

Southwest Texas News

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST SECTION OF THE
SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS

FEBRUARY 2007



“The society of Women Engineers stimulates women to achieve full potential as engineers and leaders, expands the image of the engineering profession as a positive force in improving the quality of life, and demonstrates value of diversity.”

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President's Letter

SWE Members and Friends,

We've had a terrific first half of our SWE year and I'd like to thank all of you for your involvement and support in all our activities. Just to recap, we started off the year with a great turnout at our annual kick-off brunch at Marie Callender's. We followed that up with two speaker meetings, one on Globalization and one on the Digital Home. In addition to these meetings we participated in Race for the Cure, helped with a can drive for UT and supported Safe Place with donations for the holidays. We then finished up the year with our annual holiday social at laMadeleine and the always entertaining white elephant gift exchange.

As we move into spring we will participate in a number of career guidance activities. You will read about several of them in this newsletter. It is a rewarding experience to inspire and encourage a child, especially in math and science. Just a small commitment can really have a huge impact in a child's life so I encourage you to get involved and help make a difference.

Are you interested in a leadership position within SWE SWT? New officers and committee chairs will be needed to fill many leadership roles during our 2007-2008 year. We are always looking for enthusiastic, motivated, and committed individuals to be on our leadership team. If you are interested or would like to nominate somebody, please drop me a line.

If you ever have questions, comments or concerns feel free to email me anytime at SWESWT.President@swe.org.

I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming SWE event!

Jennifer Vargus
President, SWE Southwest Texas

2006 Officers Committee Chairs

Jennifer Vargus	President	SWESWT.President@swe.org
Dina Eldin	Vice-President	SWESWT.VicePresident@swe.org
Socorro Miller	Secretary	SWESWT.Secretary@swe.org
Loulwa Salem	Treasurer	SWESWT.Treasurer@swe.org
Ebalina Roitberg	Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Katie Todd	Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Reena Singal	Award Committee Chair	
Penny Parang	Career Guidance: Girl Scouts	
Ty Parcher	Career Guidance: Science Fair	
Anna Salguero	Career Guidance: Science Fair	
Pooja Bhatia	Fund Development	
Monica Wedo	Fund Development	
Amy Story	Mom's Network	
Michelle Schneider	Mom's Network	
Ashmi Wadhvani	Newsletter Editor	
Shelley Stracener	Newsletter Editor	
Sharda Parthasarathy	Program Chair	
Khona Mohiuddin	Program Chair	
Tricia Berry	Student Liason	
Socorro Miller	Webmaster	

Xerox VP Speaks to SWE

~Loulwa F. Salem

“Managing through Influence” is the topic of our next SWE speaker meeting. Leadership is about having the innate ability to influence the behaviors or actions of other people. During the presentation, we will be discussing how to manage others through influence and levels of influence you can attain.

Our dynamic speaker is Marie Nelson, Vice President of Texas Major Accounts Operations in Xerox Corporation. Marie joined Xerox in 1984 upon her graduation from the University of Maryland. She shortly moved to Austin, TX and since then has held various sales and management positions. As Vice President of Texas Operations, Marie’s current operation is responsible for \$230M in annual revenues.

Please join us for an evening of networking and learning.

When: March 8, 2007, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Where: Austin Public Library North Village Branch
2139 Anderson Lane, Austin, TX 78757, 512-458-2239

Cost: \$5 for members, \$10 for non-members. Pizza will be served for dinner!



Marie Nelson, Xerox Corporation

Participate in the Global Marathon Without Breaking a Sweat!

~Lisa Gable

In conjunction with Engineers Week Girl Day, the National Engineer's Week Foundation is sponsoring its third **Global Marathon For, By and About Women in Engineering** – A live webcast and teleconference running for twenty-four hours, continuously from Noon Thursday, March 22 through Noon Friday, March 23 (EST).

Dozens of presentations as well as question and answer sessions originating from points around the globe will heighten awareness of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics issues among pre-college, college, and young career women, and examine issues such as retaining women in college engineering programs and the workplace. The 2007 Global Marathon is hosted by Lenovo with additional support from Verizon Business.

Go to www.eweek.org to join this exceptional event any time between noon Thursday March 22 and Noon Friday, March 23.

Additional information for audience members as well as potential presenters:

Presentation space is filling up quickly. If you feel you have a topic to present in a 30 minute slot, please contact Leslie Collins, lkucollins@comcast.net, Executive Director, National Engineers Week Foundation. Global marathon presenters are responsible for determining their topics in conjunction with the National Engineers Week Foundation. You should select a topic you are comfortable presenting and one that feeds your passion. The audience will vary widely. Samples of current presenters include:

- A young engineer from Nigeria will present information on encouraging young women to pursue technology careers in Nigeria
- A high school guidance counselor will present on the most effective way to work with counselors in order to promote engineering. Women in the military will discuss service through engineering.
- One young engineer will discuss why and how she traded in her liberal arts degree for one in engineering.
- American astronaut Sally Ride discusses “Encouraging Girls in Engineering.”

Please mark your calendars and go to www.eweek.org to join the **Global Marathon By, For, and About Women in Engineering** any time between noon Thursday March 22 and Noon Friday, March 23. See you there !

SWE Region C Conference Update

~Sharda Parthasarathy

Texas A&M University will host the 2007 SWE Region C Conference in College Station, TX. The conference will be held the weekend of March 23-25, 2007. Check out the [region C website](#) for more details. Online registration is open and the link is available on the conference website under *Registration*. Attendees are invited to make reservations at the [Hilton College Station](#). Below are some tentative details:

Reservations:

Hilton College Station
979-693-7500
Group Name: Society of Women Engineers
Reservation Code: SOWE

Contact Information:

For companies: If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact Meredith Evers at Meredith.Evers@gmail.com.

Schedule:

Please check the conference website for the latest schedule information.

Robofest 2007 Sets Rules for “Miner Rescue” Competition

~Lisa Gable

Finding and rescuing trapped coal miners is the simulated mission that student programmers must tackle at Robofest 2007, a competition organized by Lawrence Technological University to get high school and middle school students involved in robotics at an early age.

Robofest is an annual autonomous robotics competition for students in Grades 5-12 started in 2000 by Lawrence Tech. This year more than 230 student teams will compete around the world including Texas, California, Washington, Florida, Michigan, and in Canada, Korea and Singapore. The top teams from each local competition will qualify for the World Robofest 2007 Championship to be held April 28th at Lawrence Tech's campus in Southfield, Michigan.

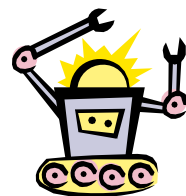
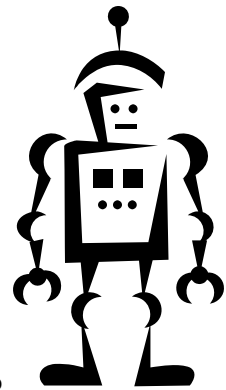
Robofest encourages students to have fun while learning computer programming, engineering, math and science technology. Students are required to do all of the design, construction, and programming of the robots; adult coaches are not allowed to assist during the competition.

The Miner Rescue competition requires robots to locate and rescue trapped miners in a simulated mine environment. The robots must be fully programmed to perform without remote controls and to sense and respond appropriately on the dynamic playing field, navigate through a partially unknown path, and determine exact locations of targets by detecting landmarks. In addition, the robots must be able to climb up and down a ramp and drag, push and hold objects.

Qualifying rounds of Robofest 2007 will be held in Texas at the following locations:

- Hill Country Middle School, Austin, Texas on March 24th, this event is being organized by Learning Links of Pflugerville, Texas. For more information, contact Kate Woodward Young at kate@learning-links.org

Robofest is a program organized by Math and Computer Science Department of the College of Arts and Science at Lawrence Technological University. For more information, contact Lori Birman at (248) 204-3566 or lbirman@ltu.edu. Lawrence Technological University, www.ltu.edu, offers more than 60 undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs in Colleges of Architecture and Design, Arts and Sciences, Engineering, and Management. Founded in 1932, the 5,000-student, private university pioneered evening classes nearly 75 years ago, and today has a growing number of weekend and online programs.

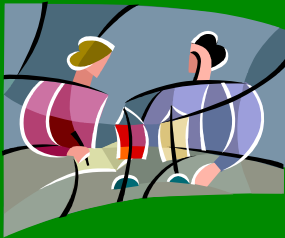




SWE Southwest Texas Celebrates the Holiday Season

~Sharda Parthasarathy

The SWE Southwest Texas annual Holiday Social was held on Saturday, December 9, 2006. The venue was the LaMadeleine Bakery and Café on North Lamar Blvd. The event started with everyone getting some brunch from the café's excellent spread. The highlight of the morning was the white elephant game. There were a total of thirteen brightly wrapped gifts and the game showed us that the women of SWE Southwest Texas love their coffee and their power kitchen tools! The last item on the agenda was dessert consisting of chocolate cake and fruit pastries which was a fitting fuel for everyone's holiday spirit. In addition to food and fun, SWE collected clothes and day-to-day essential items to benefit [SafePlace](#). Thanks to everyone who attended the 2006 Holiday Social and helped make it a success.



SWE/NSBE Networking Event

~Khona Mohiuddin

The SWE/NSBE Networking Event was held on January 25th hosted by Freescale Semiconductor, Austin. This event was a great opportunity to expand one's network and business acumen. The event started out with informal mingling of guests and serving of tasty snacks and drinks. Twenty minutes into the event, we started the speed networking event which was organized by NSBE. This event was quite exciting resulting in exchange of contact information. Following the speed networking, the president of SWE, Jennifer Vargus kicked off the speaker event. After a brief introduction about the goals of SWE, the speaker event focused on the key topic of the day, "Marketing Yourself for the Next Promotion". A series of panelists presented great ideas on paths to career success and achievements based on their personal experience. The Q&A session was interactive with the panelists. After the Q&A session door prizes were given away to the participants. On a personal note, one of the main take aways for me was that I found another mentor.

MentorNet is Seeking Mentors NOW!

~Lisa Gable

The MentorNet One-on-One Mentoring Programs are a chance to make a big difference in the life of a student in as little as twenty minutes a week.

MentorNet seeks science and engineering professionals in industry and government, either currently active, on leave, or retired, to mentor engineering and science community college, undergraduate, and graduate students, particularly women and underrepresented minorities, who are interested in pursuing a professional future in the fields of engineering and science.

MentorNet also seeks tenured faculty members to mentor graduate students, post docs and untenured faculty.

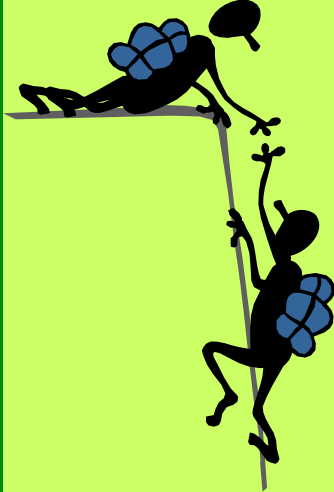
Though mentors volunteer their time to benefit the protégé, they can also find a rewarding experience for themselves. "I hope [my student] is getting as much out of it as I am," is how one MentorNet mentor puts it. Well over 90% of participants would recommend MentorNet's e-mentoring programs to a friend or colleague.

Mentoring relationships last eight months. Because mentors and students communicate entirely by email, they can communicate wherever and whenever they choose. MentorNet's research-based programs have proven effective by providing "real world" information, encouragement, advice, and access to networks for students, and particularly for those underrepresented in engineering and science fields. "My mentor always gives me the encouragement that I need," says one MentorNet student. "Sometimes those few words make a big difference to me."

How can you volunteer to be a mentor?

- 1) Join the [MentorNet Community](#)
- 2) Follow the [One-on-One Mentoring Programs](#) links to create a mentor profile.

Since 1998, MentorNet has matched more than 17,000 protégés and mentors with strong results. We hope you will join them!





WEP at UT Workshop Series

~Tricia Berry

The Women in Engineering Program (WEP) at UT Austin is hosting a workshop series based on the book "[Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office: 101 Unconscious Mistakes Women Make That Sabotage Their Careers](#)" by Dr. Lois P. Frankel. The book provides insightful guides to help women navigate the workplace and their career and highlights 101 common mistakes women unconsciously commit that can sabotage their careers. Purchasing the book is not necessary however it is recommended you take the book's [self assessment](#) to better understand your strength areas for the discussions. The registration form for the March ("How You Respond") and April ("How You Look") workshops and additional information can be found at <http://www.engr.utexas.edu/wep/current/wecan.cfm>.



Explore UT

~Tricia Berry

The University of Texas at Austin is home to a world of knowledge and discovery. On Saturday, March 3, 2007, UT will open its doors and welcome students, alumni, business partners, neighbors, and friends to come Explore UT! Explore UT is an open house event where the diversity of the UT campus and the variety of learning opportunities can be explored. The College of Engineering will be hosing a variety of hands-on activities, lectures, and displays. Mark your calendars now to see the latest in solar powered vehicles, learn about the reverse engineering of toys, find out how computers really work, and experience biomedical engineering and how engineering is involved in the making of artificial body parts. And explore other parts of campus...learn German in 30 minutes, enjoy the arts and artifacts in Harry Ransom Center and the LBJ Library, hear about "potions and pills" in the college of Pharmacy, and even get a lesson on family tax planning in the College of Business. These are just a few of the many activities that will be available for you to experience and explore on March 3rd at the University of Texas at Austin. Explore UT will begin at 11:00 a.m. and continue until 5:00 p.m. Check out the [website](#) for details on many of the events that will be going on during Explore UT. If you need more information, please contact Tricia Berry at 512-475-6830 or exploreut@engr.utexas.edu.



Mark your calendars! -

3/3/07

Explore UT

3/27/07

Workshop—

"101 Unconscious
Mistakes"

4/12/07

Workshop -

"How You Look"

Girl Scout Workshop

~Penny Parang

Each year, our Southwest Texas section organizes and hosts a hands-on, interactive engineering workshop for local area Girl Scouts. These girls, ranging from 4th to 6th grade, have the chance to work with members, who are always excellent role models. The girls rotate through multiple stations, focusing on different areas of engineering. This year's theme is "Engineering in Concert" and each station will relate in some way to music and how engineering plays a critical role in making music.

We will need as many volunteers as possible from our section to make this event a success. Some of the volunteer roles are listed below:

- Station Lead (Lead a station on industrial, electrical, chemical, mechanical, or other engineering area; we have several ideas in mind, but need someone to lead the station)
- Station Assistants (Help the girls out with the hands-on activities at one of the engineering stations)
- Photographer (Take pictures throughout the event)

Examples of stations we have had in the past:

- Oozey Splat (chemical engineering): Girls get to make polymers and learn about their properties
- Journey Inside a Computer (electrical/computer engineering): Girls get to take apart a computer and learn about each component)

Details:

Engineering in Concert!

Junior Girl Scouts, Grade 4, 5 & 6

Coming to Austin, the "Live Music Capital", the Society of Women Engineers is offering an exclusive "School of Rock" experience for the Lone Star Council. A jam packed day of cool engineering activities are planned just for you because girls rock! Learn how different types of engineering can work together in concert to make music. Mark your calendar for this can't-miss event where you will learn more about Engineering and meet some of the greatest women role models that Austin has to offer. Live Music, Food, Gifts and Patches will be provided!

Event Date: Saturday, 04/07/07

Time: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Place: GS LSC Program Center, 12012 Park Thirty-five Circle,
Austin TX 78753

**Please email Penny Parang (penny_parang@dell.com) if you are interested in volunteering. If anyone has ideas for an activity that focuses on music or sound please submit suggestions to Penny. Deadline for submissions will be March 15.



Girl Scout event from last year



Society of Women Engineers

Southwest Texas Section 2006-2007 Calendar

September 2006							October 2006							November 2006						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30		
Sept 9 – Kick-off Brunch Sept 21 – Mom's Group Networking lunch (to be rescheduled) Sept 30 – San Antonio Networking lunch (to be rescheduled)							Oct 5 – Speaker Meeting Oct 12-14 – SWE National Conference (Kansas City)							Nov 5 – Susan Komen Race for the Cure Nov 8 – Speaker Meeting						
December 2006							January 2007							February 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28			
31																				
Dec 2 – Holiday Social							Jan 18 – Joint Student/Professional Meeting Jan 25 – Joint SWENSBE Meeting							Feb 8 – Networking lunch Feb 18-24 – Engineers Week Feb 22-24 – Austin Science Fair Feb 24 – Girl Day at UT						
March 2007							April 2007							May 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		
Mar 8 – Speaker Meeting Mar 23-25 – Region C Conference at Texas A&M							Apr 4 – Speaker Meeting Apr 7 – Girl Scout Workshop							May 3 – Scholarship and Awards Banquet						