

GEO-HEAT CENTER'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The Geo-Heat Center and the Quarterly Bulletin celebrate 25 years of continuous operation this year. Much of what we have accomplished over the years was documented in Vol.16, No. 4 (October 1995) and Vol. 14, No. 3 (December 1992). Our beginning can be traced to an international conference held on geothermal energy on the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) campus in October of 1974. The Geo-Heat Utilization Center was then established in early 1975 as the publisher of the proceedings from this conference. The 25th anniversary of this conference was commemorated with a second international conference: "International Geothermal Day - Oregon 1999" held on campus and attended by over 100 persons from 30 countries (see Vol. 20, No. 4 - December 1999).

A total of 77 issues of the Quarterly Bulletin have been published starting with Vol. 1, No. 1 in May of 1975. These issues, with an emphasis of the direct utilization of geothermal energy, include approximately 350 articles written by geothermal experts from all over the world. The first issue consisted of 6 pages on heavy yellow bond paper, while current issues vary from 24 to 36 pages, often with a color cover. Issues from Vol. 16, No. 4 (October 1995) to present are available on our website: www.oit.edu/~geoheat/bullet.htm. Other issues can be mailed upon request. More recently, a quarterly newsletter for geothermal heat pump designers and installers, "Outside the Loop" has been developed by the Center in cooperation with the GeoCool Lab at the University of Alabama (editors Steven Kavanaugh and Kevin Rafferty). All of the eight-page issues to the current one, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Summer 2000), are also available on our website: www.oit.edu/~geoheat/otl/index.htm.

The Geo-Heat Center provides free technical assistance (preliminary engineering and economic analysis), applied research, resource information, publications and a 6,000-volume library. Some of the impressive statistics associated with the Center are: the current website has over 2,000 files with 100,000 hits; 12,000 users and 5,000 downloaded papers per month. We now respond to approximately 1,000 technical assistance requests per year. During the past 25 years, approximately 12,000 publications have been disseminated, and staff members have made 200 oral presentations, published 300 papers, completed 50 research projects and provided 150 tours of local geothermal uses to 800 people. Our fundamental reference developed by

the Center staff is the 465-page "Geothermal Direct-Use and Engineering Design Guidebook." Funding for most of this work has been provided by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Geothermal Technology (now the Office of Geothermal and Wind Technologies).

This issue of the Quarterly Bulletin is devoted entirely to one of the oldest and most basic uses of geothermal energy: spa heating and balneology. In addition to the more famous spas at Bath, England; Spa, Belgium and Baden-Baden, Germany, the editor has tried to select representative samples of geothermal spas from all over the world. It is impossible to present all countries, as we are aware of over 60 that have geothermal spas, including ones in South America and Africa. Additional information on world spas can be found on the official web site of the International Spa Association. ISPA is recognized worldwide as the professional association and voice of the spa industry, representing more than 1,400 wellness facilities and providers from 48 countries. Their website is: <http://experienceispa.com>. Spa training and international spa tours are organized by Professor Jonathan Paul de Vierville, Ph.D. of the Alamo Plaza Spa at the Menger Hotel in San Antonio, TX. Training and tours for 2001 will be at Karlsbad, Czech Republic (May) and Germany Bad Sulza (July). Information of these activities can be found at: www.alamoplazaspa.com/training/.

Other spa websites include: the World Spa Directory at: www.spamagazine.com, Soak.Net for U.S. natural hot spring resources at: www.soak.net, Aqua Thermal Access for definitive guides to U.S. southwest and northwest hot springs and pools at: www.hotpools.com, and for The Hot Springs Gazette at: www.hotspringsgazette.com

Finally, the editors would like to thank all the authors who have contributed material over the past years, and we would like to continue soliciting articles that publicize the uses of geothermal energy worldwide. Feedback, both pros and cons, on the content and style of the Quarterly Bulletin are always appreciated.

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