour of the semester was a Madison-based consulting and design firm named Design Concepts. If you have never heard of them, they are probably best explained through this excerpt taken from their website (www.design-concepts.com): “We’re innovation experts in design and strategy. We help companies develop products and services that build brands and business. We uncover needs, find opportunities and design solutions that build business success for our clients. Our solutions build powerful connections between products and the people who use them. We make it safer for an infant to receive life-saving medication. We make it faster for a patient to heal a broken bone. We make it possible for world-class or weekend athletes to play at the top of their game. We make it easier to shine the spotlight center stage on Broadway.” As

descriptive as that excerpt was, many of the members did not know exactly what to expect when they entered Design Concept’s office building. The first few steps look like a modern office, but as you pass the main desk it quickly changes. The main walkway has displays of a number of their previous products. There is everything from a motorcycle, baseball helmets, wireless farming equipment, medical devices and many more. We met the President of the company, Dave Franchino, who gave us an interactive presentation that showed what work they had done and the methods they use to come up with these great products. Because Design Concepts is a consultancy, they do not manufacture their products. However, they have an extensive and advanced prototyping shop that allows them to create incredibly accurate physical models of the product. This is very important in design because there are many real-world problems that you would miss if you based all your decisions on CAD models. After the tour, we were given the opportunity to ask questions and then stayed in the main hallway for a while checking out the all the interesting products on display. Everyone that attended really enjoyed the tour and, because Design Concepts is in Madison, we were back on campus before 4:30 pm.

Skana Aluminum is a fairly new company that just started in the last couple years and they were very excited to have us come visit their plant in Manitowoc, WI. It was two and a half hour drive so we left in a

bus from Madison around 9 am. Upon getting there, we were introduced to multiple employees running and setting up the tour. After some pizza and introductions, we got to really see aluminum rolling from an engineering perspective. The tour was geared towards engineering which we prefer obviously because the people guiding the tour were engineers. We left around 2 pm or so and got into Madison just before 5 pm. All in all, it was a great way to spend a Friday afternoon and get out of the classroom for a little bit. Our thanks goes out to Steve Gallimore from Skana Aluminum who helped make this tour possible.

The tour started off with a bus ride from ECB to Capital Brewery on the west side of Madison. To many, this was the most exciting tour of the semester because of a tangible item (or reward) that was received upon completion of the tour. This reward was in the form of beer samples. And not just any beer. I'm talking about the classic Island Wheat and other great seasonal beers that Capital Brewery brews and offers to its customers. Samples aside, it was a great tour being able to see how the process of making beer goes from raw material (wheat, barley, hops, water, yeast) to finished product. From a mechanical engineering standpoint, we were able to see pipe systems, pressure tanks, and the influx of liquids. It was a great tour and we were able to meet people that truly had great passion for the products they

offered by upholding the ancient tradition of fermentation.

ASME truly enjoys offering great opportunities to members, so, if there is any company that you would like to learn more about, please let an ASME officer know and we will try to make that opportunity available to you and the rest of the ASME UW-Madison members.

Thank you to our Fall 2011 Sponsors!



General Mills



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Address all correspondence to the editor:

UW-ASME
Room 1082 ECB
1550 Engineering Dr.
Madison, WI 53706

Chair Adriana Scheiner
Editor Nate Grev
Contributors Tom Pocrnich
Matt Weinheimer
Mark Gavin
Greg Smetana
Pat Remington
Michael Szewczyk
Adam Ringstad

Chair
Adriana Scheiner

Vice Chair
Tom Pocrnich

Secretary
Zach Gaertner

Treasurer
Michael Kaupla

Membership
Mark Ericson

Academic
Trent Thomas

Fundraising
Nawaf Al-Baghly

Conference
Allison Mahvi

Polygon Rep
Kristine Engel

Contests
Greg Smetana
Jackson Cryns

Publicity
Nate Grev



The University of Wisconsin-Madison
Chapter of the American Society of
Mechanical Engineers

Phone: 608-262-2973
Fax: 608-265-2316
asme@cae.wisc.edu
www.engr.wisc.edu/studentorgs/asme

Banquet
Mark Gavin

Industrial Relations
Michael Szewczyk
Adam Ringstad

Outreach
Matt Weinheimer

Regional Liaison
Jeff Albrecht

Social
Mitch Martinez

Programming
Ryan Finn

Historian
Patrick Remington

Webmaster
Greg Hanson

Undergrad Reps
Shannon Cox
Albert Gnadt

Faculty Advisor
Dr. Jay Samuel