**Membership Development**

**4.6** **Life Member Forum – Los Angeles Section**

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| **1. Section, Branch** | Los Angeles Section |  |
| **2. Section/Branch Size** | Very Large |  |
| **3. Project Contact** |  | |
| Name | William Lawson | |
| Phone Number | (949) 494-1229 | |
| Email | williamlawsonpe@gmail.com | |
| **4. Project Category** | Membership Development | |
| **5. Project Description** | Life Member Involvement | |
| **6. The Process**  (What you did, When and How)  1The material in this Best Practices Guide section was originally an excerpt from *Guidelines for Life Member Involvement in ASCE,* dated March 2009, prepared by the Task Committee on Life Member Involvement, Norm Buehring, Chair. A copy of the report may be obtained from the Society’s Geographic Services Division. | **Formation of the Life Member Organization1**  Life Member status is generally conferred by ASCE when a member reaches age 65 and fulfills a specified minimum number of years of ASCE membership. There are well over 20,000 ASCE members that have become Life Members, which is a significant percentage of ASCE’s membership, and the numbers will certainly grow in the future.  Life Members have the energy, experience and enthusiasm to be involved in a great variety of activities that serve their desire to contribute to their chosen profession, but which are also benificial to their local ASCE Section’s membership. Getting started to create a Life Member organization for a Section/ Branch is a two-step process. First, an officer of the local organization must believe in the value of more Life Member participation and support the commitment of resources to the effort. Second, a motivated and enthusiastic Life Member champion must be selected that can contact and recruit other Life Members and foster their involvement in local organization activities. In some cases, an organization may find it appropriate to create a start-up team.  Life Members add great value to ASCE, to the community in which they live, and, at the same time get a sense of contribution and accomplishment on a professional and personal level. Following are some of the activities that have already been participated in by Life Members at the Section and Branch level:   1. Recognize their peers through Awards Programs and/or recognition of achievement, such as becoming a Life Member. 2. Recognize Life Members through articles in Section/Branch Newsletters. 3. Volunteer for Section/Branch activities. 4. Promote ASCE initiatives at the Local/Regional or Society level. 5. Organize and/or provide speakers for a speaker’s bureau.   Help improve communications through work on a web site or by providing hard copies for members who may not have access to a computer.   * Prepare a Life Members Newsletter. * Lead and/or participate in Engineer Week activities. * Organize History and Heritage projects/activities. * Assist Student Chapters with programs/activities. * Mentor students and younger members. * Involvement with engineering related public projects (speak at public hearings). * Lead and/or assist with the preparation and dissemination of local Infrastructure Report Cards. * Organize or assist in disaster preparedness programs. * Offer transportation to other Life Members who want to participate but can no longer drive. * Help with fundraising such as golf tournaments and seminars. * Assist the formation of other Life Member Groups. * Digitize Section/Branch records and important historical information.   An ASCE study on Life Members has shown that the program outlined above will result in increased Life Member participation at the local level. The keys are Section/Branch support, a motivated champion, and a program that utilizes the elements of these Guidelines that are appropriate for the specific Section or Branch.  The Los Angeles Section (Section) Life Member Forum (LMF), created in the early 1990s, has been very successful over the years, and serves as a model for the Society for Life Member involvement. The LMF Members are involved in several activities with the primary event being a brunch held each year to induct those members that have reached Life Member status into the Section’s Life Member Forum. The goal of the brunch, typically held each year in March, is to recognize new Life Members’ lifetime achievements, encourage them to stay active in ASCE, and get involved in Section’s Life Member Forum activities.  The Life Member Forum held its annual Life Member Brunch in 2020 on March 7th. This event provided special recognition to the dedication and service of all new Life Members. Each year it has become a Section tradition to invite the Society President-Elect to be the guest speaker at the brunch. The guest speaker at the 2020 event was then President-Elect, Jean-Louis Briaud, Ph.D.,D.GE, DIST.M.ASCE. Dr, Briaud spoke on the importance of supporting ASCE throughout our professional careers and that we should consider ASCE as our “Professional Family.” Each new Life Member’s bio was shown in the event program and each was presented a framed certificate by Los Angeles Section Past-President Don Sepulveda and LMF Chairman Larry Lewis, PE, M.ASCE, recognizing their new membership status.  The Section has led the Society in Life Member activities. The forum is very active in events that benefit the membership of the Section at all levels in their careers, including student and younger members. Our Life Members have been active in: ASCE history and heritage including the recognition of national and local historic civil engineering landmarks; mentoring programs at the high school and college levels; providing input at public hearings for pending infrastructure projects; suggesting building code changes or implementation of code standards to public officials; and involvement in community projects such a Habit for Humanity. These activities have provided significant value to our members, public officials, and the general public. | |
| **7. Those in Charge** (Committee, Task Committee, Etc.) | William Lawson, PE, F.ASCE is the current Chairman of the Los Angeles Section Life Member Forum. His contact information is: (949) 494-1229 (Home Phone), and williamlawsonpe@gmail.com | |
| **8. Time Frame**  (When Started, When Completed) | The Los Angeles Section Life Member Forum was created in the early 1990s as a result of the efforts of Bob Bein, P.E., past President of ASCE (2001) and the Los Angeles Section (1992), and retired Caltrans District Director, Keith McKean, P.E., now deceased. | |
| **9. Success Factors**  (The Parts that Worked Really Well) | The monthly meetings of the Life Member Forum keep the members connected and actively planning their next activity. | |
| **10. Setback Factors**  (The Parts that did Not Work Well) | With a geographic area as large as the Los Angeles Section, it is difficult to get all members involved in the meetings. We are currently investigating the possibility of forming Branch Life Member Forums to reach more of our Life Members and provide activities closer to their homes. Monthly “ZOOM” meetings have allowed the LMF to continue it’s activities during the current COVID-19 pandemic. | |
| **11. Creativity**  (This is something off the wall that we did) |  | |
| **12. Administration**  (What was most Important?) | The use of the Section’s administrative services provider (GSE Corp.) to support communication and arrange meetings is important aspect of the success of the LMF. | |
| **13. Follow-Up**  (What was most important?) | Follow up communication to new inductees will significantly improve participation (e.g. due to better communication numerous field trips have been attended by “capacity-sized” groups of Life Members). | |
| **14. Recommendations**  (What you should ALWAYS do with this project?) | Have person to person contact when inviting Life Member inductees to the annual brunch event. This has been achieved on a regular basis by having a group of current Life Members call or e-mail all of the new Life Members and personally encourage them to attend the annual Life Member Brunch to receive their Life Member Certificates. | |
| **15. Cautions**  (What you should NEVER do with this project?) | Never rely totally on e-mail for distribution of information. | |
| **16. The Outcome** | The contributions of the Life Member Forum to our Section activities and Board meetings are a significant part of the success of the Section. | |
| **17. Ongoing Activity**  (Would you do it again?) | The Los Angeles Section’s Life Member Forum has been very successful and is expected to continue this success throughout the coming years. Also, we have recently formed an LMF History & Heritage Sub-Committee to support the LA Section’s and Region 9’s History and Heritage Committees activities. | |
| **18. Speaker Contact Information**  (person from your Region who would be willing to speak about the Best Practice) |  | |
| Name |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Phone Number |  | |
| Email |  | |
| **19. Additional Comments** | This Best Practice includes the following attachment:   * Photo of the 2020 Life Member Forum Brunch | |

Photo from the 2020 Life Member Forum Brunch held on March 7th:

