

# GEO-HEAT CENTER'S 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



*The current Geo-Heat Center Staff, from left to right:  
John Lund, Donna Gibson, Gene Culver, Toni Boyd and Andrew Chiasson.*

The Geo-Heat Center can trace its beginning to an international conference held on the Oregon Institute of Technology campus during October of 1974. This conference on the "Multipurpose Use of Geothermal Energy" which included papers on the uses for industrial, agricultural and commercial-residential of geothermal energy, generated an interest in exchanging and disseminating information on the direct-uses of this renewable and domestic energy source. In addition, since the campus was heated with 192°F (89°C) geothermal water, it was a natural location for a geothermal research and technical assistance center. The Geo-Heat Utilization Center was established in 1975 and later changed to the present Geo-Heat Center. The primary focus of the Center was, and still is, to disseminate information and provide technical assistance to potential and existing users of geothermal resources, to publish technical papers and a quarterly newsletter on the progress and development of direct-use geothermal energy in the U.S. and other countries, and to undertake applied research. Initially, this was accomplished through the mail and by phone, but now most is done via the Internet and Emails. Our emphasis was originally on low-to-moderate direct-uses of geothermal energy, but has been expanded over the years, based on customer requests, to include low-temperature power generation and geothermal (ground-source) heat pumps.

The original founders of the Geo-Heat Center, Paul Lienau, Gene Culver and John Lund with assistance from Lars Svanevik, were all faculty members at OIT, and have since retired. However, some of us have difficulty completely retiring. Paul, is living on Camano Island north of Seattle, but is actively involved in the local water district; Gene is again working for the Center on a part-time basis; John is the Director of the Center on a part-time basis, and Lars is still teaching chemistry on a part-time basis. We have also had 23 other researchers along with eight international visitors work for the Center over the years. Kevin Rafferty, Charles Higbee and Gene Ryan are best known for their extended contributions to the Center, and Toni Boyd and Andrew Chiasson rounding out our present staff. Other former employees, such as Gordon Bloomquist, David McClain and Mark Dellinger are still active in the geothermal field.

As an indication of our successful activities over the past 30 years, we have published 94 issues of the *Quarterly Bulletin*, which includes approximately 450 articles. Issues from Vol. 16, No. 4 (October 1995) to present are available on our website: <http://geoheat.oit.edu>. In addition, we respond to approximately 1,000 technical assistance requests annually, and our website has 9,000 hits, 1,350 users and 2,000 PDF files downloaded per day. We have come a long way since our modest start in 1975.

**- The Editor**