



# SAABE TIMES

A publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

April 2003

Mark Your Calendar—

## JOIN US FOR OUR APRIL LUNCHEON

Please join us on Wednesday, April 16 at the Old San Francisco Steakhouse for our April luncheon. The program topic will be announced soon.

Don't miss this chance for learning and networking. As "The Charlie" said in a recent column, "Networking is key! Take the time to attend monthly SAABE meetings. Meet some old acquaintances, discuss some failures, and share your experiences with new and upcoming engineers."

Please RSVP to (210) 408-1699 by Tuesday, April 17. Please note that your 2003 dues must be current in order to attend as a member.

We hope to see you there! ❖

## Are Your Dues Current?

Have you renewed your 2003 dues yet? You **must** do so before the April meeting in order to attend as a member. Please call (210) 408-1699 to check on your dues status. ❖

## Education Corner

### Professional Water Treatment Seminar

- Sponsored by SAABE
- Friday, May 2, 9:00-noon, One International Center (Jones Maltsberger @ 410)
- Cost: \$20 for SAABE members (lunch included), payable at the door
- Call 408-1699 or visit [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org) for more information.

### Electrical Standards

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- April 21-25, Houston
- Cost: \$795
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### Fundamentals of Pneumatic Controls in HVAC

- April 22 or 23 (one-day class)
- Location: 8620 N. New Braunfels, San Antonio
- Presented by Amy Ables, Training Specialist
- Cost: \$125
- To register or for more information, call 512-331-1086

### Texas HVAC Exam Prep

- Sponsored by Construction Data, endorsed by TACCA
- May 9-11
- Sheraton Four Points, Austin
- Call 1-800-969-7331 or visit [www.hvacandplumbing.com](http://www.hvacandplumbing.com) for more information.

### Hazardous Materials

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- May 12-16, Houston
- Cost: \$795
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### Basic Plumbing Code

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- May 13-15, Houston
- Cost: \$640
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### OSHA Guide to Industrial Hygiene

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- May 19-22
- Cost: \$695
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

Contact Education Director Jock Tilghman (681-2494) if you know of other courses. ❖

## A Message from the President

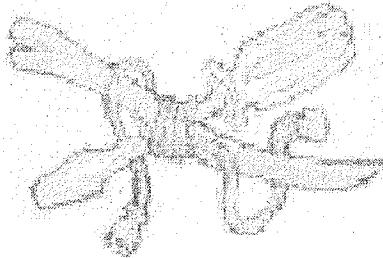
by Bob Beal

### The Engineer's Best Friend

Out of all the vendors we deal with, all the fires we put out, and all the tenants we care for, things can get really out of control. Paper piling up on your desk – trying to find your copy of the budget – a phone number you should know by memory buried under proposals and work orders. All I can say is thank God for “Wonder Women” Jane Rhodes and Myra Lee, our Property Management Assistants. We all have them. They are the ones screening our calls, sorting our mail, reminding us we are going out of control on the R&M accounts, and most of all, being a buffer when the tenants are not happy. Along with that, they pay all the bills, give us our checks, pass around the birthday cards to sign, and all with a smile. Oh, I forgot to mention their duties for the manager. Also, when things get heated up for us engineers, we can go scream in the chiller room. We have places to hide. Our ladies upstairs are like the Marines – “first in, last out.” So to all my fellow engineers, go upstairs and give your “Wonder Women” a hug, buy their “Mary Kay” stuff, sign up for their “bowling for dollars,” but most of all, let them know how important they are to you. Bring them to our next luncheon.

### A Great Start in 2003

I would like to also say how proud I am of the way SAABE has started out this year. I feel that an organization is only as good as its leadership. My fellow committee members and I are dedicated to the needs of our members, our profession, and our community. I was delighted to see the engineers socializing after every meeting. I am going to try and adjourn a little earlier so we have a little time to mingle and ask the questions that maybe are too hard to ask during the luncheon. I have had many members tell me that they like the way SAABE is branching out to include more and needed education for our members, provide more interest for possible sponsors, provide more levels of sponsorships, and just having some good doggoned fun! I try not to get too technical in my “Message from the President.” I like to leave that up to our devoted “The Charlie” and others that have the resources for factual and accurate articles. I have pledged my spot in the *SAABE Times* to motivate and highlight our organization and our members in general. I would like to hear from any member that may have something or someone you would like me to talk about. I want to hear some stories, good and bad. I



would like to highlight some engineers that are doing something great outside the job (marriage anniversaries, births, sons and daughters serving our country in troubled areas, and anything you may like to share).

### Certified Building Engineer (CBE)

In the upcoming months, Jock Tilghman, the rest of the committee, and I will be taking a serious look at the application for the CBE. I feel it is one of the most important things I will deal with during my two years as president. It has to be fair, hard, and legitimate. If nothing else, it is and will be our benchmark for what we consider to be better than the best. I have asked Jock and the committee to appoint a team to look at the overall aspects of the CBE and (along with myself) make sure the process of obtaining a CBE is as clear as glass. At a future luncheon, we will discuss all aspects of the CBE and its qualifications.

### Engineer Spotlight

**Jonathan Spaght  
Mack Cali  
Riverview Towers**

In my years of being a chief engineer, I have found myself in the position of hiring new help. I have found more times than most that it is better to take in a day porter or a guard that may have been at the property, or at least in the multi-story building for a couple of years. One of my old guards is now a chief engineer. One of my other guards has teamed up with Phil Eastman at the Riverview Towers. Jonathan Spaght came to Phil and I when we both worked at Corporate Square. At that time, Jon asked me to place him if there ever was a chance he could be an engineer. As a guard for Wells Fargo, Jon was always better than most and did seem like a fish out of water. I was so glad to find out that Phil had hired him, so I wanted to include him in this month's Engineer Spotlight.

Jon has been at Riverview Towers for two years now and has become a very important hand for Phil and their manager, Sandi Ruffo. Jon came to us from Denver and graduated from George Washington HS in 1987. Jon continues to sponge up as much knowledge he can take and as much education as he can. Phil said, “He loves his new job and especially the people part.” Sandi said, “Working with Jon has been a pleasure. His enthusiasm is reflected in every aspect of his job.” Phil, Sandi, and I feel that Jon has the characteristics of a chief engineer, and one day, will make a fine one. Please welcome Jon to our trade and to SAABE. ❖



## Sponsorship Opportunities

SAABE has added several new sponsorship opportunities. Sponsorships are a great way to get your company some name recognition with San Antonio's largest association of building engineers:

**\$100.00:** Name recognition at the meeting (sign near the podium that is visible to all the members) and a brief description of services and introduction of the sponsor.

**\$250.00:** Vendor has one table (table-top display is allowed) at the entry to the luncheon and can distribute literature and business cards before and after the meeting as all the traffic is going through the door. Tim Young (SAABE vendor rep) will coordinate this to make sure the speaker and this sponsor are not competitors.

**\$500.00:** Vendor has the podium and an opportunity to address the membership. Material must be educational in nature, but the vendor has a table up front near the podium with the opportunity for members to take literature and cards or small give-aways at the end of the meeting.

Also, don't miss our new information exchange table and networking board at the next meeting. The table gives engineers an opportunity to display a question or need (for example a part you can't find), and there is a business card display for all members.

For sponsorship opportunities, contact Tim Young at 210-651-5588 or [tim\\_young@munters.com](mailto:tim_young@munters.com). Make your reservation early for the next meeting so you don't miss these exciting additions to our luncheons. ❖

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make sure you stay informed of the  
latest events! ❖



## Tech Talk #71

by The Charlie

### *A Matter of Economics/Ergonomics*

Over the years, a large amount of what was once considered to be a standard practice has changed due to a matter of economics.

For instance, the number of extended length service vans that electricians or mechanical contractors were provided with is diminishing, and trucks outfitted with boxes, bins, and racks are more traditional. The reason? Possibilities include the cost of the van, the rigging, the stocking of equipment, the insurance, the maintenance costs, the depreciation, or even the life expectancy. How it has affected our industry? These vans were usually well stocked with common replacement parts and an extensive array of tools. A service call could typically be solved with one visit and without a need to run to the part houses on your time.

### **Inventory**

There can be nothing more disheartening on a service call than to have a technician (average service call hourly rate @ \$45-75/hour) leaving for one or two hours to chase down inexpensive items! If this was a common item at your facility, shame on you for not having this item in your inventory (which just added \$90-\$150 to your service ticket).

Why don't the service vans/trucks stock inventory? It's simple – there is too much inventory to cover, and it is money out-of-pocket until the materials can be charged somewhere. Then, there is no telling when or where the materials were originally purchased in order to track down the amount for invoicing. In addition, things get broken or misplaced. It is easier and more economical for the provider to go and pick up needed materials simply because once the job was called in, a job order was assigned, and all related expenses and labor will be charged to the ticket. This practice streamlines operations, making them more efficient.

Of course, you can't go out and buy all of the items you think you might need with one trip next month, but if you spread it out over time, you would be surprised at the amount of materials you've acquired in case of need. Trust me – if it's in your building, and you're there long enough, you will need it and use it! So it doesn't take a monster-sized property with a gigantic budget to stock inventory. It's all in visioning the need, and applying money appropriately.

The same can be applied to out-of-the-ordinary tools which may be needed at your facility. This could be as simple as a fire alarm tamper key to a 1-5/16" wrench/socket for a Vic coupling. Over time, items like these will be needed more than one time, validating their expense to have on site.

### **Organization**

Lesson #1: It doesn't matter how much you think you might need to keep this old broken part. "Do not place it back with inventory without altering its appearance!" If you stock used materials, mark on it, bend it, break it – do something so that it will not be mistaken by you, or anyone, as working inventory. Better yet, throw it away!

The only thing bad about having materials on-site is not being able to find them when you need them! Great organizational skills must come in hand to pull this off. If at all possible, utilize an area for electrical materials, another area for plumbing, another for lighting, etc. There are only a handful of properties that have enough room to accommodate all their needed materials in one place. So having multiples is not so bad as long as everything in the area is related to what is around it, and everyone involved knows where the materials are stored. Having the property manager or the dedicated service technician know where these materials are stored will come in handy one day when you are off on vacation...trust me!

*(Continued on page 5)*

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## Tech Talk (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

Creativity comes into play regarding organizing materials. It doesn't necessarily have to be a store-bought rack for stocking inventory. We have seen some ingenuity when it comes to organizers (i.e., leftover crib-wall works well as a bolt bin, lockers can be converted into cabinets, shopping carts can be used as service carts, old upper & lower cabinets, old refrigerators, etc.). Hey, if it works for you, at least you've gotten farther than the next guy! However, when it comes to toolboxes, kick, beg or borrow to make arrangements for a "large enough" toolbox to keep all the hand tools you have. Also, be sure to get one large enough so that there are additional drawers for future use. You can also use another cabinet for your power tools, another for your electronic tools, etc.

### Time-Saving Approaches

When purchasing tools, look for the sets which come with a case. There is nothing like losing those special wrenches supplied with power tools to change the blade, bit, etc. The benefit of having a case is if you need a grinder, you can grab the case and be assured that everything you need is ready to go (tool, extra discs, wrenches, etc.).

Another good bit of advice is to keep inexpensive items handy near their intended destination. Most floors have janitorial closets on each floor/wing. Keeping items such as a plunger and "restroom-closed" sign in each janitorial closet

## Water Treatment Seminar Sponsored by SAABE and Presented by Delta Water Laboratories

Don't miss SAABE's upcoming "Professional Water Treatment Seminar" on Friday, May 2 from 9:00 am-noon at One International Center (Jones Maltsberger @ 410). Presented by SAABE member Jim Pittman (of Delta Water Laboratories), the seminar will cover water fundamentals specific to the Edwards Aquifer, biological concerns, troubleshooting water systems, and more.

Seminar cost is only \$20 for SAABE members and includes lunch. Please pay at the door. You can print out a registration form on SAABE's web site at [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org), or call Laura Bray (408-1699) for more information. ❖

## It Pays to Advertise in SAABE TIMES

| <u>Dimensions</u> | <u>1 Issue</u> | <u>3 Issues</u> | <u>1 Year</u> |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Full page         | \$110          | \$280           | \$1,000       |
| Half page         | \$60           | \$150           | \$575         |
| Quarter page      | \$30           | \$75            | \$280         |
| Business card     | \$20           | \$50            | \$190         |

(call for ad dimensions, 210-408-1699)

Send ad copy (preferably in GIF or JPG formats) and payment to SAABE, 14602 Huebner Rd, #116, PMB 149, San Antonio, TX 78230, or email to [laurabray@braycommunications.com](mailto:laurabray@braycommunications.com).

tremendously cuts down on the amount of time necessary for the job and adds to the overall efficiency of your operations because everything you will need is already at the workplace. If you can swing it, having multiple ladders strategically located throughout the building is a huge benefit. Another good idea is a personally designed light cart.

Everyone involved in the maintenance/operations of a property should be supplied with a quality multi-tool with a belt pouch, considered to be an excellent investment. Our personal favorite is the Leatherman® Super Tool® "200" (\$49.99 @ Wal-Mart). Although these tools are not UL listed, nor recommended for electrical work, they are excellent for getting jobs completed at the time of discovery rather than getting side-tracked by a service call, lunch break, etc.

Finally, using your brain (not your back) could be the best advice here. Dollies, flat carts, or anything with wheels/casters can play to your advantage. Even such a simple thing as pieces of ½ inch EMT about 8 inches long come in handy to roll heavy items a short distance. And as always, using a levered fulcrum to your advantage beats an aching back every time.

**Next Month:** Going Digital

**CHARLIE'S LAW:** Never be afraid to try something new. Remember – amateurs built the Ark, professionals built the Titanic!

**JUSTA MAJNTENANCE MAN ❖**



## “For Sale” Items

### Power Conditioner

San Antonio Credit Union has an excess power conditioner (Liebert, Model #CAC030C, size 30kVA, weight 1,600 lbs., dimensions 36"x34"x64"). It used to feed a piece of equipment that has been removed. The equipment is located at SACU's main building at 6061 IH-10 West (corner of Vance Jackson and IH-10). Price is negotiable. Please contact Bill Humes (210-258-1360, bhumes@sacu.com).

### For Sale at One Oak Park

- Misc. Fan Coil Units (\$40-\$100 ea., or make offer)
- Misc. 9' Power Poles (make offer)
- Misc. Down Lights and 2x4 Fixture (make offer)
- Misc. Supply and Return Diffusers (make offer)

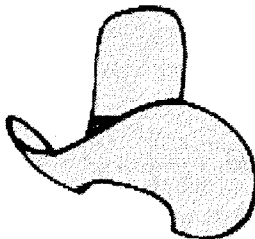
Please contact Doug Graves (210-828-7712, doug\_graves@hines.com).



If you have some unused or old equipment that your building is looking to sell, please send the details to Laura Bray (laurabray@braycommunications.com, fax 210-408-1799). This is a free member benefit to SAABE members. ❖

## TRADE SHOW AT THE OK CORRAL

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! THE SABOMA/SAABE TRADE SHOW IS BACK - THURSDAY, MAY 22 AT THE AIRPORT CONVENTION CENTER FROM 4:30-8:00 PM. VENDOR BOOTHS ARE SELLING FAST. SO SEND IN YOUR RESERVATION AND PAYMENT TODAY. YOU CAN FIND AN EXHIBITOR CONTRACT AND BOOTH MAP ON OUR WEB SITE AT WWW.SAABE.ORG. OR CALL (830) 981-5223.



## Equipment Survey

SAABE has begun the process of developing a database of installed equipment in the buildings of SAABE members. When completed, this database will provide SAABE members an invaluable resource when troubleshooting problems or purchasing new equipment. You can look up specific equipment and equipment types in the database, then give that engineer a call to find out more.

But we can't do it without your input! At the next several SAABE membership meetings, you'll receive a section of the survey to complete (each section pertains to one category of equipment, such as HVAC). You'll complete the survey at the meeting and leave it at the registration desk. SAABE will take care of the rest.

Please participate in this important new member benefit. If you have any questions, please call SAABE treasurer Doug Graves at (210) 828-7712. ❖

## Welcome New Members

### **BR Services**

PO Box 2764  
Cedar Park, TX 78613  
Amy Ables: (512) 331-1086

### **Chem-Aqua**

9651 Spring Harvest  
San Antonio, TX 78254  
Theron Mund: (210) 884-2441

### **Randy Najvar**

Blackmon Mooring  
4808 Perrin Creek  
San Antonio, TX 78217  
(210) 342-4441

### **Tim Titus**

Jones Lang LaSalle  
3500 Wiseman  
San Antonio, TX 78251  
(210) 474-4530

### **Joe Alvarado**

**Floyd McDonald**  
Kennedy Wilson  
1001 San Pedro  
San Antonio, TX 78216  
(210) 342-2248 ❖

## Luncheon Guest Fees & RSVPs

Beginning with the April luncheon, the guest fee for attending a SAABE luncheon will increase to **\$20**. Regular members may still attend luncheons at no charge, and the cost to affiliate members is still \$15.

Our luncheons are a great way to meet new people and share ideas. When you RSVP for a meeting, we order a meal for you at the Old San Francisco Steak House. If you then don't attend the meeting, your meal sits there uneaten.

Everyone has last minute emergencies. But if you have RSVP'd for a lunch and cannot attend, **please** call or email Laura Bray (210-408-1699, [laurabray@braycommunications.com](mailto:laurabray@braycommunications.com)) and let her know that you cannot attend.

Regular members who RSVP and do not attend will be billed \$5 to help defray the cost of the uneaten meal. As usual, associate members who RSVP and do not attend be invoiced for the full cost of the meal (\$15).

It's also important to RSVP when you plan to attend. If you don't RSVP, we might not have enough food!

Please help us use your membership dues wisely and **cancel** your RSVP if you cannot attend! We appreciate your help! ❖

## "What Is It?" Contest

Log on to SAABE's web site at [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org) for a new contest called "What is It?" Each month, we'll post a new photo of some piece of equipment. If you know what it is, send an email to [laurabray@braycommunications.com](mailto:laurabray@braycommunications.com). The member who has the most right guesses by the December holiday luncheon will receive a nice prize. ❖

## Job Listings

Are you looking for someone to add to your staff? Post your open positions on SAABE's web site, [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org). This service is free of charge to SAABE members. Send your job listing to Laura Bray (fax 210-408-1799, email [laurabray@braycommunications.com](mailto:laurabray@braycommunications.com)). ❖

## The Daily Chronicle

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## SAABE TIMES April Issue

### *Final Thought:*

*"The major difference between a thing that might go wrong and a thing that cannot possibly go wrong is that when a thing that cannot possibly go wrong goes wrong it usually turns out to be impossible to get at or repair."*

– Douglas Adams

### 2003 Board of Directors

|                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
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| Tom Lasater<br>1st Vice President    | 521-4494 |
| Cesar Alvarado<br>2nd Vice President | 357-2258 |
| Kendal Langenberg<br>Secretary       | 967-8766 |
| Doug Graves<br>Treasurer             | 828-7712 |
| Jock Tilghman<br>Education Director  | 681-2494 |
| Tim Young<br>Vendor Representative   | 651-5588 |
| Elena Castillo<br>Past President     | 822-8570 |

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Laura Bray 408-1699  
 Association Coordinator  
 (laurabray@braycommunications.com)

### Membership Luncheon April 16, 2003

**Time:** 11:30 a.m.

**Location:** Old San Francisco Steakhouse

**Program:**

Topic to be announced

**Upcoming Luncheon:**

**May 21, 2003**

Program to be Announced

**Mark Your Calendars NOW for the  
 SAABE/SABOMA Trade Show!**

**May 22, 2003, 4:30-8:00pm**

**Airport Convention Center**

The *SAABE Times* is edited by Laura Bray and printed monthly for the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers by:



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 email: inkspot@onr.com