



SAABE TIMES

A publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

December 2002

Mark Your Calendar—

JOIN US FOR OUR DECEMBER LUNCHEON

Please join us on Wednesday, December 18 at the Old San Francisco Steakhouse for our annual holiday luncheon. Pick up your 2003 Membership Directory if you haven't already done so. We will be collecting clothing for a **holiday clothing drive**. Please drop off your donations in the box when you register. Bring your business cards – starting with the December meeting, we'll have a table for you to leave your cards, to help facilitate networking.

We hope to see you there! ❖

2003 Board Elections

At the December meeting, SAABE members will elect the following board members: President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, Treasurer, and Vendor Representative. Your vote is important, so please attend our December luncheon! ❖

Tech Talk #67

by The Charlie

TEN TIPS FOR CRAFTING EYE-CATCHING COVER LETTERS

Your cover letter presents your intentions, qualifications, and availability to a prospective employer in a succinct and appealing format. As your first chance to make a great impression, a personalized letter indicates you are serious about your job search. Your resume can give the nitty-gritty of dates, places of employment, and education, but your cover letter must entice the reader to consider you amidst the possibly hundreds of candidates for any one job opening.

1. Do You Really Need a Cover Letter?

You bet! Just as you would never show up unannounced at a prospective employer's door, your resume should never just appear solo on a decision maker's desk. Your cover letter is your first opportunity to introduce yourself, present your qualifications and show the search committee you are a potential candidate for the advertised position.

2. Personalize It to the Company.

Anyone can reproduce a "canned" cover letter and hope for the best. Instead, take a few minutes to personalize your letter to show a company you are serious about working there. State the reason for your interest in the company. Show that you have done your homework by mentioning company specifics such as a department, a new project, or a recent acquisition. Address the cover letter to a specific individual whenever possible.

3. Why are You Sending Your Resume and Cover Letter?

Cover letters should be clear and to the point. Include the specific job title, two to three reasons why your experience makes a good fit, and a brief outline of your career highlights.

4. Highlight Your Strengths.

You may be a great person and never call in sick, but prospective employers really want to know why they should consider you for this position. Brag a little! Give a few facts, list relevant skills, and state accomplishments on recent jobs that will be impressive.

Examples:

- Decreased operating expenses by 13%.
- Negotiated new maintenance agreements or purchase agreements.
- Implemented new training programs that reduced staff turnover by 15%.

(Continued on page 3)

A Message from the President

by Elena C. Castillo

The time has come to relinquish my position as President and allow the new person to take over, managing the agendas for the year 2003 through 2004. This December will be the last time I will write an article as president; however, I am sure there will be more "Opinions" or "Tio Saabe" articles I will be contributing to.

But for now, I reflect back on my last two years serving as president. During my presidency, the organization has added over twenty members to its membership. A lot of this had to do with the membership committee and the members themselves bringing in guests and signing them up as members.

We were able to rely on the lunch sponsorships from several faithful members at our monthly membership meetings. Their presentations brought us invaluable information about the community, introduced new laws going into effect, updating us on ADA requirements for our buildings, security issues, etc.

Our organization also felt the tragedy the United States encountered when we were attacked by terrorists threatening our very existence. We watched helplessly as hundreds leaped to their deaths, and we watched our twin towers reduced to a pile of rubble before our eyes. It was then we really became one, united under God. It was then that we took steps to protect and take care of our families, our homes, our workplaces, and our places of worship. We took a stand, together.

Last year, the SAABE/BOMA trade show also brought us together with the building owners and managers. Working in conjunction with each other also brought us better working relationships, giving building engineers an opportunity to meet with other building owners and managers. With over 40 vendors, every person who attended the trade show walked away with a door prize, a pocket full of candy, or valuable information and samples for their workplace.

There were several building tours during the last two years. Danny and Veronica at Alamo Towers had an enormous transformation at their central plant. They went from a small room filled with all their old equipment to a huge plant area, covering brand new, state-of-the-art controls to run their towers, and more. Bill at San Antonio Credit Union had us "locked in" after hours and showed us their equipment room and more. Don't worry about ever getting lost in his building – they will find you. The system operations tour at the CPS Service Center building (set up by Judy Garcia) was also a tour out of this world – I mean, city. This department has the means to monitor and adjust the electrical power feeding the cities outside of the San Antonio area. If you missed this tour, perhaps someone can make arrangements to tour the new facility on San Pedro Avenue.

In January 2001, we began the mighty task of putting SAABE on its own website. With the help of the board members, some of the membership, and some outside help, we were up and running in six months. Currently, our website is managed by Laura Bray, who is constantly improving the site and making sure all information is up to date.

Throughout my two years, I saw vendors who graciously raised their hands, promising a door prize for the next meeting. Of course, this has been an ongoing thing for as long as I can recall, but I will remember these two years as the best. I hope the vendors continue to donate door prizes, as this is also an incentive for the members who attend.

In September 2001, we moved from the Barn Door Restaurant to the Old San Francisco Steakhouse. Personally, I think membership climbed during this period because of the food being served.

A donation of \$1,000 was given to Sam Rayburn in August 2001, but due to the number of luncheons SAABE paid for in 2002, we found it difficult to make a donation this year. Perhaps more vendors can sponsor luncheons in 2003 and make this possible again.

There are so many wonderful things that happened within our organization these past couple of years, but the best memories I have include the members. I have made so many friends, so many caring friends, who would not hesitate to give the shirt off their back or give their last dollar for a cause. These friends are special and close to my heart. I can only hope that I personally have made a lasting impression in their hearts too.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year! ❖

Scott Meyerkord
Existing Building Sales Consultant



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Tech Talk #67*(Continued from page 1)***5. State Your Intentions and Qualifications Right up Front.**

Don't expect a senior personnel manager or property manager to wade through a mish-mash of information on your cover letter before understanding why you are sending your resume.

6. What Makes You Different?

Emphasize your skills, talents and experiences to show how you would be a valuable addition to the team. If you have relevant volunteer or professional experience, mention it briefly in your cover letter. For example, if you are an engineer who serves as volunteer treasurer for a nonprofit community health organization, include that information. Or if you are in marketing and have lived in Europe and Asia and speak several languages, add that to your letter.

7. No Negative Information.

Never include personality conflicts with previous employers, pending litigation suits, or sarcastic remarks in your cover letter. If you are bad-mouthing your present place of employment, interviewers may fear a repeat performance if they hire you.

8. When Should You Include Salary and/or Relocation Information?

The rule of thumb is to always include salary requirements and/or salary history in the cover letter if a prospective employer requests it. For example, you could write: "My salary requirements are \$60,000-\$75,000 (negotiable)." Or you might write: "My current salary is \$53,000 at XYZ corporation." Eliminating this information from your cover letter may justify your resume getting tossed out. Never include salary and relocation information on your resume – only address this information in your cover letter.

9. Take Action Steps.

Take a proactive approach in your cover letter. State the fact that you are available for a personal interview; give your home, work, email, and/or cell phone numbers where you can be reached; note that you will follow up by phone (whenever possible) to provide any additional information

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required.

10. Be Direct!

A professionally written cover letter and resume can open the door to your next position on the corporate ladder or to a new career in a different field. A clean, error-free presentation, combined with strong phrasing and solid facts, will encourage the reader to review the attached resume and call you in for an interview.

CHARLIE'S LAW: The reason Santa is very jolly is because he knows where all the bad girls live!

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November Luncheon: Boiler Safety

November's luncheon featured speaker Rick Boers (from Honeywell Burner Boiler), speaking on the importance of boiler safety controls. The meeting was sponsored by Amcon Controls.

Even though the state has regulations concerning boilers themselves, there are **no** regulations governing the controls on the boilers. So it's up to building engineers to make sure the systems are operating properly. Rick reviewed the safety control systems on boilers.

Boilers are one of the few pieces of equipment in which a failure could cause catastrophic injury to a large number of people in your building. So it's vitally important to make sure the control systems are working properly.

Don't miss the December SAABE program – come and visit with other building engineers and learn from their experiences. ❖

May Trade Show: We Need Volunteers!

SAABE holds its bi-annual trade show (in cooperation with BOMA-San Antonio) in May, and we need your help to make the event successful! The planning committee holds its first meeting in January. If you'd like to volunteer for the committee, please call Laura Bray (408-1699). ❖



THANK YOU 2002 Meeting Sponsors!

SAABE would like to thank our meeting sponsors for 2002:

City Public Service Voss Lighting

Holt Power Systems Ed Flume Building Specialties

York International Amcon Controls, Inc.

If you'd like to sponsor a meeting, please contact SAABE president Elena Castillo. ❖

We need meeting sponsors! Associate members can sponsor a SAABE luncheon and provide a speaker on your field of expertise. It's a great way to show off your knowledge and experience to the SAABE membership.

Sponsorship cost is \$500. Please contact SAABE President Elena Castillo if you would like to sponsor an upcoming meeting. ❖

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Designing the Ultimate Residential HVAC System

- February 28-March 1, 8:30 am-5:30 pm
- Location: Core Distributing, San Antonio
- Presented by Hank Rutkowski, P.E.
- Cost: \$499 per person.
- To register or for more information:
www.hvacandplumbing.com.

If you know of other upcoming training courses, please contact Laura Bray (408-1699) so she can include them in upcoming newsletter issues. ❖

RSVPs are Important

SAABE's monthly membership luncheons are a great way to meet new people and share ideas. Regular members receive a free lunch as part of their membership dues; lunch is only \$15 for associate members.

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. At several recent meetings, SAABE has thrown away over fifteen uneaten meals due to no-shows. This has cost SAABE nearly \$500—a waste of your important membership dues.

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) 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 will be invoiced for the full cost of the meal (\$15).

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

The Daily Chronicle

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SAABE TIMES December Issue

Final Thought:

When you become senile, you won't know it. – *Bill Cosby*

2002 Board of Directors

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<hr/>	
Laura Bray Association Coordinator (laurabray@braycommunications.com)	408-1699

Membership Luncheon December 18, 2002

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Location: Old San Francisco Steakhouse

Program:
 Annual Holiday Luncheon

Upcoming Luncheon:
January 15, 2003
Building Engineer of the Year

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

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