



NEWSLETTER

CENTRAL NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS

December 2005

Our President's Voice –

I suspect that most of us would characterize ourselves as honest. Sure we may tell a white lie now and then maybe put a spin on our lives, but we don't consider ourselves as liars. But how truthful are we when it comes to our jobs. When our boss or a client or even a colleague asks us how a project is going do we tell the truth or do we provide a positive shade of the truth? Do we talk about what really is happening or do we focus on the good stuff? For that matter how often do our bosses, clients, or colleagues really want to hear the truth. To tell them the truth may force them to deal with a problem and be honest themselves.

A recent benzene spill in China contaminated a river and forced the shut down of a city water supply for five days. At first the government officials claimed that the supply shutdown was for maintenance purposes and there was no contamination. They reportedly feared that they would get in trouble with their bosses if they told them the truth. I have worked with clients who don't want to hear the truth and if you tell the truth they would likely fire you. So I bend the truth.

How many failed case studies are presented at conferences? Is everyone else really that successful? With all the successful site remediations being presented it is a wonder that most of the contaminated sites in this country have not been cleaned up. Or is the truth being

modified to make the presenter look good. And are clients really going to select a proposal that is honest and discusses all of the limitations to remediation or will they select the proposal that promises success? So the consultant spins the truth and the client willing accepts the spin because it is much more pleasant than dealing with the truth about their site.

When you say hi to a colleague as you pass in the hall and casually ask how they are doing, how often do they tell you the truth? Do they tell you about their personal problems or the stress at work or do they say fine and continue on their way. And if they did answer honestly, would that not put you in a bind. You would have to actually respond to person instead of continue with the casual hello. You would have to make a decision to get involved or not.

So where am I going with this? Well it seems that we are caught between a rock and a hard place. If we are not honest then we risk violating our personal values and potentially dealing with a bigger problem later. If we are honest we risk getting fired or at least face having to cope with an unpleasant situation. It is not an easy choice. For that matter couldn't we place some of the blame for this situation on our bosses or clients? After all do they really encourage you to be honest or do they discourage honesty by punish problems. Being honest and out of work is a real discouragement to honesty.



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Finally, we should remember that our professional registrations, our employers, and laws have requirements for honesty and the truth.

I am sure that I will continue to bend the truth and put spins on problems. I will also bite the bullet and deal honestly with problems and mistakes and tell the truth to my boss, clients, and colleagues. I don't have the answer, but this is an issue that we should consider this issue and periodically realign our behavior to be consistent with our personal values and the expectations of our colleagues, clients and society.

Life is not black and white and answers are not simple. If we accept that for our selves and for others then honesty may come more easily.

Guy Swenson
President

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Calendar

December 2005	No CNYAPG Monthly Dinner Meeting,
January 18, 2006	HMPGA Monthly Meeting - John W. Delano, Ph.D. (The University at Albany): "Origin of sustainable life on Earth, and its prospects elsewhere: A geologist's perspective" Calaway Grill, Albany
January 18, 2006	Buffalo Association of Professional Geologists Monthly Meeting (http://www.bapg.org/)
January 19, 2006	CNYAPG Monthly Meeting – Speaker and location to be announced.
April 20, 2006	CNYAPG Monthly Meeting - Bill Kappel of USGS

Future programming – CNYAPG is lining up some great programs for 2005-2006. If you know of someone who might be willing to be a speaker at one of our programs, please contact Joel Parratt jparratt@pwinc.com 437-1429 or Guy Swenson (swensoga@obg.com 437-6100).

Field Reconnaissance of the Tully Valley - Bill Kappel (US Geological Survey) has a theory that a hydraulic connection between surface water and ground water in the Tully Valley drives the Tully Mudboil activity. To further evaluate this thesis he is looking for help in conducting a reconnaissance of the Tully Valley area to look for fractures, loosing streams and other surface/ground water interaction zones. He does not have a date for this field exercise, but if you are interested in joining him for this reconnaissance please contact him at (607) 266-0217 ext. 3013 or by e-mail at wkappel@usgs.gov.



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Membership news – Membership renewal is due in January 2006. To become a new member, simply complete the membership form, which is available on our website at www.cnyapg.org! Membership is only \$25 per year and all money received is used in support of our organization.

If you have questions, ideas, or concerns about CNYAPG please do not hesitate to contact us.

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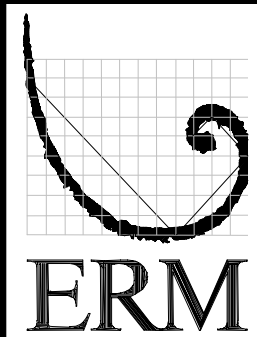
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CNYAPG would like to thank Severn Trent and GES for sponsoring student participation at the September and November Monthly Meetings.

CNYAPG sponsor's ad will be posted in each issue of the CNYAPG Newsletter. For more information regarding becoming a CNYAPG sponsor, please contact Guy Swenson, President (315.437-6100) or swensoga@obg.com

OSHA Classes at Onondaga Community College – The OSHA 40-hour class will be offered during the Winter Session at OCC, from Jan 9th through the 13th. Participants will receive the 40-hour OSHA certificate as well as 3 credits from OCC. The cost will be approximately \$350 and registration begins Nov 7th. Go to www.sunyocc.edu for more information. OCC will also be offering the 8-hour OSHA Refresher course on Jan 17th for a cost of \$100.