



March 2017

## LOS ANGELES BASIN GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

*March 23 (Thursday) – 11:30 AM*

**Robert D. (Dan) Francis, Ph.D.**

**CSULB Professor of Geology, Director of Los Angeles Basin Subsurface Data Center, and past Department of Geological Sciences Chair**

### **“BLACK GOLD IN CALIFORNIA: THE STORY OF THE CALIFORNIA PETROLEUM INDUSTRY”**

#### **Abstract**

Dr. Francis will be speaking to the LABGS about his new book, an illustrated history of the petroleum industry in California paired with stories of the companies that helped shape the industry. As humans arrived in California, first Indians and then Europeans, they farmed the state's rich land, built towns, and made lives for themselves. At first the incalculable treasure beneath their feet was unknown to them, although it manifested itself at the surface in various places as tar seeps and even rivers of asphalt. But by 1903, California became the largest oil-producing state in the United States, subsequently peaking at over 1 million barrels a day in the 1970s. California still produces over half a million barrels per day, making it the number three state in the nation. This great resource would never have been utilized for the benefit of mankind had it not been for the pioneers of the early petroleum industry. The risk-taking, hard work, and innovating spirit of those entrepreneurs are still alive today in companies great and small, which even now are finding new ways to unlock America's hidden bounty. Dan's book tells a story about people, past and present, who made the mighty energy industry of today possible.

#### **Speaker's Biography**

Dr. Francis is a Professor of Geology and past Chair of the Department of Geological Sciences at California State University Long Beach (CSULB). He holds a B.A. in Physics from UC San Diego (1974) and a Ph.D. in Earth Science from Scripps Institution

of Oceanography (1980). He has 34 years of experience involving petroleum geology, with experience including industry employment with Getty Oil Company and Texaco, consulting work, and university employment. He joined the CSULB faculty in 1987, where he has specialized in the application of novel geophysical and geochemical technology to marine geology, structural geology, and oil exploration, especially with respect to the tectonic evolution of the southern California offshore and nearshore regions. Specific geographic research interests include mapping the Palos Verdes fault and other structures in the California Continental Borderland using marine high resolution seismic reflection, and field mapping of detachment surfaces in the White Pine and Horse Ranges of east central Nevada. He has published over 55 articles and abstracts in journals and conference proceedings. In addition to his professorial duties, he is Director of CSULB's Los Angeles Basin Subsurface Data Center, which maintains a collection of logs and data files for roughly 30,000 exploratory wells in southern California, as well as legacy seismic reflection images obtained along the southern California coast. He has also participated in and organized onshore and offshore seismic reflection and refraction data acquisition projects, including projects in the coastal zone where specialized techniques are required.

Dr. Francis teaches several courses at CSULB. His most frequently taught courses are igneous and metamorphic petrology, petroleum geology, geological oceanography, introductory geology, and earth science for teachers.

## Meeting Time, Place, Cost, and Reservations

### When:

**Thursday, March 23, 2017**

### Meeting Agenda

Lunch Served: 11:30 AM to 12:00PM  
Announcements: 11:45 AM to 12:00 PM  
Guest Speaker: 12:00 PM to 12:45 PM  
Questions/Close: 12:45 PM to 1:00 PM

### Place:

**The Grand at Willow Street Conference Center** located at 4101 East Willow Street, Long Beach, CA (562-426-0555). Take Lakewood Boulevard south from the San Diego Freeway (I-405), turn west onto Willow Street, and turn right onto Grand Avenue at the sign for the Center. Park for free in the multi-level garage structure.

### Cost:

Lunch and Speaker: \$25.00 *with reservations*  
\$30.00 *without reservations*

Retired: \$20.00

Student: \$5.00

**PAYMENTS IN CASH OR CHECK ONLY**

### Meeting Reservations:

**We encourage you to make your reservations using the LABGS web site, at [www.labgs.org](http://www.labgs.org)**

Otherwise, call Ryan Weller at (562) 637-6019, or e-mail [ryweller@gmail.com](mailto:ryweller@gmail.com).

**Reservations must be made by: 10:00 AM Tuesday March 21<sup>st</sup> to receive the discount price noted above. As always, walk-ins are welcome.**

## LABGS / PS-AAPG Student Scholarships

### **Applications due March 27<sup>th</sup>**

Available to students enrolled in a BA, BS, MS, or Ph.D program at a California public college within the LABGS's sphere of influence.

See [LABGS.org](http://LABGS.org) for further eligibility details and the application.

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## OUR WEB SITE ADDRESS:

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**Job Available:** *EKI Environment & Water, Inc. (EKI) is looking for a Los Angeles area geologist with at least 1-2 years experience in Hazwaste projects writing field sampling plans, overseeing bore drilling, installing groundwater/soil vapor wells, and environmental sampling (with documentation thereof). If interested, contact Earl James, EKI Vice President, at [ejames@ekiconsult.com](mailto:ejames@ekiconsult.com) or 415-385-2326.*

**Book Series Available – *Mines Ghost Towns and Legends of the American West*:** Books of this series authored by Ivan Herring are available via Amazon or by contacting Mr. Herring at [iherring202@comcast.net](mailto:iherring202@comcast.net).

**In Memoriam – Thomas “Tom” L. Wright:** Please see next page.

## *In Memoriam*

### **Thomas “Tom” L. Wright**

On November 17, 2016, PS-AAPG lost one of its most stalwart members and forces in California geology when Thomas Lawton Wright, of San Anselmo, CA, passed away suddenly from a stroke at the age of 86. Tom was born on January 1, 1930 in San Diego, grew up in Glendale, received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in geology at Stanford University (where he met his wife, Louise, in a chemistry laboratory and they soon married), and joined the Standard Oil Company of California (SOCAL) in 1952. He spent most of his 34-year career with SOCAL (now Chevron Corporation [Chevron]) working in California and Alaska.

Fresh out of Stanford, Tom did field geology in Salt Lake City, UT, then Salinas, CA and Yakima, WA, followed by 5 years in Seattle, WA. From 1958 to 1960, during the early days of SOCAL's Alaska exploration program, he was Field Party Chief on the North Slope. Those were days of summer rock collecting and mapping using helicopters, or in tight budget years on foot with only fixed-wing support. He spent the remaining 9 months of the year in photo-geology and map preparation, working up his field traverses. This was almost a decade before the Prudhoe Bay oil discovery.

In 1961, Tom was transferred to Los Angeles, where he became a true expert in LA Basin geology. He participated in discoveries in and near the downtown and west LA and Beverly Hills area. In addition, he did geologic investigations and provided testimony after the Baldwin Hills Dam collapse in 1963. After moving to the Bay Area in 1971 and working 7 years on South American projects in the San Francisco office of Chevron Overseas Petroleum Inc., he moved into geological environmental and public affairs work for Chevron. This included work on offshore California geology and then hydrogeology and environmental geology. During those years, represented Chevron and the oil industry in numerous hearings and negotiations about offshore drilling and in joint industry programs. During that work he encountered many people ignorant of our profession and antagonistic to our industry. With his unfailing good humor and highly knowledgeable professional background, no one could have better represented the industry.

After retiring from Chevron in 1986, Tom continued various outreach activities including work with the Southern California Earthquake Center (SCEC), contributing his knowledge of the LA Basin and arranging for many industry seismic lines to be

contributed. This work also led to establishment of what is now known as the Los Angeles Basin Subsurface Data Center at CSULB. These efforts involved countless hours of travel between his home in northern CA and southern CA for numerous meetings. In his “retirement years” he finally found time to write his 100-page “Structural Geology and Tectonic Evolution of the Los Angeles Basin, California,” published in 1991 in AAPG Memoir 52, which remains a definitive reference for LA Basin structural geology.



Tom was active and dedicated to national, state, and local geological professional societies. He joined the AAPG in 1952 and later served on many committees, including Visiting Petroleum Geologist, House of Delegates (representing the Northern California Geological Society [NCGS]), Business, and Environmental Geology. For the latter he served as Chair from 1974 to 1977, organizing six symposia, and he was an important proponent in creation of the AAPG's Division of Environmental Geology (DEG), serving on the DEG Publications, Membership, and Environmental Practices Committees and on its Advisory Board. He was awarded AAPG's Distinguished Service award in 1993, Certificate of Merit in 1996, and DEG Honorary Membership in 1999, and in 2000 he received AAPG's third highest Award, the Michael T. Halbouty Memorial Human Needs Award, to honor his outstanding application of geology to benefit of human needs and to recognize his scientific excellence.

Tom was President of the NCGS in 1974, and remained an active participant in NCGS activities and field trips right up to his passing. He contributed to PS-AAPG for over 30 years, serving as Editor, Treasurer, Finance Chair, Field Trip Coordinator, Environmental Chair, Vice President, and President (during 1980 and 1981). His outstanding service was recognized in 1989 with PS-AAPG's highest honor, the Honorary Life Membership Award.

Tom and Louise had five children, eight grandchildren, and (so far) two great grandchildren. Louise passed away in 2009 after 58 years of marriage. Tom will be greatly missed by his family and all who knew him. His passing leaves a big hole not only in the ranks of premier California geologists but in the remembrances of his hundreds of friends.

*(Modified from PS-AAPG "In Memoriam" article by Donald W. Lewis and Bob Lindblom)*