

WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT THEM?



Jennifer Coombes
Editor

THIS ISSUE WILL be my second to focus on volunteering. You might ask why we're covering this subject again. The answer is simple: PEO would cease to exist as we know it without the dedication of hundreds of engineers and engineering interns, over 800 in fact, who are willing to give back to their profession in big and small ways.

Whether these dedicated people are working at the committee or chapter level, have contributed five hours or 5000, are just starting out or are decades along in their engineering careers, they all play an important role in making the PEO live hum along.

They have another thing in common: they're deserving of a huge pat on the back. Despite PEO's programs to honour volunteers, there are far fewer awards available than engineers who deserve them.

We start by exploring the importance of volunteering and succession planning to the future of PEO (p. 37) and move on to the structure of our volunteer organization and where to start if you'd like to join the legion already at work in PEO's chapters and on committees, task forces and council (p. 41). Finally, we couldn't look at a topic like this without going to some of the volunteers themselves and asking why they give their time so generously (p. 46). The answers vary with the individual, of course, but one message stands out. These people clearly love their profession and want the public, especially the younger variety, to understand and appreciate what engineers do.

On another note, this spring is proving to be an especially busy time at PEO. For instance, council is taking advantage of the Ontario government's Open for Business initiative and has just put the finishing

touches on over 20 proposed changes to the act, including a proposal to remove the controversial industrial exception (p. 27). PEO's province-wide mentoring program is launching as a pilot this summer through five Toronto-area chapters (p. 12). Engineers Without Borders has teamed up with PEO to work together on addressing the root causes of poverty in Africa (p. 28). And, we're one step closer to making PEO's new building the centre for engineering in the province with the arrival of the Advanced Design and Manufacturing Institute, a master's-level engineering program offered jointly by five Ontario universities (p. 10).

This issue, we also reveal the results of PEO's 2010 elections (p. 8) and introduce you to your new council (p. 20), I should add that this introduction is more special than usual. When Diane Freeman, P.Eng., was sworn in as PEO president at the annual general meeting May 8 (p. 9) she made history, marking the first time in the regulator's 88 years that women have held the post two terms in a row.

Well done, Diane! Σ

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