



## **Communications Committee: plenty of projects, need more people ...**

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Communications Committee Co-Chairs

The Communications Committee oversees AEG's various communications media, including our technical publications and digital platforms. We are responsible for maintaining their quality, and advising the officers and Board of Directors how they may be improved or expanded to enhance the exchange of information between the Association and its members, among members, with the wider scientific and technical community, and with the public. In addition to managing our existing media, the committee has been moving forward on some new projects ensuing from the Needs Assessment surveys, as well as dealing with unforeseen challenges caused by the change in Association administration and headquarters geography.

Communication was the focus of the Needs Assessment Strategic Area #4 (sounds like a battle zone), and several new projects were assigned to this committee. Nate Saraceno led the effort to develop a social media strategy for AEG, which was accepted in outline at the board meeting in Scottsdale; further plans and recommendations will be considered at the mid-year meeting in April. In order to build a catalogue of AEG field-trip guidebooks that could be made more broadly available, we are conducting an inventory of past guides, from sections on up to annual meetings, in print (formal or informal), digital files, CDs, whatever. Sarah Kalika developed a Google form for the inventory, and sent it in January to section chairs and trip coordinators; we encourage any other members with information on field guides (especially the old and obscure) to participate ([goo.gl/forms/w6Tqq62M6h](http://goo.gl/forms/w6Tqq62M6h)). Our aim is to scan the print materials into digital form, and make them all available to members and others; ultimate media, prices and distribution system still to be decided.

A second NA #4 assignment was to conduct a survey regarding AEG's weekly email newsletter. The *Insider* was launched in early 2013, too new to be evaluated previously, so we are formulating a set of questions to determine reader consumption rates, satisfaction with its content, how often links to stories and sponsors are followed, etc. The survey will hit the digital streets this spring (as soon as we figure out the functions of our new web platform), and links will be emailed to all *Insider* subscribers; please participate – your opinions count!

Other NA #4 projects are slated a few months out, including one to revise AEG's general communications plan. The current version of the communications manual (2005) contains the plan, media kit, style guides and templates, with information ranging from lists of officers and HQ address, to official logos and typefaces, and much more. It's time for an update.

Meanwhile, the committee continues to manage our publications and digital outlets. *AEG News* reaches your hands (for us luddites) or some e-device thanks to the work of Anna Saindon and Andie Ptak. Joe Krupansky has accepted a *Cities of the World* paper on the geology of the Pittsburgh area, now in final review, to be available before the annual meeting there in September. Our flagship technical journal, *Environmental & Engineering Geoscience*, is available through the website; Abdul Shakoor and the editorial board would like to expand to six issues per year. We are even trying to revise the article about AEG on *Wikipedia*.

So keep sending us your news, your pictures, your field-trip reports, and your scientific papers ([news@aegweb.org](mailto:news@aegweb.org) for the *News*; [enews@aegweb.org](mailto:enews@aegweb.org) for the *Insider*; the editors for *E&EG*). And if you want to get involved in Association communications, please contact us (see [www.aegweb.org/?page=OperationalComms](http://www.aegweb.org/?page=OperationalComms) ). Like almost everything in AEG, we exist and function by the grace of volunteers, and can always find use for more. Anna has plotted a glide-path out of the *News* editor's chair (mixing metaphors) in the next year; and we are planning to rotate out someday as well ... you could be wielding the *vast* powers of co-director of communications someday soon!