

SOME VERY INVENTIVE ENGINEERS



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Editor

IT'S LAUGHABLE NOW. But, if legend has it, Charles Duell of the United States Patent and Trademark Office was dead serious when he said in 1899 that, "Everything that can be invented has been invented."

Well, it looks like somebody forgot to tell P.Engs Joseph Sieber, Ed Waller, Deborah Fels, and the other engineers and engineering interns whose inventive work we highlight this issue (p. 40). All have parlayed their frisky neurons into ingenious discoveries that have the potential to change life as we know it—among them, a system that can harvest energy from ocean waves, a tissue engineering breakthrough that could one day completely cure people who have suffered heart attacks, and a special chair that allows the deaf and hard of hearing to experience music.

Our innovations issue wouldn't be complete without a look at one of the granddaddies of all Canadian inventions—the St. Lawrence Seaway—which this year turns 50 (p. 26). Highway H₂O, as it's called by seaway operators, stretches 3700 kilometres from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes and, since 1959, has seen billions of tonnes of cargo transported through its waters.

But even with a masterpiece of engineering like this, there is always room for improvement. As we speak, the seaway is undergoing some innovative upgrades that will not only ensure its viability over the next several decades and beyond, but also improve its safety. Who would have thought ships could be moored using giant suction cups?

On a completely different note, two of our sister regulators, OIQ and APEGBC, are well on their way to addressing the issue of professional development for their members (p. 12).

OIQ, which has recently put together a professional development guideline, doesn't require its members to enroll in a particular program, but does hope to make its engineers more aware of the need to upgrade their skills.

APEGBC currently has voluntary continuing professional development in place and, with an eye to the future, has plans to eventually develop a mandatory program.

Professional development remains top of mind for our sitting president, Catherine Karakatsanis, P.Eng., who has made developing such a program for PEO one of the goals of her term.

Don't file this issue without reading about the spectacular accomplishments of our 2009 Ontario Professional Engineers Awards recipients (p. 7). These 16 outstanding engineers, many of whom are no strangers to innovation themselves, will receive their awards at a gala celebration November 21 at the Toronto Congress Centre. Ticket information is available at www.ospe.on.ca. Σ