Dr. Jim Allen: The Scramble to Drill Grass Creek Anticline

2014 Continuing Education Seminar

Energy Citizens

Proposed Award for SIPES Houston
# SIPES Houston Chapter

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## On the Cover:

Environmental standards have changed a bit since the blowout of the Valentine well in 1914 near Grass Creek Anticline. It became a tourist attraction after having been struck by lightning. This photo is a part of Jim Allen’s talk to be given at the SIPES Luncheon on Oct 17th.

Want to be on the cover? Email Jeff Allen, the editor, at JeffAllen@Allen-Hoffman.com

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B.K. Buongiorno  
713-651-1639
October SIPES Luncheon
The Scramble to Drill Grass Creek Anticline
Dr. Jim Allen

INTRODUCTION

This is the story of the dramatic discovery 100 years ago of a major oil field in northwestern Wyoming. In 1912, Enalpac Oil & Gas, a French company, had discovered large gas reserves in the Oregon Basin. These discoveries were based on the work of Thomas Harrison, former coal inspector for the General Land Office, but the gas was worthless due to the lack of a market. Harrison staked claims in Grass Creek and Little Buffalo Basin in 1913 and the following year made a deal with the Ohio Oil Company to drill some of his claims on both anticlines.

In May of 1914, while Ohio was preparing to bring rigs into Grass Creek, a Californian named W. L. Valentine suddenly jumped Harrison’s claims and began drilling on conflicting claims by men from the town of Worland. That same month, President Woodrow Wilson withdrew all federal land in the Bighorn Basin from exploration. The drilling continued, hoping that in the end the courts would rule in favor of the drillers. Lawsuits were filed by the government and others. Early in the morning of June 15, oil was struck by Valentine. Harrison sold more claims to the Midwest Oil Company. At one point the Midwest drillers were prevented from entering their claims by an armed Worland crowd. Based on a judge’s decision, Midwest and Valentine had a contest, with both companies’ rigs set 20’ apart, and to spud the same day in a race.

By the end of 1915, the Grass Creek anticline was split fairly equally among Valentine, Ohio, and Midwest, but by the end of 1917, Ohio controlled most of the field. How Ohio gained the advantage was partly due to the First World War, the drive and vision of one man, and a nasty trick played by Mother Nature. The story includes a greedy landowner, a geologist losing his override, a man who claimed he owned it all, and a passionate businessman.

BIOGRAPHY

Since 1983, Jim Allen has been a dedicated member and leader of SIPES, serving in numerous capacities including Chairman of the Houston Chapter, National Board member, and President of the SIPES Foundation. Jim was raised in Wyoming and graduated from Worland High School. He received a B.S. from Baker University and a Ph.D. from the University of Wyoming - both in physics. He began his career as a geophysicist with Exxon, worked for Texas Eastern, then went on his own as a consultant in 1980. With great trepidation, Jim started participating in wells in the mid-80’s, and started several small companies, some successful and some not.

He co-wrote a paper that won Honorable Mention as Best Paper in Geophysics. During the two years he worked at the Houston Advanced Research Center, he co-authored a book on AVO. He also co-edited a book on 3D seismic, and was an Editor for Geophysics and for The Leading Edge. For those contributions to geophysics, Jim was awarded an Honorary Membership in the Geophysical Society of Houston 1996 and in 2013 was named an Outstanding Alumnus of the Dept. of Arts & Sciences at the Univ. of Wyoming. He has had considerable success exploring for oil and gas, particularly using AVO and depth migration, with his biggest being in the Hackberry Trend.

He has established scholarships at the Univ. of Wyoming (through the SEG), at Neuhaus Education Center, and at Baker University, where he also donated the Advanced Physics Lab. Jim is currently Chairman of Allen-Hoffman Exploration Co.
**IF YOU DON'T READ THE NEWSPAPER, YOU'RE UNINFORMED.**
**IF YOU READ THE NEWSPAPER, YOU'RE MIS-INFORMED.**
—MARK TWAIN

SIPES Continuing Education Seminar  
Geology In The Public Interest  
October 24, 2014  
8:00-5:00  
6 Continuing Education Credits  
Marathon Oil Building  
10th Floor Conference Center  
5555 San Felipe St.  
Houston, TX 77056

Topics to include Future Hydrocarbon Supplies, Oil & Gas Impact on Water Quality and Supply, Hydraulic Fracturing, Keystone Pipeline, Induced Seismicity, and CO₂ Sequestration.

To register, go to [www.sipeshouston.org](http://www.sipeshouston.org)

By October 16th  
$195 SIPES members | $225 Non-members  
After October 16th  
$225 SIPES members | $245 Non-members  
Continental breakfast and a lunch voucher are included.

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**REGISTRATION FORM**

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<th>Company</th>
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**Price**

| By October 16, 2014 |  
| $195.00 for SIPES Members | $225.00 for Non-members |
| After October 16, 2014 |  
| $225.00 for SIPES Members | $245.00 for Non-members |

To register, please fill out this form and return it to B.K. Buongiorno via:

**Email:** bksppee@aol.com  
**Fax:** 713-951-9659  
**Mail:** SIPES Houston Chapter  
5535 Memorial Drive, Suite F654  
Houston, TX 77007

Checks should be made payable to SIPES-Houston

For additional information, please contact B.K. Buongiorno at 713-651-1639 or bksppee@aol.com.

Registration confirmation will be emailed upon receipt of payment.
SIPES Houston CES 2014
Geology in the Public Interest
Speakers and Program Topics

Andrew Stone, PhD Geology
Executive Director - American Groundwater Trust
Perceptions of the Oil & Gas Industry and Its Impact on Water Quality and Supply

Richard Bishop, PhD Geology
Executive Director and Chief Geologist - RSK Ltd. and former AAPG President
World Oil Supply in Transition

Garrett Golding
Vice President - The Rapidan Group, LLC
U.S. Crude Oil Exports: Policy and Politics

John W. Oneacre
President - Ground Water Solutions, Ltd.
The case for uniform and detailed testing parameters to identify shale-gas origins with more certainty.

Stephen Richardson, PhD Environmental Engineering
Environmental Engineer - GSI Environmental
Evaluation of the Relationship between Prevailing Redox Conditions and Methane Concentrations in Susquehanna County, NE Pennsylvania

Steve Leifer
Partner - Baker Botts LLP in Washington, DC
Hydraulic Fracturing: 'Separating Myth from Reality'.

Stephen Holditch, PhD Petroleum Engineering
Professor - Texas A&M Energy Institute
Shale Operator Must Follow Best Practices

Don Clarke
AAPG Distinguished Ethics Lecturer and National Research Council Member
Induced Seismicity Draw Spotlight

Jim Melton
Senior Project Manager – Environmental Planning Group (EPG) in Helena, Montana
EPA EIS Process and Keystone XL Pipeline

Susan D. Hovorka, PhD Geology
Senior Research Scientist - Texas Bureau of Economic Geology
Science-based permitting of geological sequestration of CO2 in brine reservoirs in the U.S.: Environmental Science & Policy

Jory A. Pacht, PhD Geology
President - Pintail Oil & Gas
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16420 Park Ten Place, Suite 240, Houston, Texas 77084
Last month’s luncheon was held on Thursday, September 18th. The luncheon talk was presented by Dr. Ronald A. Nelson of Broken N Consulting, Inc. Dr. Nelson is a world-renowned fractured reservoir specialist having working for close to 40 years with Amoco and BP Amoco teaching numerous courses and authoring numerous (over 100!) publications on structural geology and fractured reservoirs. Dr. Nelson’s textbook, *Geologic Analysis of Naturally Fractured Reservoirs* is a ‘go-to’ technical guide used throughout the world. Nelson’s luncheon talk was entitled “The Importance of Natural Fractures in a Variety of Unconventional Mudrocks: Quantitative Assessment of Natural Fracture Intensity in Core and Mechanical Properties”.

Dr. Nelson’s talk is built around the analysis of 11 different mudrock reservoirs from core-derived observations. The study was inclusive of data from 211 cores over a total of 20,500 feet. The core data was donated by Marathon Oil Company to whom Dr. Nelson acknowledged and thanked. Nelson’s analytical approach is quantitative in nature; the ultimate goal is to characterize the natural fracture system (typically ignored) of these productive mudrock reservoirs in an attempt to optimize completion planning and execution.

Nelson described the complex origin of natural fractured mudstones as resulting from tectonic and regional forces with relative distributions that can be linked to local tectonic strain and mechanical property distribution within individual reservoirs. These mudstone reservoirs vary significantly in their properties; such as structural homogeneity of fractures, compositional make up, petrophysical properties, depositional fabric, and threedimensional mechanical properties. Often reservoirs include fractures of two or three different origins overprinted at a location. Nelson reviewed the example of the Eagle Ford Shale which varies along trend from up-dip to down-dip. As rock composition varies, so does the expression of bed-limited fracture systems. Understanding these variations is helpful in designing completion programs tailored to the subtleties of reservoir characteristics.

Conventional wisdom has been that the completion process (fracking) will allow the operator to generate effective fractures critical for production. Natural fracture intensity is low in some reservoirs and their effects are negligible. However, other reservoirs are characterized by ample fracture systems or swarms, and contribute hydrocarbon flow without stimulation. This can be a benefit or the bane of the reservoir as some wells will produce at high rates and volumes, experience rapid water influx, or demonstrate unusual response to stimulation.

Quantitative core-based fracture data such as vertical intercept rate and number of fractures per foot were captured into a database as well as image log fracture interpretations. Other quantitative measurements included the Rigidity Modulus supplanting often-used measurements of Poisson’s ratio and Young’s Modulus of Elasticity. These measurements are helpful in defining the higher “G”, higher rock stiffness and potential for higher fracture intensity.

Worldwide examples of the effect of these property variations on production and stimulation were discussed including the Bakken, Woodford and Poland Mudrock reservoirs.

In the case of the Bakken Shale where poor fracture stimulation is clearly the result of fracking into existing natural fracture swarms the presence of natural fractures in abundance can be a hindrance to a successful completion. This underscores the importance of identifying natural fractures in reservoirs and planning appropriate stimulation and completion programs.

Pictures can be found on Page 5.
News From The Board by Dick Bishop

Your SIPES Houston Chapter Board was not really AWOL but we did manage not to meet in August because we postponed our normal luncheon due to conflict with Summer NAPE. We had a party instead: the Independents’ Day Celebration which was a lot more fun than a Board meeting. Just ask Christine!

Nonetheless, we returned to our duties in September and, due to our refreshing interlude, did a few things.

As you may know, Chair Jory Pacht has emphasized outreach for many years. As part of that effort, the SIPES Chapter has invited professors from both UH and Rice to bring three students to our luncheons as guests. This sponsorship is possible due to the many companies who advertise in our Newsletter and support CES and Independents’ Day. To them we owe our great appreciation.

The second thing we did was to move the next Independents’ Day from January to March/April. We have had two celebrations per year for several years and – in spite of the last ‘sell out’ and large number of potential new members—it was time for refreshment. We are, quite frankly, concerned with the large number of no-shows and walk-ins in spite of the required reservations.

Finally, we ask you to look forward to our ‘second generation’ website due out in October (yes, of this year). This is a major step into a higher level of functionality and will certainly become an example for other chapters. Many people (Phil Martin and Jim Allen are our leaders) have contributed significant time and energy to the product. Watch for it and tell them thank you!
POP QUIZ!

What is the origin of the Forty-Two Gallon Barrel?

In the oil and gas industry there are literally hundreds of abbreviations that we use everyday. For example, feet becomes ‘ft’ and pounds per square inch becomes ‘psi’. These are understandable, but do you know how barrel became ‘bbl’?

The winner of last month is James Mertz, of Mertz Energy. If you see him, make sure to give him a high-five for his geological prowess!

The answers of last month are: Mars, Igneous rocks, and giant wind storms.

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ECONOMIC UPDATE

- West Texas Intermediate crude capped its biggest weekly gain in a month on speculation that stronger U.S. economic growth will increase demand.

- Brent crude dropped for a third week as ample supplies shield the oil market from the US military campaign against the Islamic State.

- Gasoline tumbled after reaching a high on the 25th for the month of September.

- Brent narrowed its premium to WTI amid rising global supplies. Higher exports from Libya and booming U.S. production overshadowed any lingering worries of potential output disruptions in Iraq.

- Libya is working to restore crude output after a year of unrest reduced it to the smallest producer in OPEC.

Moming Zhou: mzhou29@bloomberg.net

THE SIPES DEAL BUYERS LIST

The Houston Chapter provides a Deal Buyers List for members and participants. You can get it by email, in printed form, or download here (password provided with C.A.)

Please contact B.K. Buongiorno at 713-651-1639. Please contact Committee Chairman Phil Martin with new entries or updates. The list is currently being updated and its value relies on your input so thank you for your contribution.

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California, Texas, Mid-Continent
Proposed Houston SIPES Chapter
Outstanding Independent Award (OIA)
(06/19/2014)

**Objective:** To recognize career contributions and accomplishments of independent geoscientists.

**Characteristics of Awardee**
- Any successful independent (not restricted to Chapter members)
- Has had a significant impact on the profession as an Independent
- The impact may be technical, exploration/business success, as a leader and inspiration to others

**This recognition will be considered on an annual basis by the OIA Committee by the following process:**
- The Chapter Chair-Elect will chair and recruit members for the OIA Committee;
- Nominations may be received from any Houston SIPES Chapter Member (full or associate);
- Names are to be submitted to the OIA Committee for review and recommendations;
- The OIA Committee will submit a single nominee to the SIPES Houston Chapter Board for its consideration and approval.

**One awardee per year OR occasional, no more often than annual**
- The Committee chair or the SIPES Houston Chapter Board will appoint an appropriate Houston Chapter Member to contact the person to be recognized. Independent geoscientist may or may not want to be recognized;
- 2014 Outstanding Independent Award (or recognition) is targeted for November or December meeting.

**Award**
- Physical award is to be decided but will be a plaque, plate or something appropriate.
- Awardee would be offered (and will choose) a format appropriate for them:
  - Awardee may present an overview of their career in a normal SIPES talk format;
  - Awardee’s colleagues may be invited to give short presentations on the career contributions of the awardee;
  - Or a combination of these depending on Awardee
- The physical award will be presented at the end of the presentation

**Background**
This designation was suggested by several SIPES members during 2013 to recognize colleagues with long experience and distinction as independent geoscientists, operators and/or prospectors. The occasion of the Houston SIPES meeting recognizing Dan Hughes in July of 2013 organized by John Hankey prompted this discussion. It was envisioned that future awardees will be recognized and make a presentation at a Houston SIPES Chapter meeting.

**Committee**
- The current working group is John Hankey, Dick Bishop, Bill Smith, Jim Tucker, and Gary Weir as Program Chair (*ex officio*).
- This is an ad hoc committee of the Houston SIPES Chapter, with members appointed by the Chapter President, and including the current Program Chair.
- At the current time, no modification of this ad hoc committee has been made by the Houston SIPES Chapter President and Board.
Many members of SIPES stay active in the organization their entire career. Would you like to know why? We have asked many prominent members why they recommend SIPES. Check back each month for a new referral. If you would like to tell us why you are a member of SIPES please contact the editor, Jeff Allen.

*Having been a member of SIPES for nearly 30 years now, I must say that for me the number one benefit of being a member is networking. Not merely networking, but networking with outstanding people. It is a high-class organization filled with high-class scientists with strong ethical standards. I have learned many things from various members about aspects of petroleum geology, about running a small company, about working together despite disagreements.*

Another benefit is education. The seminars and weekly talks have enlightened me many times over the years.

Jim Allen
In 1975, in reaction to fears of a possible global oil shortage, Congress placed severe restrictions on U.S. crude oil exports.

In 1975, Gerald Ford was the president, Patti Hearst was on the FBI’s Most Wanted list, and 8-track audiocassettes were considered high technology.

All of that has changed, except for the crude oil export ban. It is time for that policy to be relegated to the history books as well.

The need for restrictions on exports of U.S. crude (if it ever really existed in the first place) has long since passed. Thanks to fracking and other innovative production techniques, America has gone from energy scarcity to energy abundance.

We will soon be the world’s largest oil producer and must have the ability to sell that American-made energy where demand is highest. Exporting U.S. crude will open new markets and spur investment, and a recent study by ICF International and EnSys Energy concluded that it could result in an estimated increase of 500,000 barrels per day in domestic crude production by 2020.

Consumers have nothing to fear from crude oil exports. The ICF/EnSys study also concluded that adding U.S. crude to the global energy supply would put downward pressure on fuel prices, saving U.S. consumers up to $5.8 billion in fuel costs from 2015-2035.

Allowing crude oil exports will also provide a tremendous boost to the U.S. economy. The ICF/EnSys study estimates that, in 2020, lifting the outdated crude export ban could add an estimated $38 billion to GDP, increase government revenues by $13.5 billion, reduce our trade deficit by $22 billion, and support as many as 300,000 new jobs for American workers.

The crude oil export ban is a relic from a long-gone era that today stands in the way of economic growth, job creation, and more affordable fuel for U.S. consumers. Congress needs to move into the 21st Century and let it go.

This election year, it’s vital that you make the choice to vote for energy.

Our nation is in the middle of an energy renaissance. To keep it going, we need elected officials who support policies that will allow our nation to develop the energy resources that will create jobs, strengthen our security, and move us towards energy independence.

What can you do to vote for energy in November?

**Sign the pledge to vote for energy.** If you haven’t pledged to vote with energy in mind this November, do so today.

- **Register to vote.** You can’t vote unless you register.

**Get educated about the candidates.** Talk to the candidates, research their positions, and check out our website to see where they stand on energy issues.

- **Research voting dates and deadlines.** Election Day is November 4, but many states have early voting. You can also request an absentee ballot. Research your state’s deadlines to register and vote to make sure you aren’t left out.

- **Talk to your friends.** Telling your friends about the importance of voting for energy is a key way we’ll elect good policymakers.
New Member Applicants

The following people are applying to be members of SIPES.

Laura Domingue—Affiliate
Mark E. Hodge—Affiliate
Bryan Porter Key—Full
Gregg Martinez—Limited
James Osborn—Full

TBPG Meetings and Public Hearings.

At its recent Board meeting and Public Hearing in Houston on August 8, 2014, the Board unanimously approved extending the deadline to submit public comments on the proposed rules through October 2, 2014. The Board also approved holding special hearings in additional cities in coming weeks in order to further facilitate public input for TBPG’s review of its rules.

- The Hearings are an opportunity to address the TBPG Board with oral comments regarding the proposed changes published July 4, 2014. The TBPG Board Members will consider the input provided in the hearings as they move forward in the rules review process. As provided in the Texas Administrative Procedure Act (which, among other things, provides the State's rulemaking procedures), the TBPG Board will consider and provide a formal response to written comments, which will be documented in the Texas Register.
- The hearings will be recorded. Every board member will receive a copy of the recordings of all of the hearings.
- Any written comments provided at the hearings will be collected and provided to all board members, along with the recordings.
- Most of TBPG’s standing committees will meet next on October 17, 2014. Through each of the committees, Board Committee Members will review the written public comments relating to the rules assigned to each committee and develop recommendations for the full board regarding how to respond to each comment.

On November 7, 2014 the full Board will meet to review public comments and recommended actions from the committees, and make decisions regarding proposed changes.

TBPG Meeting

Charles Horton

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TBPG Meeting

Charles Horton
Upcoming SIPES Events
Oct 16: Luncheon, Jim Allen, The Scramble to Drill Grass Creek Anticline
Oct 24: SIPES Continuing Education Seminar, Geology in the Public Interest

Upcoming HGS Events
Visit HGS.org
Science-Based Events in Houston
Museum of Natural Science Lectures
Oct 1, 6pm: Lecture, Houston’s Prehistoric Energy Corridor
Oct 2, 6:30pm: Lecture, Bones never Lie, true forensic thrillers
Oct 9, 6:30pm: Film Screening, Particle Fever
Oct 13, 6:30pm: Lecture, Gulf of Mexico Biodiversity and Oil Spill Resilience

University of Houston Free Lectures
Oct 11, 10am: The Investment Banking Scholars Club’s Second Annual O&G Conference and Case Competition. (Free)
Oct 29, 5:30pm: Petroleum Industry Expert Lecture Series, Global Oil and Gas Business: Intro to Deepwater Development

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Exploring South Louisiana
Ralph Daigle rjdaigle@petrusenergy.com
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