

History of the Nevada Section of AIPG

1981-2012

The Nevada Section was formed in 1981. Nevada is a large state with the main population centers of Las Vegas and Reno being 450 miles apart. Of the nineteen AIPG members domiciled in the state in 1981, five lived in Las Vegas, six lived in Reno and the rest lived in rural areas. It is doubtful that there was much interaction between members living in the two major cities. A Las Vegas member named Joseph H. Kenny formed the state section and for a time filled all three positions himself: president, secretary-treasurer and screening board chairman.

There is no record of any further action by anyone in the Las Vegas area regarding an AIPG organization, but by 1983 there was a small gathering of AIPG members at a local Reno watering hole called the Gold and Silver restaurant. An original group consisting of Bill Nork, James Cooper and Dick Thomssen (from Carson City) were later joined by Jim Taranik, Michael Johnson and Kelvin Buchanan. Taranik had the misfortune to not be at the first nominating meeting, so naturally, he was elected president. Buchanan was elected screening board chairman, a function more related to getting new members than actually screening new applicants.

Money was hard to come by. If a mailing was contemplated, someone donated a roll of stamps. Gradually, the membership increased to about 70 members. The lack of funds was cured in 1989 when some hardworking members, Earl Abbott, Mark Stock and Bob Levich, among others, launched a dual pronged tour of the Nevada Test Site and Yucca Mountain, 85 miles northwest of Las Vegas, as well as tours of several mining properties between Reno and Las Vegas. One bus left from Reno, one bus left from Las Vegas, and both groups met in Tonopah, the location of the Hall molybdenum mine, midway between Reno and Las Vegas. For the Reno members, the March field trip was a good excuse to visit the sunny climes of southern Nevada. The Reno Gazette Journal newspaper sent a reporter with the Yucca Mountain tour, and in addition to the publicity, the Nevada section generated sufficient funds to sustain future section meetings and create a newsletter. As a result, enthusiasm for AIPG grew. As an example, the annual December AIPG Exploration Round-Up, with an average attendance of 100 geologists, has been held for the last 23 years. The Exploration Round-Up, the brainchild of Ellen Hodos, updates AIPG members and other geologists on the activities of major and junior mineral exploration companies. It is also a great party that provides an opportunity for non-member geologists and students to see the benefits of AIPG membership.

Following the lead of the Colorado section, over the years, the Nevada section has hosted several career days for the University of Nevada, Reno and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Students from California also ventured across the Sierra to these sessions. These career days brought professionals from various disciplines of the geological profession (mineral exploration, mining geology, hydrology, exploration geophysics, environmental geology, engineering geology, university teaching and government applied research and

regulatory programs) together with undergraduate and graduate students to discuss such issues as job opportunities, what employers seek in résumés, workplace skills to learn while in school, precautions to take when working overseas, professionalism and ethics- topics not often covered in university classrooms. The students saw that AIPG members truly love being geologists.

The Nevada Section hosted AIPG Annual Meetings at Lake Tahoe in 1992 and in Reno in 2002. Robert S. (Steve) Friberg was the first Nevada member to hold a national office-Vice President in 1991. Jonathan (Jon) G. Price, Nevada State Geologist, was elected AIPG National President in 1997. Kelvin (Kel) J. Buchanan, HB Engineering Group, was elected AIPG National President in 2007. In 2008, an AIPG student chapter was established at the University of Nevada, Reno. The Nevada Section is growing, in part due to importance of the designation of Qualified Person that membership in AIPG provides, and state membership is presently well over 200 members.

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