

2002 FOUNDERS AWARD

The American Institute of Hydrology (AIH) established this award in 1990 to honor the founders of AIH, Sandor C. Csallany, Roman Kanivetsky and Alexander Zaporozec, for their initiative and vision in forming the Institute. The award is given at the discretion of the AIH Executive Board to a member of AIH for outstanding, long, and dedicated service to the Institute. The first AIH Founders Award was presented to Ralph C. Heath at the 10th Anniversary Meeting of the American Institute of Hydrology in Orlando on November 4, 1991.

Response: James D. Ruff

Tony Laenen received his Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from U. of Florida in 1967. Prior to college, he served in the U.S. Navy for 5 years. After receiving his degree, he began work as a Hydrologist with the USGS. He retired from USGS in 1995, but as you will see, he hasn't really "retired."

His work with USGS included a wide variety of hydrologic studies and reports, incl. collection and analysis of surface water data, field survey and analysis of historic flow events, water resources investigations, urban storm water runoff, acoustic velocity meter and stream temperature studies, debris flow simulations, watershed modeling and flow routing, surface and groundwater interactions, as well as supervisory responsibilities and teaching experience.

The purpose of the AIH Founders Award is to recognize a member for his/her outstanding, long and dedicated service to the organization. As I can personally attest, Tony's service to AIH has been exemplary. He became a member in 1984 and shortly thereafter began serving on the Task Force on Professional Evaluation. This was established to help the Registration Board evaluate the large number of applications received. Once the Task Force was disbanded, he served as a member of the Board of Registration.

In 1992, the Oregon State Section was formed and Tony served as its President from 1992 until 1998. The Oregon Section has been one of the most active sections and has organized seven successful state conferences and now hosted two national AIH conferences. In addition to helping organize the 1992 national AIH conference in Portland, Tony was also one of the editors for the proceedings. Under his leadership, student AIH chapters were established at PSU and OSU. He also worked with professors at PSU to develop a Hydrology Certificate Program using AIH education criteria, enabling students to take the fundamental exam to become a H-I-T. The Oregon Section participated in developing a display about the Willamette River that is out in the lobby.

In 1999, while serving as Board of Registration Secretary, Tony took the lead in developing two parts (surface and GW) of the new hydrologist examination for the Wisconsin Dept. of Regulation and Licensing. He was also instrumental in developing the Fundamental hydrology exam. This was a large and important undertaking for the organization and a valuable service to our profession. He continues to serve as Chair of the examination committee and is responsible for updating and reviewing new sets of questions for the exam.

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Tony also updated the AIH web site in 1999 to make it more user-friendly and interesting. He has continued to work on the site, adding more sections and keeping it updated and relevant.

In addition, Tony has always been willing to provide helpful guidance to young professionals, from answering questions as they come to the Board and to review information published by AIH to ensure it is clear and accurate.

Now I'd like to tell you about a few of his accomplishment in his own backyard, the Oregon Section of AIH. The Oregon Section is very proud of him. Tony was an active, contributing member of the Oregon Section of AIH from the day he joined. Over the years, he has served in every executive position of the Oregon Section leadership. Tony has been the cornerstone of more than a half-dozen regional conferences that Oregon Section has sponsored over the past decade. This type of professional contribution has significantly added to the direct and indirect technical development of hydrologists and hydrogeologists throughout the Pacific NW. Not only has Tony chaired regional conferences, he has also been the editor of the conference proceedings. Most notable were the conference proceedings of the February 1996 floods in the Northwest. Those proceedings will be a testimony to his regional contribution to our profession for many years to come. His vision for publishing those and other conference proceedings will remain a treasured gift to future hydrologists.

Since becoming an AIH member, Tony's contributions have demonstrated his commitment to our organization and to the profession of hydrology. He has voluntarily taken on a wide array of challenges and tasks and has emerged as a true leader within AIH, both at the national and state levels. As President of the Oregon Section, I speak for all Section members when I say we are honored to be part of this presentation of the Founders Award to Tony.

*James D. Ruff
National Marine Fisheries Service
Portland, Oregon*

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Response: Antonius (Tony) Laenen

It is an honor to be presented an award predicated on the founding of our Institute. I wish to thank Sandor Csallany, Roman Kanivetsky, and Alexander Zaporozec for their insight and dedication in forming the Institute, and their life-long devoted service. Although not a charter member, I gained membership in 1984, early in the development of the organization. Much of the work I have done for AIH has been with the Oregon section and nationally; I have been a member of the Board of Registration since 1994.

The Oregon section has been one of the more productive of state sections within AIH. Arthur (Art) Crook was the Oregon section second president, and under his direction we began a series of state conferences that have been instrumental in providing hydrologic education and professionalism in the Pacific Northwest. Art died in 1996 from complications due to brain surgery. I wish to recognize his efforts within our Institute. I also wish to recognize those members of our Oregon section that have given their time and experience in the development of our state program: Dick Cassidy (USACE), past section president (and past national AIH treasurer); Jon Lea (NRCS), past section president; Jim Ruff (NMFS), current section president; Ivars Steinblums (USDA-FS), current section vice-president; and John Risley (USGS), current section secretary-treasurer.

I want to “toot the Oregon section horn.” Among those things we have accomplished are a total of seven very successful “state conferences,” the establishment of two student chapters at Portland State and Oregon State Universities, collaboration with local water-resources organizations such as the Water Resources Research Institute, the American Water Resources Association, the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and the Vancouver Water Resources Education Center. At Portland State University, with the direction of Professors Allan Yeakley and Roy Koch, we helped to develop a Hydrology Certificate Program using AIH education criteria, which culminates with an option for the student to take the AIH fundamentals test and become a member.

I invite you to walk the promenade along the Willamette River in Portland. Along the promenade adjacent to the OMSI building is a display about the river that we helped develop. Check out the conference exhibit showing AIH publications. We have a proceedings publication on the 1996 floods in the Pacific Northwest – the only available publication on this important hydrologic event. The point I am trying to make is that we, here in Oregon, have a membership that is not only interested, but also involved in the professionalism of Hydrology.

In 1991, Alex Zaporozec came to Portland to begin organizing the annual conference to be held here in 1992. Dick Cassidy (OR) and Bill Lum (WA) were conference co-chairs. I shared the technical program responsibilities with Dennis Woodward (WA). While here, Alex began his relentless recruitment for participation in parent-organization affairs. Soon, Dick Cassidy became Treasurer and I joined the Board of Registration. As a board member, I very much enjoyed and appreciated my time working with Ken Brooks (and part time with Roman Kanivetsky). Ken (somehow) talked me into the chairmanship of the examination committee, and although it has been an exhausting job, I have come to a greater appreciation of AIH responsibilities and goals. The newly created examination process, done in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing, is a milestone in AIH development.

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Although much has been accomplished there is still much-much more to do in exam administration, further development of exams and question banks, and the recruitment of the examination for use by many more states for professional registration. As a member of the executive committee, I also wish to give my thanks for the direction and hard work of the presidents I have served under: Tom Haan, Jerry Seaburn, and Vijay Singh. I duly note that Jerry continues to edit my work.

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I have one final comment relating to the future of AIH: I believe that having viable state or regional sections is important to the lifeblood of our Institute – no, even its continued existence. AIH must develop more functioning state or regional sections to create a whole body. It is good to have a heart in the heartland, but a network is needed to distribute the flow. Functioning state sections will bring increased membership and growth. There are two critical goals for section achievement: (1) the establishment and nurturing of student chapters at universities, and (2) the lobbying for state hydrology licensing. Participation of universities and students in our examination process is vital to the AIH primary goal – “the registration of professional hydrologists.” Participation of state licensing boards will follow – provided we continue to apply pressure in this direction. There is membership interest and there is membership willingness to devote time to these two goals. We need to provide the organizational skills to capture the moment.

Thank you.

*Antonius (Tony) Laenen
Consultant (Ret. USGS)
Portland, Oregon*