

OFF BALANCE

NEWS FROM BALA CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC.
Practicing the Lost Art of Engineering Humor
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Projects OF SPECIAL NOTE



EPA SITES PYRAMIDS FOR "DEAD BUILDING SYNDROME"

Bala has been commissioned to improve the Indoor Air Quality of the Great Pyramids of Egypt. Even though the Pyramids are the only remaining Seven Wonders of the World, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its Science Advisory Board has consistently ranked the Pyramid's Indoor Air Quality among the top environmental risks to public health.

Well beyond the "sick building syndrome", the Pyramids have been known for their "dead building syndrome" for centuries. The usual design flaws are to blame including the construction of more tightly sealed buildings, reduced ventilation rates to save energy, the use of synthetic building materials and furnishings, and the use of chemically formulated personal care products, pesticides, and household cleaners.

A truly daunting engineering challenge, Bala has ruled out the use of operable windows. Design solutions currently under consideration range from "stone top" DX units to fully enclosed penthouses.

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AIA, NSPE & NCEES MERGE BECOMING EIEIO

Caught up in the wave of mega mergers, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has decided to merge with the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) and the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). Key officials from each organization have been conducting a charrette on a rural estate in Pennsylvania owned by the McDonald family.

With reimbursable costs running low, all three organizations finalized a standard form of agreement on the official red fonted form. The host, who asked to be indemnified and appeared ecstatic to be involved in the historic moment, was heard summarizing; "Old McDonald had on his farm EIEIO,..."

Long rumored to be companion but incompatible institutions, sensitivity courses (1.5 hours/LUs or CEUs each) will be offered to organization members. Engineers will be required to take non-linear creativity, Post-Freudian Modernism and Fashion 101. The architects' curriculum will include scheduling, cost control and psychometric chart analysis.

Few details of the contract documents are known. Actually, little is known of the programming, conceptual, schematic and design development documents either. In an unorthodox move, the AIA



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BALA TECHNOLOGIES FOLLOWS LONG DISTANCE COMPANIES LEAD

Bala Technologies, Bala Consulting Engineer's affiliate firm providing voice/data design services, is now the country's low cost voice/data communication designer. Bala Technologies has decided to beat the competition to the connecting wires by offering the lowest nationwide rates for design and installation of your voice/data network.

By joining the Bala Technologies' P² Plan* you'll enjoy rates as low as 7¢ per minute. Full design of your voice/data network is only 7¢ per minute. If you include installation of your voice and data network you pay, incredibly, still only 7¢ per minute. Full design of voice and data separately will also be 7¢ per minute.

If you only need installation services** Bala Technologies' P² Plan can also help. For only 7¢ per minute Bala Technologies will fully install your voice/data network cable. For a limited time only, we will test all cable installed for an additional charge of 7¢ per minute.

**The P² Plan stands for Perpetual Patron and requires a lifetime contract with Bala Technologies. Lifetime shall be defined as the period of time that you or your company is in existence. Company shall be defined as the original, any subsidiary or parent company of the signed company. You shall be defined as me, myself or I. The Plan also requires a monthly fee of \$7,000 for design. If the design of the network exceeds one month the monthly rate will double.*

***Installation Services require the company of the signed contract to purchase all cable and connectors.*

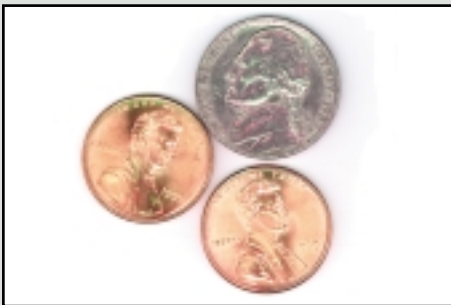
Installation of voice or data cable separately will result in additional charges to be assessed at the time of installation.

Rates mentioned in this release are valid only for contracts signed between 12:00 am and 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time on February 29th in the year 2001. This offer is only valid in the States of Kansas, Flux and Mind. Cancellation of your contract is not an option.



The names, logos, and tag lines identifying Bala Technologies services and rates are fictional and used only for the purposes of amusement in our April Fools Newsletter. Make sure you read all of the fine print.

For more information contact
PaulReiser@balatechnologies.com.



BALANCE

Welcome to our April Fools edition of our newsletter. The information, for the most part, is fictional and used only for the purposes of amusement. We hope that you will read the features in the spirit that they were intended.

If you'd like to be included on our mailing list or if you have additional ideas for future spoofs, please contact Suzanne Taylor at 610-649-8000 ext. 332 or email at smt@bala.com. ©2000, Bala Consulting Engineers All Rights Reserved.

AIA, NSPE & NCEES Merger Continued from page 1

forwarded incomplete background documents, on AutoCAD v 1, to the NSPE, leaving the engineers with little time to finish.

The NSPE responded by issuing a series of addenda before substantial completion of the merger could be authorized.

EIEIO forecasts additional mergers with organizations such as the ABC, GBCA and AFL- CIO waiting in the wings. Any future mergers guarantee to be an acronym nightmare.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

IT WAS ONLY AN ACCIDENT

A toy that spans all generations was merely an accident. The Slinky was invented in 1943 during the second World War when an engineer in the US Navy, Richard James, dropped a torsion spring to the floor. The engineer watched in amazement as the spring flip-flopped.

When James returned from the war he remembered the spring and together with his wife perfected a long steel ribbon tightly coiled into a spiral. They began production in 1945.

According to one estimate, more than two million Slinkys have been sold and the only change in the original design has been to crimp the ends as a safety measure.

THE FIRST FIRE ESCAPE

When buildings began getting taller in the second half of the 19th century, Mr. Oppenheimer felt they needed to have fire escapes. So he invented a contraption that was made of a hat, parachute, and padded shoes. The person in danger would jump from the burning building and the parachute would carry him safely away. That is, as long as the wind was blowing your way.



BALA EXPANDS REPUBLICAN PLATFORM

After Gary Bauer's embarrassing fall in the Bisquick Pancake Flipping contest, the day before the New Hampshire Primary, the Republican Party vowed to improve the safety and stability of their platform.



The Party called upon Bala's Structural Engineering Department to expand the platform in all directions, enforce existing government standards (i.e. OSHA) and to adopt Senator McCain's political stances. Republican's feel these changes will prevent any other presidential candidates

from damaging contest frying pans and prevent the chances of "waffling" on future issues.

Having suffered through a similar platform stumble, retired Senator Dole doesn't feel the Party has done enough. Senator Dole advocates adding handrails and reclaiming the Republican issues President Clinton successfully enacted as a way of improving and broadening the platform. Reportedly, Dole also quipped, "Finding a way to add Viagra would certainly do wonders for the GOP platform."

After careful evaluation of the platform, Bala's structural engineers have decided to recommend a complete redesign. Paralleling the Party's core values, Bala's structural department is using conservative, proven building blocks: concrete, steel, and family value fundamentals. The improved platform includes a new concrete reinforced base with steel support beams and cabling, and a new state-of-the-art cantilevered truss. The truss was recommended to compensate for placement of the platform on unstable ground and to respond to Dole's aforementioned request. In addition, if candidates find that the platform still seems a bit shaky, a centralized control system (located in Washington, DC) will allow the podium adjustments to be made locally to stabilize the platform.

The guard rail around the platform will also give added comfort to the candidates when backing up during future events. Additionally, architects believe the rail will add to the otherwise lacking ambiance of most debate podiums. For information contact GOP@bala.com.

Projects OF SPECIAL NOTE

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Planning

The Greeks introduce Land Planning at Ephesus between 220 and 180 B.C.

St. Paul's Cathedral

Christopher Wren, a mathematician (i.e. engineer?) and astronomer, started designing St. Paul's Cathedral in 1675.

Structural

The flying buttress was invented in 1137 enabling walls to be thinner and windows to be inserted virtually anywhere.

Reinforced concrete was invented in France in 1849 and rediscovered by U.S. architects in the late 1960s inspiring Bala's Mike Hayko into structural engineering.

Washington Monument

Considered a precious metal at the time, the Washington monument is topped with an aluminum point. Michael Graves' use of aluminum scaffolding replicates the beauty of the Washington Monument - and aluminum.

HVAC

Willis H. Carrier invents the first air conditioner in 1902. Legend has it that the First Union (Fidelity) Building was the first commercial office building in Philadelphia with central air conditioning.

Electrical

In 1879, the first Commercial Light Bulb was invented. Has GE stock been around that long?

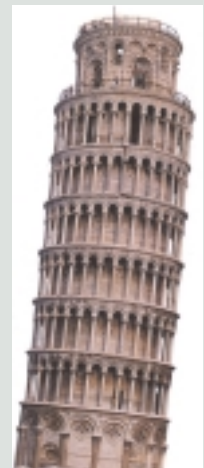
Plumbing

Bathrooms, including indoor plumbing, were introduced around 2000 B.C. in the Cretan Palace of Minos.

After the fall of the Roman Empire the quality of plumbing greatly declined, until Sir Thomas Crapper made great improvements to the patented flush toilet.

The Leaning Tower of Pisa

Unless engineers can find a solution, this tourist attraction is going to need a new name. Despite previous efforts to add concrete under the base, the tower's tilt still increases about a quarter inch each year.





*Although our name might not always be penned/recognized
in the paper, our clients, projects, and people have made an
impact locally and nationally.*



Wimbledon@Bala, Bala's annual tennis tournament, has produced the next official Wimbledon challenger. Pete Sampras will defend the cup against Bala's own president, Michael Anastasio. Rumor has it that after last year's tournament Anastasio remained on the court for the rest of the night single handedly defeating the champions of Wimbledon@Bala. This year promises to be another exciting event, and if Anastasio wins the cup, Wimbledon@Bala may actually be held in Wimbledon. Get your frequent flier miles ready!

The FDA called upon Bala's Validation Department to educate new FDA Investigators on the strict laws imposed upon Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Companies. After attending the FDA sponsored training course, top officials felt they did not have a sufficient understanding of the laws, and were quoted as saying, "Only Bala's Validation Department knows our laws better than we do."

In a related story, Bala's translation of China's Pharmaceutical Production Quality Administration Guidelines has caused quite an international hullabaloo. It appears that no one in Washington, DC was aware of the Bala translation until the FBI unexpectedly found a copy on Los Alamos scientist's Wen Ho Lee's computer. When it was determined that Bala's Validation Department, in conjunction with the FDA, did not assist Wen Ho Lee in translating classified nuclear warhead design and test codes from English to Cantonese, a potential pharmaceutical "Cold" War (or was that "Flu" War) was diffused.

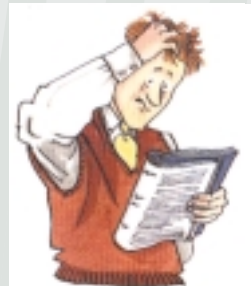
Microsoft's own Bill Gates vows to solve Bala's word processing woes. During his visit to Bala, Mr. Gates tried feverishly to make Microsoft Word's outlining wizard meet the strict MasterSPEC requirements. After many hours, Mr. Gates finally gave up and promised to consult Bala's word processing department for all word processing programs designed by Microsoft in the future. However, the word

processing department has its doubts, and began chanting "down with Clipit", as Mr. Gates left the building.

ABC's "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" is coming to Bala Consulting Engineers to gather information for their newest special night, "Engineers Who Want To Be Millionaires." Modeled after the Football version of "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" that aired the night of the Superbowl, the engineering special is planned to air on April 1st.

Both ABC and Fox declined to renew the pilot show of "Who Wants to Marry an Engineer" citing a lack of engineers interested in the concept.

COMPREHENDING ENGINEERS



“Normal people believe if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Engineers believe that if it ain't broke, it doesn't have enough features yet.”

- Scott Adams,
The Dilbert Principle

To the optimist, the glass is half full. To the pessimist, the glass is half empty. To the engineer, the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

An engineer was crossing the road one day when a frog called out to him and said "If you kiss me, I'll turn into a beautiful princess." The engineer picked up the frog and put him in his pocket. The frog spoke up again and said, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a beautiful princess, I will stay with you for one week." The engineer smiled and returned the frog to his pocket.

Finally, the frog asked, "What is the matter? I've told you I'm a beautiful princess, and that I'll stay with you for one week. Why won't you kiss me?"

The engineer said "Look I'm an engineer. I don't have time for a girlfriend, but a talking frog, now that's cool."