

WestPoint Bridge Design Contest

This has been successfully run for several years now by ICE Scotland. It is promoted to pupils (S1-S3) in every Secondary School throughout Scotland. Last year's contest saw entrants from as far afield as Lockerbie and Baltasound.

Using free software, pupils design a computer bridge model which is then submitted online and ranked in a leaderboard. They can refine and resubmit their design as many times as they like to improve their placing, which results in enthusiastic competitiveness among contestants and a very exciting contest to watch.

This year the all-Scotland contest runs from 1st February until 23rd April, forming part of the activities for National Science and Engineering Week (12th-21st



Pupils absorbed in refining their WestPoint Bridge designs at the Dundee E4L event.

March). We require volunteers willing to give a couple of hours to deliver the ready-made presentation to their local School; it's easy to do, fun and above all very satisfying to see the enthusiasm with which young minds come to grips with this introduction to structural engineering. If you are interested in taking part please contact Nicola Smith (nicola.smith@ice.org.uk) or check the Education section of the ICE Scotland website to see if a school near you is participating.

John McPartlin

Education & Careers Co-ordinator
ICE Scotland

Pre19

Bridges to Schools

The Bridge's activity has been reduced in recent months following the ill health of its chief engineer, John McPartlin. However thanks to the sterling input from John Mott and a willing band of volunteers the Bridge has not been gathering dust, visiting four schools for 2-4 day events and a full two weeks in Aberdeen. Special thanks are to Rachel Kennedy, who coordinated the visit to Aberdeen in November, and to John McNaught for the continuing assistance of George Leslie Ltd in transporting the Bridge.

Going forward, we are delighted that John McPartlin is back in an organizational capacity for the WestPoint Bridge Design Challenge and Bridges to Schools. It is intended to develop a pool of

volunteer Lead Engineers for the Bridge to run the events in schools, who will be trained in its use prior to 'going solo'. With requests for the Bridge from all over Scotland, we are seeking a wide network of volunteers. The role may best suit retired members who are able to give a few days a year to the events in their area. We will still require one-day volunteers to help the Lead Engineer run each event so there is a role to suit everyone!

A training day is being planned for March, with details to be confirmed. If you are interested in getting involved in this extremely rewarding initiative in any capacity, please contact John McPartlin, john.mcpartlin@ice.org.uk, for more information.

Pupils put their construction skills to the test.



Engineering For Life

Dundee Area Branch once again hosted the annual Engineering for Life (e4L) festival in Dundee University's Bonar Hall. The 2 day event in November was very well attended with over 300 S3 pupils from 15 local schools in attendance and over 30 engineers on hand to provide a range of practical sessions. The event had a buzz this year as pupils participating were given the chance to undertake various activities displaying particular aspects associated with Civil Engineering including water filtration, bridge-building from paper & card, the Lego tower challenge and the ICE's own WestPoint Bridge Design Competition.

Edinburgh's Engineering Experience

An exciting plan has been engineered for St.Margaret's School during National Science & Engineering Week (15-19 March). Following on from the success of the annual Construction Challenge held at Edinburgh's Napier University, the girls of St.Margaret's are set to find out what it's like to be a civil or structural engineer and discover their route into the profession. Dr. Mark Taylor of Edinburgh Napier University will lead the team of undergraduates, graduates and professional engineers undertaking a civil engineering model bridge building challenge with a range of pupils from S1 to S4. The team will play a large role in a careers fair aimed at girls making subject choices, deciding on university courses and for those simply needing some inspiration!

RREC Needs You!

Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch are looking for an engineer to help co-ordinate the Rapid Response Engineering Challenge (RREC). Initially this will be to assist John Mott who currently co-ordinates the challenge in the West of Scotland, with a view to taking over the lead role later in 2010.

The RREC promotes civil engineering to first year secondary school pupils using a disaster in Honduras to demonstrate how natural disasters can disrupt lives and require engineers to help rebuild the necessary infrastructure. The Challenge is in three parts: an initial Motivational Talk, a Training Period and an Activities Day.

Last year 7 schools in the West took part involving 28 engineering students/graduates to help run the challenge. This, our third year, will be even busier as from 57 enquiries 18 schools are expected to run the event. There are potentially 177 secondary schools in the West so there is scope for this promotional activity to get very big.

The co-ordinator needs to:

- Liaise with Education Authorities and Schools to promote the concept
- Run Teacher Familiarisation Seminars
- Enlist engineering students and graduates
- Run a Motivational Talk workshop for the engineers
- Assign engineers to schools
- Assist with presenting the Motivational Talk

The post will be on a voluntary basis perhaps suiting someone who is retired with a strong interest in promoting civil engineering to young people.

You will need on average one day a week throughout most of the year, excepting the summer months. This will increase in the run up to the seminars/workshops as well as the May/June period when most schools wish to run the Challenge.

The position also involves working with ICE Scotland and the Education & Training Committee.

If you are interested or wish more information please contact John Mott on 07857 905469 or jsmott@btinternet.com.

We are also seeking volunteers to give the Motivational Talks and man the Activity Days at this year's events. If you could give one or two days to hone your presentation skills and participate in a great event, please contact John Mott.