

# My Journey Continues... Carrying the Banner for Energy Education

Bill Cobb, 2008 SPE President, [president@spe.org](mailto:president@spe.org)



Our industry needs more young people to consider careers in energy. If forecasts are correct that the world consumption could reach 120 million BOPD in the next 25 years, up from the current level of about 85 million BOPD, it will be our young professionals, university students, and those in the next generation who will be called upon to meet these demands.

But beyond our industry's human resources needs, we recognize that ALL students need to become informed consumers of energy. Today's students are the future lead-

ers of companies, universities, and public agencies—they will ultimately make critical decisions that impact our planet's energy supply. We need to let them know that our industry is both a growth and a very high-tech industry, and give them the knowledge to be energy-responsible leaders.

SPE has made some big steps in promoting educational programs about energy and careers to young people in elementary school through high school. I hope you've read the Energy Information Committee's reports on these programs over the past year in *JPT's* SPE News section. I'd like to thank former SPE President DeAnn Craig for her leadership as the first chairperson of the committee, and welcome Bill Pike as the new chairperson.

SPE's new energy education program, called Energy4me, has its own website combining all our resources in one place. When you visit [www.energy4me.org](http://www.energy4me.org), you'll notice that we discuss all energy sources, while we provide information about the importance of oil and gas in our everyday lives—an important part of improving our industry's image. The site also provides career information, including a new database showing all SPE section scholarships.

Take a special look at the new speaker resources that have been created. The Energy4me Kit updates the Magic Suitcase. You can find presentations that are ready to go. Students today respond positively to hands-on activities, and the new Energy4me kit has some activities that you can do in the classroom or copy and leave behind for the students to do later. You can see the elements of the new kit on the [Energy4me.org](http://Energy4me.org) website, along with an order form.

SPE has just produced its first educational book for middle and high school students, called *Oil and Natural Gas*. We partnered with a book publisher well-known for its popular science and educational books. It's an attractive hard-back book with short text items and lots of pictures, covering the history of oil, how we find it, the many products made from oil, the importance of natural gas, and careers. The book also highlights the industry's commitment to social responsibility and protecting the environment. *Oil and Natural Gas* is for sale to members and to the public. In addition, SPE will give a copy of the book to the school library whenever a member makes a class-



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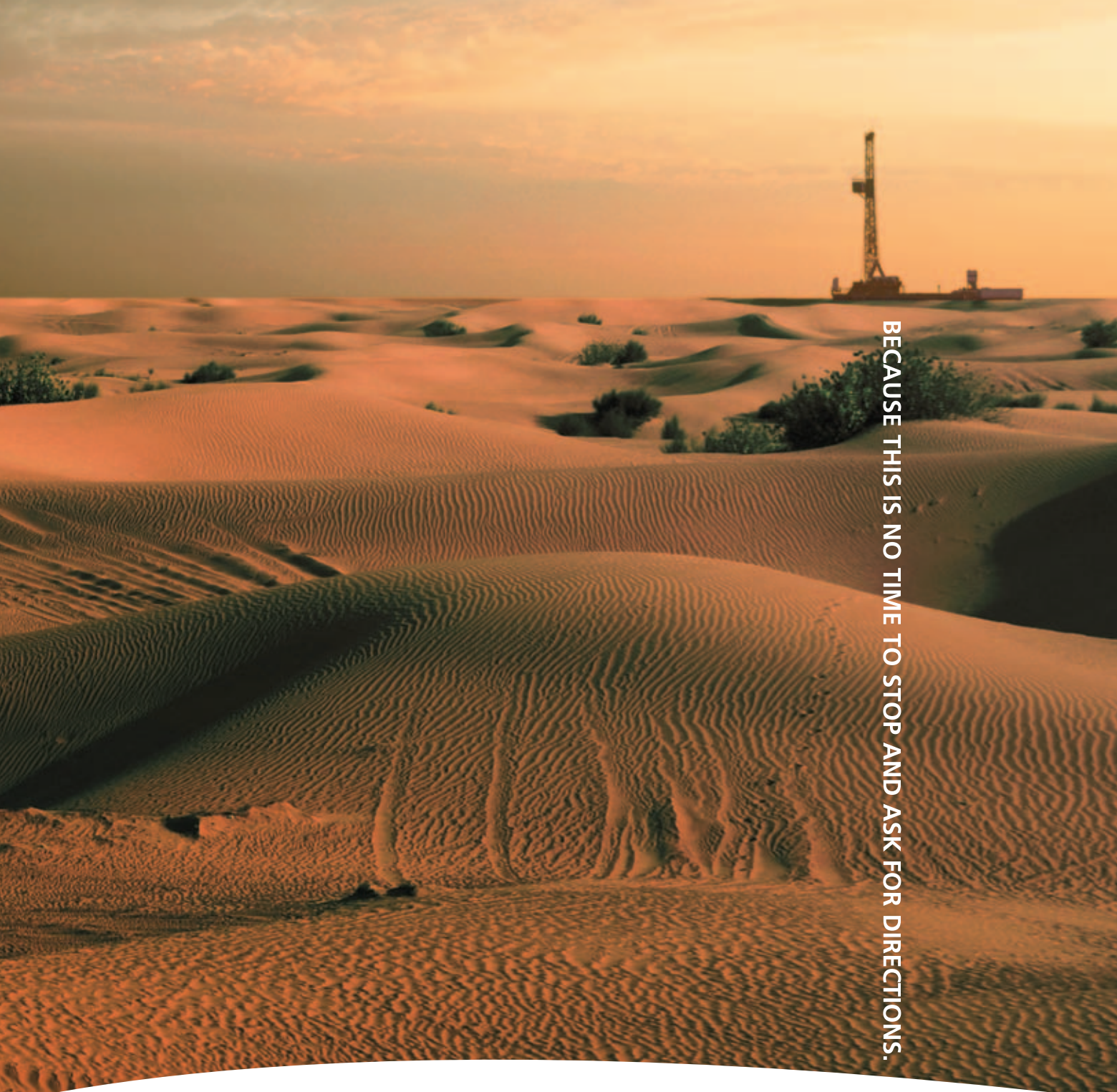
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room presentation. A form for this purpose is on the website.

Although our member outreach is extremely important, we know we can reach even more students by educating teachers about energy topics. Working with instructors from the U.S. National Energy Education Development Project (NEED), we sponsored a workshop for area teachers at SPE's Annual Technical Conference and Exhibition in November in Anaheim, California. Teachers got a tour of the equipment and displays on the exhibition floor, plus an introduction to the oil patch from SPE member Ron Hinn. Thanks, Ron, for your leadership in this important activity. The workshop provided fun, hands-on classroom activities they could use immediately to "energize" their students. We plan to hold similar teacher events in other parts of the world.

We also are developing a global Energy Ambassadors speaker program to inform key audiences and opinion leaders about our industry. We have identified some experienced and articulate executives to serve as a spokesperson and educator for special speaking opportunities identified by SPE, such as educator groups, public officials, targeted media, and civic groups. Please contact [energied@spe.org](mailto:energied@spe.org) to suggest organizations or speaking opportunities.

We have a big job ahead of us to reach youth around the world, as well as teachers and the public. The best materials can do little if they are left on the shelf and not used. That's where our members come in—please consider making a school presentation, serving as a science fair judge, or speaking at a career fair. We also welcome your feedback on what materials and support your need in your part of the world.

SPE must continue to build bridges with other professional societies to collaborate on our career outreach efforts. We can achieve so much more by joining forces with other industry groups that are currently working independently on reaching pre-college students.

January was a busy month for SPE and me. Early in the month, I chaired the Board Committee on Finance and Administration (F&A) meeting. The F&A Committee includes the SPE officers (President, Past President, President Elect, and Vice President Finance); the chairpersons of the Board Committees on Print and Electronic Media, Education and Professional Activities, and Membership; and the SPE Executive Director. The staff directors for SPE's regional and functional activities also



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participated. Each January, this group reviews and discusses the budget that will be proposed to the Board for the following fiscal year, in this case the FY 2009 budget, which begins April 1. The final budget will be presented and discussed at the Board meeting later this month in Bangkok, Thailand. Another item on our agenda was to plan and organize several activities to take place at the March Board meeting, including a strategic planning session.

In mid-January, I traveled to Anchorage, where I met with Alaska Petroleum Section officers and students. Thanks to Section Chairperson Christopher Jenkins of BP for coordinating the meeting.

In late January, I met with a large number of SPE's staff members in the Dallas office to discuss both SPE and my personal goals for 2008. It was good to meet a number of new staff members and re-connect with others.

Finally, a highlight of the month was a luncheon where I had the opportunity to speak to and personally thank those who were responsible for coordinating and editing the recently completed seven-volume *Petroleum Engineering Handbook*. Larry Lake, Editor-in-Chief, and volume editors Ken Arnold, Joe Clegg, John Fanchi, Rob Mitchell, and Hal Warner (Ed Holstein could not attend) and key members of the SPE staff have produced an outstanding set of technical

manuals that I am confident all SPE members will find helpful in solving daily technical problems and issues. On behalf of a grateful SPE Board, I express appreciation for the time, effort, and sacrifices these editors and 178 authors made to bring this project to its conclusion. Give these members a "pat on the back" for a job well done the next time you see them.

On the road, building bridges, and encouraging SPE members... **JPT**

*Bill*

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### Letter to the Editor

## Fellowship Reaches Out to the Oil Patch

In an issue of *JPT* last year, 2007 SPE President Abdul-Jaleel Al-Khalifa invited organizations to submit articles detailing their efforts to serve mankind. The Oilfield Christian Fellowship (OCF), which has been in existence since 1991, appreciated the article written by President Al-Khalifa as timely and well stated. We are eager to write about our involvement in aiming for the excellence mentioned by him when he wrote, "As we aim for excellence, it is only rational to aim for objectives beyond ourselves, beyond our company and home town, and beyond our region—goals that can shape the lives of mankind."

The OCF started in Houston and now has chapters in Dallas, Midland/Odessa, Fort Worth, and Corpus Christi, Texas; New Orleans, Lafayette, and Houma, Louisiana; Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Denver, Colorado. The chapter's monthly meetings are places where men and women in the oil industry come together to encourage one another. Attendees hear a message that is both uplifting and informative (including information about how to get involved with the humanitarian organizations listed in previous *JPT* articles).

In addition, many of the chapters have adopted outreach programs to help their neighbors both near and far. Jim Schmidt, president of the Tulsa chapter, started the Success and Faith Seminar series offered to universities. He has written the book *101 Ways To Help Public Schools*, describing how people can help public schools be better places for children and teachers, and *I Cried Too*, a book about recovering from grief that was distributed by the Pentagon to help children of US soldiers lost in service and in the September 11 attack.

Rick Johnson, President of the Oklahoma City chapter, started the Turkeys to the Rescue program 3 years ago and was able to involve several oilfield organizations. The program helped deliver meals to the homeless and to shut-ins and, in 2007, raised more than USD 20,000. Lafayette, New Orleans, and Houston chapter members reached out to victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita by offering shelter, aid, encouragement, clothing, food, and Bibles.

The Houston chapter also spearheaded an employment network to help those in job transition. Members in Decatur, Louisiana, started a church in their community to give oilfield workers a place to worship. A concerted effort has taken place between the OCF Houston chapter and the local churches of southwestern Wyoming to install chapels in the camps in the oil fields of southwestern Wyoming. Perhaps the single largest outreach for the OCF is the Bible ministry started in 2000. Originally organized to enable oilfield personnel to take Bibles with them when they travel, it expanded in 2004 to include a Bible designed for oil workers called the *Oilpatch Bible*. More information on the program can be found at [www.oilfieldchristianfellowship.com](http://www.oilfieldchristianfellowship.com).

The OCF supports the efforts of Al-Khalifa to encourage the SPE membership to be lights to the lost, helping hands to the hurting, and providers to the needy. A special thanks goes to the hundreds of men and women in the OCF who are involved in outreach programs listed in this article. **JPT**

*Mike Chaffin, SPE, Jim Schmidt, and John Bird*