



SAABE TIMES

A Publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

August, 1999

Mark Your Calendar —

San Antonio Water System and the Year 2000

As the end of the millennium approaches, the impact of the Year 2000 continues to be a hot topic of conversation and concern among business professionals and citizens alike. SAWS recognized the need to be proactive in this matter, and in 1996, SAWS' Information Services Department initiated an internal project to assess and address the Year 2000 impact on all business-critical hardware and software systems with embedded computer technology, readiness of critical suppliers/vendors, business continuity planning and communication.

This presentation will discuss the approach SAWS has adopted in addressing the Year 2000 issue, the makeup of SAWS Team 2000 and the current status of our Year 2000 initiatives. The presentation will be given by Gregg Flowers, Director of Information Services at San Antonio Water System.

Education Corner

By Mike Lusk

The dog days of summer are upon us and it is about all I can muster to put together some information for this month. Education? Can you believe school is going already? The ink is still wet on the last report card from last year. However, I did have a decent vacation — drove a lot, visited with some relatives, drowned some worms and caught a few Walleyes. Didn't catch enough to bring any home because we ate all we caught.

Here are some upcoming NTT seminars. Call 1-800-922-2820 for more information or to enroll.

- Maintenance Management: San Antonio, August 25-26, \$705.00
- High Voltage Electrical Safety: Houston, September 15-16, \$695.00
- Troubleshooting Electrical Control Circuits: Austin, August 24-26, \$985.00; Dallas, August 31 - September 2, \$985.00

Also, last month I mentioned "THE COMPLETE COURSE ON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT" by KEYE Productivity Center. It is a two-day seminar in San Antonio, September 22 and 23. For more information, call me at 340-2533, or 1-800-821-3919 for info/enrollment.

There is still one upcoming course in Texas (Dallas, Oct. 5-6) on EPA Refrigerant Compliance Management Training and Indoor Air Quality Management. These courses are offered by Environmental Support Solutions and cost \$395.00 per class. Call 1-800-289-6116, ext. 8.

Bits & Pieces

STUFF WANTED! Alan B. Sheppard Middle School is setting up informal reading areas for students. The idea is that the more relaxed atmosphere and comfortable environment will make reading enjoyable to more students. They are accepting donations for: small sofas, sofa tables, coffee tables, overstuffed chairs, lamps, carpeting, etc. Please contact Dee Thompson at 623-1875 (school number) or myself. Thank you!

Those of you who know anything at all about the SASA/Pyramid Maintenance Department know Mr. Tim McElroy. He's been at the building since day one, having helped SASA move here from downtown. In fact, if you

look in the original SASA Mechanical Specifications book (Section 15A - 38, 3.02 Protection of Equipment) it call for the building "...to come equipped with one Tim McElroy. No substitutes accepted." In a word, this guy is a FIXTURE in the place. So it's hard to believe, but Tim's leaving for Long Island, NY where he'll have a job at JFK airport — not to mention that his fiancé lives there! Love makes you crazy, what can I say? So from everyone at the Pyramid: Good luck and we'll miss you! And for Richard, the "New Guy", welcome aboard!

— Paul Thompson

Above the Ceiling

by Paul Thompson

Blaze Across the Sky

Dee, Aidan...come outside, quick! What is it? Come outside, hurry! What is it? A Point of fire, blazing across the sky from horizon to horizon in minutes, flaming tail trailing for miles behind it...what is it?

One of my earliest memories was looking up at the night sky with my parents on a historic night. There, barely in sight, a point of light slowly crawled across the starry night — Sputnik was Earth's first artificial satellite. And it was Russian. Several years later, partly in response to this, a young President John F. Kennedy issued an almost unbelievable challenge to the nation: to put a man on the moon within the decade. Of course, this was not the only challenge he put to us: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" became a clarion call for action to a generation not yet cynically callused to a President's words.

They say that the flame that burns the brightest burns out the quickest. November 22, 1963, was a day that is forever branded in the collective memories of all of us who were alive then. In a matter of seconds, a sniper's bullets changed history. Three days later, as my baby sister was busy being born, John-John saluted his father's casket on his third birthday. President Kennedy's grave is marked by an eternal flame.

Six years later, in the summer of '69, this was a nation wracked by the divisions of race and the war in Vietnam. But there was one bright light as we all paused to hear Neil Armstrong: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." One of Kennedy's challenges had been fulfilled.

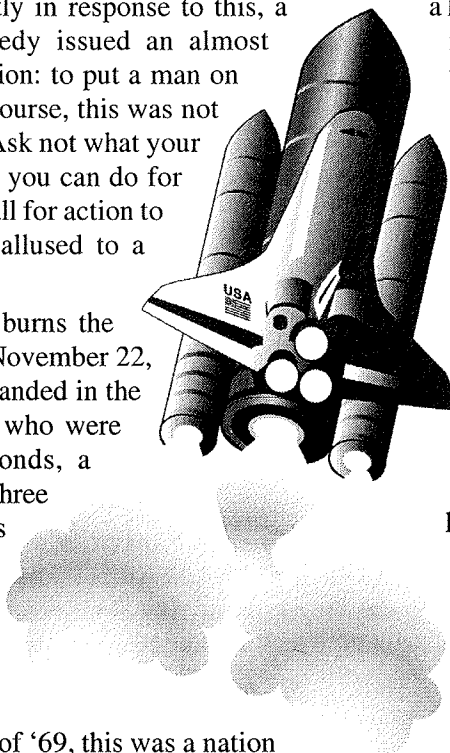
Emma Tenayuca was born on the south side of San Antonio in 1916. A child of Mexican/Indian stock, she was a good athlete and voracious reader. But what marked her life was a passion for justice. Before she graduated from high school, she had already been arrested for participating in a strike. She spoke out against the suppression of the Spanish language and Latino culture in school, demonstrated for unemployment benefits, and by the age of twenty, had already organized two chapters of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. In the midst of a Depression, in the poorest part of town, this young

woman of slight build fashioned herself into a champion of the poor workers — a strong, fearless voice for those who had none.

The high water mark in her life came in 1938 when she helped lead more than 12,000 mostly Mexican/American women pecan shellers on a strike. Already beaten down by low wages, (average \$2.00 for a 54 hour week) dismal working conditions in poorly lit and a ventilated rooms and a high rate of tuberculosis (brought on by the fine dust in the air) the last straw was having their pay cut. "It was a beginning, not an end," she said later. "After that, workers weren't afraid to speak out."

She moved to California where she got a degree, not returning to San Antonio until the '60s. Here, she taught school in Harlandale until she retired. She died last month at age 82.

Fierce, fearless, passionate, cutting-edge, strong, brave, a pioneer, forward-looking — she was all these things and more. As on person said, "She shook the trees, others picked up the fruit."



The thirty year anniversary of the first manned landing on the moon rolled around last month with that glorious picture. You know, the one where the Earth rises blue/green over the moon's horizon. Possibly the most important thing we gained from the moon shots was just this perspective — of ourselves on Spaceship Earth. And how small it really is.

But on the same day of the anniversary of a dream fulfilled, a small plane fell out of the sky. John F. Kennedy, Jr., his wife and sister-and-law adding another sad chapter to the family saga. As one survivor perished, another was victorious. Lance Armstrong of Austin was stricken with cancer three years ago and then given only a 50/50 chance to live — certainly he would never return to the world of competitive cycling. But some people never give up — last month, Lance completed one of the most improbable comebacks in sports history and won the 2,290 mile long Tour de France.

Women's athletics has always been the poor stepchild to Men's sports in this country, but now, what's up with these girls? From golds in hockey, gymnastics, etc. in the Olympics and now the World Cup Champions? Whoa, this is getting a little out of hand. Let's hear it for our Soccer Champions of the world!

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Above the Ceiling

continued from page 2

Paul, Aidan, come quick — they're showing it on TV! What? The space shuttle — it just landed!

Sure enough, there it sat on a tarmac in Florida under lights — smoke and heat still coming off of it only minutes since we watched it cross the South Texas night sky. A rare night landing the announcer said. But rarer still, it was piloted by Colonel Eileen Collins, the first woman commander of a space shuttle.

Sometimes I get tired, there's always work to do, always another brick to put in place. The world we live in has become so commercialized, politicians lie in front of grand juries, you get cynical. But then I think of people who weren't afraid to dream, who didn't take no for an answer or believe that it couldn't be done — people who set the bar higher for all of us. Who gave it their all.

The next morning, the moon grew dark on my way in to work as the shadow of the Earth crossed it. But the sunrise was incredible.

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Regular Member:

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Tony Norton
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San Antonio, Texas 78205
Phone: 224-6868

Associate Members:

Duro-Test Lighting
Tom Rogells
2 Oakwell Farms Pkwy
San Antonio, Texas 78218
Phone: 832-8969

Smth Legecy Security
Julie Smith
900 NE Loop 410, Suite D-427
San Antonio, Texas 78209
Phone: 805-9245

In My Opinion

by Elena Castillo

Last year around this time, the SAABE Board donated \$1500 to buy fans for needy folk who had to endure the extreme outside temperatures of summer.

This year, the Board opted to donate money to two middle schools instead. Through thorough research and investigation, we found Sam Rayburn Middle School and Anson Jones Middle School would benefit most from our donation. Mike Alvarez and I visited these two Northside Independent School District campuses on Monday, August 9.

When we arrived at Sam Rayburn Middle School, we met with Vice-Principal Daniel Gomez and Social Worker Barbara Gamez. Since they knew beforehand of the gift, they had already alerted the teachers at the Monday morning staff meeting. So, much to our surprise, several of the staff members greeted us as we met with Mr. Gomez and Ms. Gamez. Mr. Gomez and staff accepted our \$750 check from SAABE with sincere gratitude and appreciation. They could not thank us enough. A picture of this moment could say a thousand words, but there was no camera. So I can only relay the emotional containment in their speech and infinite burst of pleasure coming from each individual there.

According to Ms. Gamez, she is constantly challenged with supplying dwindling school items to needy youth. When young adults do not have enough paper, notebooks, pencils, etc., they have a tendency to miss school. Attendance is affected, self-esteem and confidence lower that person's performance. The teachers and counselors are now well aware of this blessing they have received and are seeking out those kids who were not able to buy all the school supplies needed.

At the other campus, Anson Jones Middle School, we arrived during the hustle and bustle of teachers and staff members preparing for the first day of school on Wednesday, August 11. Of course, we wanted to meet with the social worker and a principal, but we had to wait a spell, because the secretary found it extremely difficult to get two staff members to be still for a couple of moments. If you have seen ants working diligently and hurriedly, you can only imagine all the hard work these extraordinary people undertake to make sure our children get the best education possible.

We finally intervened and stood in front of the Principal, Ms. Lydia Martinez, and told her that we had a gift for the school. She was not aware of our donation. Mr. R. Scott Zolinski, the Vice-Principal, joined us. Ms. Martinez received our \$750 donation and told us that the needy youths are plenty. This gift enlarged her eyes, left her speechless for a moment, and gleefully passed the check to Mr. Zolinski. To our amazement, he said "Wow!". Again I say, where is the camera?

On behalf of SAABE, there are now two schools who are better equipped to handle the little "emergencies" that will crop up during the school year. My personal thanks is extended to the members of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers who have made this donation to needy young adults possible.

In My Opinion, we, SAABE, as a whole, have etched a mark in our history in that we made a difference in the lives of our future doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc.

Have you made a difference in someone's life this day?

Ask Tio SAABE

Q: Is there a single source that I can use to get accurate, up-to-date information about the City of San Antonio's Y2K preparedness? My boss wants need details on utilities (phone, water, and electricity) and other critical services such as banking, hospitals, etc.

Signed, Y Me?

A: Well, Y, you are a lucky fellow because such a source does indeed exist. With the approach of the Year 2000, people (including our tenants and property managers) are thinking more about the Y2K computer glitch and what it will mean to them. A coalition has been established locally with Y2K experts from the City of San Antonio, City Public Service, San Antonio Water System, Bexar County, Frost Bank, H-E-B, Greater San Antonio Hospital Council, San Antonio Federal Credit Union, Southwestern Bell and

others. This forum, which is part of the President's Council of Year 2000 Conversion national campaign, is holding a "community conversation" to discuss the status of efforts of local businesses, government agencies and other key service providers on Saturday, August 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Trinity University Laurie Auditorium. Areas to be discussed will include utilities, banking, health care, food, and city and county government. This meeting, one of many which will take place across the country, will provide citizens with information about how our community is working to address the problem. And if someone has concerns about the change of century, this is the place to raise them. For more information, see the website at www.ci.sat.tx.us/gsay2k or call Gavin Nichols at 210-938-8410.

Tech Talk #27

by The Charlie

Tryin' To Get It Right, The First Time!

How many times have you been involved in a project or repair, which typically, was not planned in your budget? You have crossed your T's, dotted your I's, presented it to your owners for approval, and later find out that unforeseen circumstances cause you to have to go back to your owner for more money on the same project! This sure hits close to home, doesn't it? There is nothing worse than wiping the egg off your face in this situation. Hopefully, the following will help you avoid situations like this:

ADMISSION

When dazed, take another look. When in doubt, look it up. When disconcerted, call someone. There is nothing wrong with asking questions, there is also no such thing as a stupid question. Once an individual can get over the "I know it all" syndrome, the more pragmatic will the individual be. I will be the first to admit, "Hey! I need help! Have you.....?"

SELECTION

When selecting a vendor, use extreme care. It can prevent an Excedrin #146, if done right! Always try to use a vendor that has a performance record with others. Too many times than none, labor and/or materials are intentionally omitted to reduce the bid amount and secure the bid. Always, read everything on the proposal, call and ask questions, and keep apples-to-apples/ oranges-to-oranges.

RESEARCHING

If one were to take their trusted SAABE Membership Directory and give it a whirl, you'd soon realize that this little book contains hundreds of thousands of hours of experience within it. Imagine that — all of that information and experience at your fingertips. I'll also go the first step. If you've got a question, call me! Call anyone in the book! There are excellent resources throughout this book. If you take almost any given situation, I'd wager someone out there has been through it and can make recommendations/suggestions that can ease the pain.

HERE IS YOUR SIGN

It will never happen to me, I'm on top of things! If this is your stance, let me grab a chair — cause a six-pack and a bug zapper ain't got nothin' compared to this entertainment. If you'd like to see how fast things can happen and leave you squirming back to your owner for money, here are few classic signs:

That little caption on the proposal about fill not included on your cooling tower liner installation because it looks good? Always figure a minimum of 15% fill loss due to damages incurred while removing!

Doing a CVHE/CVHB overhaul without a base line vibration analysis? Wait 'til you get past the suction volute and first-stage vane assembly and find a factory installed balancing nut!

Same scenario — does this overhaul include a labyrinth seal and sleeve? You can bet on this one, I've yet to find one that is fit for re-use. Yep, \$800.00 right off the bat!

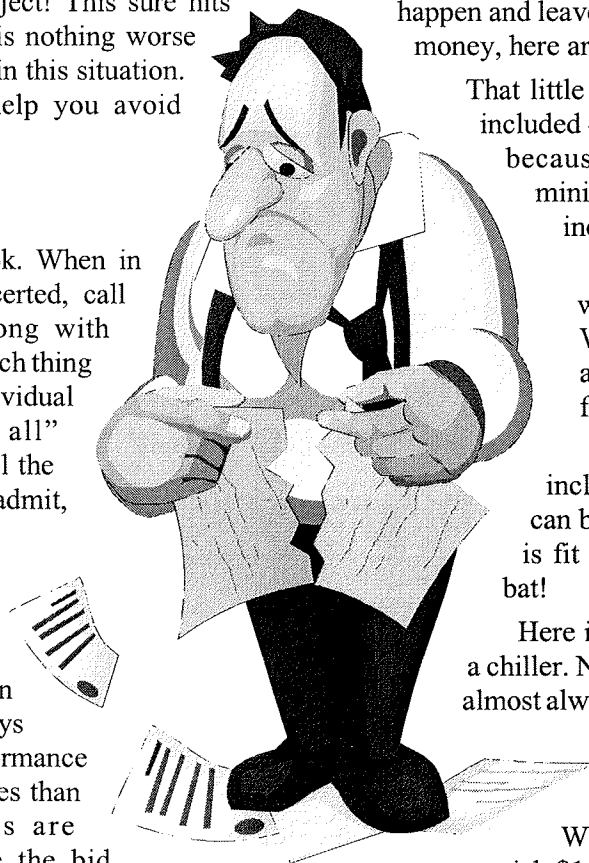
Here is another good one! You are repairing a chiller. No matter how good it ran before, it will almost always come up short on refrigerant. Thirty to fifty pounds ain't bad on most machines, you could ride it out 'til next year and budget for it then. What if your 100+ pounds short? Here's a quick \$1,000.00 hickey!

How about a 19DH that's swallowed a bunch of air? Hopefully, someone has noticed the oil temperature has dropped through the floor! Well, you've gotten the leak repaired. As you're peeling off hours of purge time, you either notice your oil temperature or worse, the oil level is diminishing. Hello! 19s are notorious for blowing out that little grommet between the gear box and the sump causing you to dump oil into your refrigerant! Don't forget to include extra refrigerant and refrigerant clean-up in the bid!

Closing Quote: "I know that's what you wanted, but that's not what I bid!" or, "That's NIC" (Not In Contract).

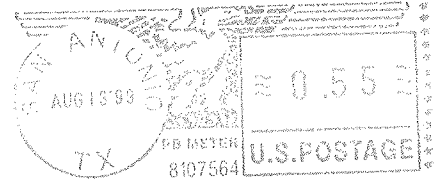
Well, I'm just about as nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs!

"Just a maintenance man"





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SAABE TIMES
August Issue

**Pick up your 1999 Membership
Directory at the August Luncheon**

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Membership Luncheon August 18, 1999

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Location: Tex's Restaurant
in the Airport Hilton

Topic: SAWS and the Year 2000

Speaker: Gregg Flowers

Sponsor: SAABE

Upcoming Luncheon September 15: Munters Moisture Control

The SAABE Times is produced monthly for the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers by:



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