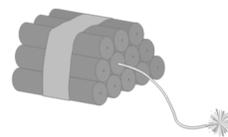


# The Primer



Newsletter of the Golden West Chapter, International Society of Explosives Engineers  
430 32nd Street, Suite 100, Newport Beach, CA 92663

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## ***President's Message...***

### **Hey Members, Guests & Supporters**

What else will 2020 bring us?

That is a question that is being asked whenever I encounter family, friends, and neighbors - all while abiding by the rules of social distancing I might add. When is this all going to end? The COVID pandemic and the fires that have surrounded us with tragic results.

On behalf of the board and officers I want to say how sorry we are for anyone affected by a loss to the fires and to those personally affected by the pandemic. It is still too early to predict when and how the Golden West Chapter can conduct a business meeting as usual.

The ISEE has canceled their annual conference scheduled to take place in Orlando. We, the board, and officers, will do some evaluating of our options and will keep you informed.

Until then, stay well and Be Safe!

Your President,  
Mike Chiurato

## The Primer

### Editors Notes:

Every time I start thinking about all of the bad stuff going on, I remember how much worse this has affected so many. I am lucky they are still buying rock, concrete and asphalt. We have even had a nice run of rip rap going out the gate lately. I am pleased that we are able to keep so many of our employees working.

We did have one of our employees lose his home in the fire outside of Vacaville recently. They were lucky to have escaped the fire with just the clothes on their backs. The men and women of the Lake Herman Quarry raised a nice sum of money for our employee and the Syar Family matched our donation. That was a real feel good moment.

I found a couple of photos of several of our past presidents that I will share in this issue of the Primer. I want to thank our Web Master for his contribution to this edition of the Primer. It has a fitting title "Seismograph Monkey Business".

The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) has an opening for an **Explosives Safety Office Leader**. See our website to learn more about this position.



Past President Wes Bender 1988 pictured on the left with Lew Oriard at the 1991 ISEE Conference

**Continued on next page**

**Editors Notes Continued...**



Past President Dale Nies 1989 & 1993



Past President Richard Love 1991

## The Primer

### Editors Notes Continued...



Pictured on the left Past President Gordon Coleman 1992  
Pictured on the right Past President Al Colflesh 2000 (RIP)

The Golden West Chapter library is dedicated to the memory of the late Al Colflesh, and contains numerous publications of interest to our membership.

Location:  
Syar Industries  
Lake Herman Quarry  
Vallejo California

**Editors Notes Continued:**



Pictured on right Past President Mike Burneson 1994  
Pictured on left current President of the Golden West Chapter  
Mike Chiurato 2011– 2020.

# Seismograph Monkey Business

By

Wes Bender

During the 20 years that I sold, rented and used seismographs, I had the pleasure of meeting and working with numerous people and companies. Almost all of these relationships were excellent and I considered many of them friends rather than clients. There were a few, however, who either figured I had just fallen off the turnip truck or who otherwise tried to take advantage of me. Here's a few examples of those who tried to take advantage of a good thing.

A customer purchased a small fleet of seismographs from me for a contract in Texas. He needed to record the vibration from a petroleum geophysical company's small blasts. He couldn't afford to buy all of the units outright, so he decided to take advantage of my lease/purchase program. At the time, I would rent seismographs on long term contracts and would apply 70% of the rental paid toward the purchase price of the unit if the customer wished to eventually purchase it. After this individual had rented the fleet for a couple of months, he contacted me and proposed that I apply 70% of the rent on all of the seismographs, to the purchase price of one specific unit. I guess he figured that he could thus obtain ownership of a few of the units fairly quickly and then return the rest and call it a done deal. Of course, the proper language was in the lease/purchase agreement to preclude shenanigans such as this and he wasn't successful. He was still paying monthly rent on the units when I sold the business in 2002 so I don't know if he eventually purchased the fleet or not. (This same client has a couple of incidents also detailed in an earlier article titled *Digital Daze*.)

When I was with Alpha Explosives, we had an explosives customer in the Bay Area whose quarry was located in a populated area. He couldn't store explosives there, so we always provided shot-side deliveries and then brought back the unused portion of the explosives after his shot was loaded. He only blasted a couple of times per year.

A few years after I left Alpha and had added blast vibration monitoring and seismograph sales and leasing to my business, I got a call from one of the owners of this Bay Area quarry. He said he was contemplating purchasing a blasting seismograph and wanted to know if I could come demonstrate a unit on an upcoming blast that he was going to shoot. Of course, I was more than willing to do so. That's part of the business. It may not result in a sale or a lease, but you need to do it. On the day specified, I showed up at the quarry office with a demo unit and price lists. I was going to set it up just outside the office, but he had a better idea. Why not set it up at a neighboring residence to get a more realistic demonstration. OK, I can do that. We went out to the proposed spot and I programmed the unit for him and we recorded the blast. Afterward, we went back to the office and I explained what everything on the tape meant. After leaving him the tape, price lists and rental rates, I returned to Nevada City. A few weeks later, I called him to follow up about a possible sale, but he said he had not made up his mind yet.

Fast forward six months or so, and this potential customer calls me again. He still hasn't made up his mind, but he'd like another seismograph demonstration to help him arrive at a decision. This time, more than a few alarm bells went off in my head. Knowing his approximate blasting schedule, I figured this was the next blast after the one I had previously recorded. His wanting another "demonstration" was just too suspicious. I agreed to drive down to the Bay Area again with a couple of seismographs, but I figured I'd better do a little preparation first.

Instantel had just come out with their DS-200 Data Collector. At the time this was a fairly sophisticated unit. It processed and stored all of the data within memory but, not having a printer, it required that you run Instantel-provided software and download everything into a computer and print it from there. (That's fairly standard now, but back then it was something new.) I figured that I would not only demonstrate a conventional seismograph, but also the DS-200. Before I left the office, I ran the battery down to almost flat on the conventional seismograph and put it in the trunk of my car with the fully-charged DS-200.

When I got to the quarry office, I was met with the same requirement that we demo the units at a specific location in a nearby neighborhood. We went out to set up the instruments and, right on schedule, the regular seismograph crapped out due to a low battery. Not to worry. I have a backup. I grabbed my laptop and the DS-200 and programmed it to record the blast. After the blast had been detonated and the results duly recorded by the DS-200, we returned to the office. I showed how the resulting vibration levels could be read in the small window that was the display on the DS-200. I also showed how I could view all of the data and waveforms on my laptop computer. Unfortunately, my potential customer was not impressed with this modern technology. He was also getting uncomfortable with the lack of a seismic tape. I apologized for the lack of a tape from the unit with the dead battery, but my apology wasn't making him any happier. It was becoming obvious that he needed a printed record.

Eventually, he admitted that he had a requirement to record vibration from his blasts. I tried not to show that I had seen through his little scheme, but told him that I could very easily print out a copy of the vibration record and send it to him, along with an invoice for monitoring services rendered. I did so and he paid my invoice, but I never heard from him again.

In another instance, an employee of an engineering group in Hawaii took advantage of his position with his employer to try to gain a little extra income. He didn't so much take advantage of me as he did his employer. It didn't work out well for him however. He called me and said the company wanted to rent a seismograph for a month. I shipped it to his attention. He did the recording and then returned the unit. He asked that my invoice also be sent to his attention. When my invoice went unpaid for three months, I sent a tracer, but to their accounting department rather than to this individual's attention. The company president called me and asked why they were being billed for something that didn't show up on their books. After hearing my explanation, he called the employee in to hear his side of the story. The end result was that my invoice got paid by the company and the employee was fired. He called me later and threatened me with bodily harm, but nothing has come of it so far.....



State of California  
 Department of Industrial Relations  
 Division of Occupational Safety & Health  
 Mining & Tunneling Unit



**Gas Tester, Safety Representative and Blaster Exam Requirements**

**Experience is required in the type of work for which you're requesting license or certification:**

Gas Tester: at least 1 year of underground experience

- \$15 for any or all GT exam portions
- Must have experience in gassy situations if applying for gassy certification
- Bring your testing instrument and unexpired calibration gases

Safety Representative: at least 2 years of underground safety experience

- \$15 for any or all SR exam portions
- Must have experience in gassy situations if applying for gassy certification

Blaster: at least 3 years of blasting experience

- \$15 for any or all blasting exam portions
- Describe your explosive experience, including what kind of explosive work you have done, and what kind of explosive materials you have used.

**Each examinee must provide the following at least 10 days before the exam:**

Application and Form W-1.

- Complete both pages of the appropriate application, and sign on Page 2.
- Complete all pages of the Form W-1, and sign on Page 4. All pages must be submitted.

Check or Money Order, payable to "State of California".

- We cannot accept cash or credit/debit card payments.
- We cannot issue refunds.

**The following must be provided at the time of the exam:**

One of the following forms of unexpired photo\* identification:

- Driver's license
- State-issued ID card
- Military ID card

One of the following:

- Birth Certificate
- Current Passport

\* A temporary ID without photo must be accompanied by a current passport or other item with photo. M&T Certification or License cannot be used as an ID.

**Exam Locations and Dates**

Contact the following offices for scheduled dates and times:

<p>District 1 (North)          1750 Howe Ave, Suite 300          Sacramento, CA 95825-3369          (916) 574-2540</p>	<p>District 2 (Central)          6150 Van Nuys Blvd, Suite 310          Van Nuys, CA 91401-3345          (818) 901-5420</p>	<p>District 3 (South)          464 W. Fourth St., Suite 354          San Bernardino, CA 92401-1442          (909) 383-6782</p>
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NOTE: Following a failed exam, we require 90 days to have elapsed before re-taking the exam.



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Current Board Members and Officers are:

President Mike Chiurato  
Treasurer Gerald "Jerry" Fulghum  
Secretary Joe Stack  
Board member Todd Quigley  
Board member, Newsletter Editor Mike Burneson  
Website Master Wes Bender

Chapter Activities  
Crab Feed Business Dinner  
Saturday, February 20, 2021

### Fire in the Hole...

The new normal.

I hope they give us a two week notice before sending us back out into the real world. I think we'll all need the time to become ourselves again. And by "ourselves" I mean lose 10 pounds, cut our hair and get used to not drinking at 9:00 a.m.

I was in a long line at 7:45 am today at the grocery store that opened at 8:00 for seniors *only*. A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in at the front of the line, but an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane. He returned and tried to cut in again but an old man punched him in the gut, then kicked him to the ground and rolled him away. As he approached the line for the 3rd time he said, "If you don't let me unlock the door, you'll never get in there."

New monthly budget: Gas \$0 Entertainment \$0 Clothes \$0 Groceries \$2,799.

Breaking News: Wearing a mask inside your home is now highly recommended. Not so much to stop COVID-19, but to stop eating.

When this quarantine is over, let's not tell some people.

I stepped on my scale this morning. It said: "Please practice social distancing. Only one person at a time on scale."

Day 37: The garbage man placed an AA flyer on my recycling bin.

People keep asking: "Is coronavirus REALLY all that serious?" Listen y'all, the churches and casinos are closed. When heaven and hell agree on the same thing it's probably pretty serious.

Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go up to a bank teller wearing a mask and ask for money.

Putting a drink in each room of my house today and calling it a pub crawl.

The dumbest thing I've ever bought was a 2020 planner ...

## The Primer

### Fire in the Hole...

#### The truthful lawyer

A lawyer, who had a wife and 12 children, needed to move because his rental agreement was terminated by the owner who wanted to re-occupy the home. But the lawyer was having difficulty finding a new place to live. When he said he had 12 children, no one would rent a home to him because they felt that the children would destroy the place. He couldn't say he had no children, because he couldn't lie. We all know lawyers cannot and do not lie.

So, he sent his wife for a walk to the cemetery with 11 of their children. He took the remaining one with him to tour rental homes with the real estate agent. He loved one of the homes and the price was right -- the agent asked: "How many children do you have? He answered: "Twelve"

The agent asked, "Where are the others?" The lawyer, putting on his best courtroom sad look answered "They're in the cemetery with their mother."

**Moral: It's not necessary to lie, one only has to choose the right words, and**

**don't forget - most professional politicians are lawyers!**

## **Fire in the Hole...**

**Excellent Questions Looking for Answers.**

- 1. If poison passes its expiration date, is it more poisonous or is it no longer poisonous?**
- 2. Which letter is silent in the word "Scent," the S or the C?**
- 3. Do twins ever realize that at least one of them is unplanned?**
- 4. Why is the letter W, in English, called double U? Shouldn't it be called double V?**
- 5. Maybe oxygen is slowly killing you and it just takes 75-100 years to fully work.**
- 6. Every time you clean something, you just make something else dirty.**
- 7. The word "swims" upside-down is still "swims"**
- 8. 100 years ago everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars. Today everyone has cars and only the rich own horses.**

**\*\*\*\* Six great confusions still unresolved.**

- 1. At a movie theater, which arm rest is yours?**
- 2. If people evolve from monkeys, why are monkeys still around?**

**Continued on next page.**

## The Primer

### Fire in the Hole...

3. Why is there a 'D' in fridge, but not in refrigerator?
4. Who knew what time it was when the first clock was made?
5. Why is Filipino spelled with a F, but Philippines is spelled with a P ?

\*\*\*\* Vagaries of English Language!

Ever wonder why the word funeral starts with FUN?

Why isn't a Fireman called a Water-man?

How come Lipstick doesn't do what it says?

If money doesn't grow on trees, how come Banks have Branches?

If a Vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a Humanitarian eat?

How do you get off a non-stop Flight?

Why are goods sent by ship called CARGO and those sent by truck called SHIPMENT?

Why do we put cups in the dishwasher and the dishes in the Cupboard?

Why do doctors 'practice' medicine?

Why is it called 'Rush Hour' when traffic moves at its slowest then?

How come Noses run and Feet smell?

What are you vacating when you go on a vacation?

Did you know that if you replace "W" with "T" in "What, Where and When", you get the answer to each of them?