



SAABE TIMES

A publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

March 2008

Mark Your Calendar—

JOIN US FOR OUR MARCH MEETING!

The next General Membership Meeting of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers is set for 11:30 am on Wednesday, March 19, at the Alamo Cafe on 281 (just north of Bitters). This month's speaker is Paul Dockery with Chemsearch, and the topic will be "GREEN Buildings/LEEDS."

The meeting will be held in the first floor Travis/Bowie rooms, to the right of the entrance. There is plenty of parking at the back of the restaurant. **Please make sure to check in at the front desk when you arrive.** Please do not leave valuables in your vehicle, as members have reported attempted break-ins in the restaurant parking lot.

RSVP to (210) 408-1699 by Tuesday, March 18.

PLEASE RSVP so we can be sure to have enough meals on hand! ♦

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Engineer Spotlight

by Jeff Turov

Jeff Ackerman



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• **What was your reaction to being selected as a spotlight subject?**

My personal reaction was fairly neutral. However, my co-workers took the ball and ran with it and have ribbed me about it ever since the luncheon—from awarding me with a crown, a necklace and a trophy, to insisting that I get more in touch with my feminine side in regards to answering the interview questions. Overall, I have enjoyed the whole experience.

• **How long in the building engineer trade?**

I have been involved in the building engineer trade for approximately six years, and over that time period, have worked for a lot of nice people that have made the experience much more enjoyable. During this time, I have worked for both a building maintenance contractor and directly for the property management company—and, I must say, that working directly is the best way to go. Currently, I help keep three area properties running smoothly for MSG. I also served in the Army for 11 years with the 82nd and 18th Airborne Divisions.

• **Any awards, recognition, or special training?**

In a previous life, I worked for a commercial construction company, and on two different occasions, received the OSHA award for safe work habits. While employed for Lillibridge, I received the esteemed "Gold Chip Award." This recognition was given to me due to my keen ability to baffle certain folks with the proverbial B.S. The award itself was readily available on the property manager's farm and easily assembled as it was a cow chip painted gold and mounted on a piece of plywood.

• **What one childhood event affected you the most as an adult?**

It was probably when I was around eight or nine and was tinkering with an old antique lamp that was not working. This lamp had the fabric insulated cord, and, as I jiggled and inspected it for problems, I was surprised at how quickly the jolt of electricity got my attention. Hence, my winning the OSHA safety award years later.

• **Hobbies/what do you enjoy during off-hours?**

I love to hunt and have been involved in the game of baseball for most of my life either as a player or a coach. Throwing a good game of horseshoes or washers is always enjoyable whether you win or lose. I also enjoy grilling Sunday dinner on the BBQ with family and friends around.

(Continued on page 7)

A Message from the President

by Charles Mikolajczyk, CBE-M

The end of the first quarter is nearly upon us, and has anyone really seen Old Man Winter this year? With all the anomalies regarding the weather over the past year, I'm not sure what this year has in store for us. One thing for sure, we need rain and lots of it! Another for sure item is the 4th Annual SAABE Picnic at the Lake on June 14! Also, AAFAME is having their 16th Annual Chili Slam at Zilker Park in Austin on April 24. Please be sure to mark your calendars and watch for additional updates. Finally, it was great to see you at the annual Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Chili Cook-off earlier this month!

Thank you all for sending in your RSVP's for the SAABE general membership luncheons. As you are aware, the attendance has been phenomenal, and we are outgrowing the capacity of the meeting room. Please note that the SAABE Board of Directors has been aware of this and has actually gone through great pains to find a new meeting place. It is really more difficult than one would think to find a new location (i.e. space for a seated meal for more than 100 people, keeping the expenses reasonable, a convenient location, away from construction, plenty of parking, security, casual attire, etc.). In the interim, please continue to send in your RSVPs. This information helps us ensure enough plates are ready for everyone attending as we continue to seek an establishment that can handle our needs well into the future.

Being ahead of my time (or the simple fact that time between article submission and newsletter distribution can take up to three weeks), March is going to be a busy month, so be sure and try to take some Mental Relaxation Time (MRT) when possible. March brings: March Madness, the time change (DST), the beginning of Spring, Easter and backyard BBQ's. Be sure and spend some quality MRT with your family and friends...it does your body good!

We would like to thank Firetrol Protection, Inc. and Brandt Engineering respectively for providing the Last-Thursdays Training in January (Fire Systems) and February (HVAC 101). It is great to have vendors like these that provide SAABE members with education and training on today's building systems. Also, thanks to Gerloff, Sloan, Simplex and others who provided training classes in 2007. If any other vendors would like to participate in the SAABE Last-Thursdays Training, please contact Tom Lasater or Allen Mangrum.

One of the most difficult parts of the building engineer's duties nowadays are often the most unnoticed. Nothing stays the same, and changes in operations and technology are constant. Keeping up to date with these changes is an occupation in itself...keeping well-versed can be overwhelming. These changes can be as subtle as changing the operating software in your PC to as difficult as renovating the EMS/BAS and fire alarm systems and keeping current with the applicable codes. Case in point: Did you know that soon, if you renovate a building restroom and have a fully ADA/TAS accessible stall, there is no need to have an ADA/TAS compliant urinal (17" AFF)? Check with your ADA/TAS/RAS specialist and get approval beforehand because this is not yet

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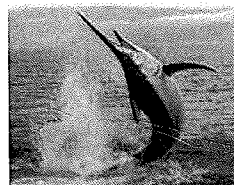
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finalized, but one of the most common complaints in today's buildings stems from low height of the urinals...this could be your ticket if you're in the planning stages of your renovations!

One of the best fast-track ways to get up to speed is the use of a network. The SAABE network is at your fingertips. By the mass of members alone, someone, somewhere already knows their way around a particular item/system. At the least, this will allow you to get up to speed in the shortest amount of time. Your SAABE Directory is full of building engineers and vendors to help you through this transition. And, the 2008 Directory will soon be on its way to you.

In parting, please be sure and RSVP to the SAABE luncheons....Till then, FISH ON! ♦





Vendor Rep Report

by Allen Mangrum

As promised, below is the proposed luncheon schedule for 2008:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
3/19/08	"GREEN Buildings/LEEDS"	ChemSearch
4/16/08	"City MEP Inspectors"	SAWS
5/21/08	TBD	Dimension Contracting
6/14/08	Summer Social - Picnic	
7/16/08	"Maintenance & Regulations"	Holt CAT
8/20/08	TBD	TD Industries
9/17/08	TBD	Voss Lighting
10/15/08	"SAWS Water Conservation"	TBD
11/19/08	"Future of Road Construction"	TBD
12/17/08	Board Elections/Year End Awards	Board

As you can see, there are some exciting things happening this year. This month, Paul Dockery, with ChemSearch, will give a presentation on "GREEN Buildings/LEEDS." And, we will be announcing the BEOTY winners.

For any vendors out there who are still interested in sponsoring a luncheon, the October and November luncheons are available. Also, stay tuned for the June picnic sponsorship opportunities. If you are interested in sponsoring either of the events, please contact me at (210) 414-6529 or Laura Bray at (210) 408-1699.

Thank you again to all the vendors that provide support to SAABE.

See ya'll at the luncheon.

P.S. Remember to RSVP for the luncheons!!❖

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Contacts:

Ronnie Shaner: rshanner@brandteng.com

David Felts: dfelts@brandteng.com

Matthew Dunn: mdunn@brandteng.com

Bobby Woodie: bwoodie@brandteng.com

Education Corner

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- March 24, Doubletree Airport
- Cost: \$199
- Visit www.nationalseminarstraining.com to register

Basic Electricity for the Non-Electrician

- Sponsored by American Trainco
- March 31-April 1, Comfort Inn & Suites Airport
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Air Conditioning and Refrigeration

- Sponsored by American Trainco
- April 7-8, Comfort Inn & Suites Airport
- Cost: \$890
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Building Codes

- Sponsored by Lorman Education Services
- April 10, Crowne Plaza, Austin
- Cost: \$339
- Visit www.lorman.com to register

Green or Sustainable Construction

- Sponsored by Lorman Education Services
- April 11, Holiday Inn Riverwalk
- Find out how green development practices reduce risk, improve your bottom line & improve our environment
- Cost: \$349
- Visit www.lorman.com to register ❖

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Job Openings

There are several job openings currently listed on the SAABE website (www.saabe.org). Visit the site for full details.

If you have job openings, please forward them to laurabray@braycommunications.com for posting. ❖



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Last Thursday Training Seminar: "Plumbing Q & A"

The February Last Thursday Training Seminar, sponsored by Brandt Engineering, covered basic refrigeration principles. SAABE member Carlos De La Garza said, "It was fantastic. Everyone in the class got something from it."

This month's Last Thursday Training Seminar is presented by Bolin Plumbing. The topic is "Plumbing Q & A," and the speaker will be Robert Stricker, the City of San Antonio Chief Plumbing Inspector.

Where: CPS Energy's Northside Service Center (7000 San Pedro, north of Oblate)

When: Thursday, March 27, 11:30 am

The seminar is open to all SAABE members. RSVP soon, since classes fill up quickly. Limited to the first 25 RSVPs. RSVP to Laura Bray at (210) 408-1699 or e-mail laurabray@braycommunications.com.

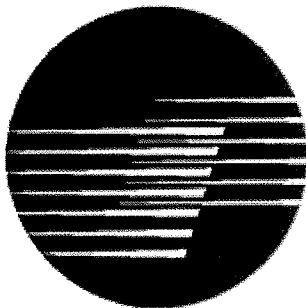
For more information about Bolin Plumbing, contact Greg Bolin at (210) 688-3177. ❖

February Lunch Summary by Robert Andrews, Jr.

Another month and another meeting gone by. We had 94 RSVPs for the February meeting sponsored by Joe W. Fly Company! Keith Jordan with Sanuvox Technologies showed us all how much a well-placed ultraviolet light can reduce biological and chemical pollutants. Everything from mold, bacteria, viruses, and allergens to diesel fumes, pet odors, and cigarette smoke can be removed easily. These special uv-c and uv-v bulbs can be placed in ductwork and on coils. There are also portable and tile mount purifiers for special areas.

As Keith said, "These lights are an exact science—they are not a one-size-fits-all." They also do not replace the need for filters. To greatly reduce the possibility of "sick building syndrome" in your system, both the filters and ultraviolet lights should be in place. If you would like more information, contact Will Fawcett at (210) 946-1688 or at wfawcett@joeflyco.com. Not only does Joe Fly have your ultraviolet lighting needs covered, but your air and water filtration needs as well.

Please remember to RSVP to the next luncheon on March 19 sponsored by ChemSearch. ❖



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Apply for the SAABE Scholarship/Educational Assistance Program

SAABE now offers a program to provide scholarships and educational assistance to SAABE members for participation in courses related to property maintenance (especially *SMT/SMA programs offered by the BOMI Institute).

Applicants must be regular members of SAABE and hold a position in the field of building maintenance. The place of business must be within the San Antonio geographic area. Applicants must have long-term career plans in building engineering/maintenance and must have at least two years of experience in the field. Applicants are responsible for a portion of the cost of any course.

For full details, rules and an application, visit the SAABE website at www.saabe.org. ❖

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BOMI Discussion/Action Group

The BOMI group comprises individuals from all levels of building maintenance that meet bimonthly to review materials for the Systems Maintenance Technician (SMT) certification. (For more information on the certification, visit www.bomi-edu.org.)

The group is currently reviewing the Air Handling, Water Treatment and Plumbing Systems section of the SMT in preparation for the exam in April or May of this year. Below are some additional details:

- Meet every first and second Thursday at Union Square Building (10101 Reunion Place, suite 170), 11:30 am—1:00 pm. Reunion Place is off of Jones-Maltsberger south of the airport. Parking is at the rear of the building adjacent to the loading dock.
- Led by Tom Lasater
- Free to SAABE members. Bring a sack lunch.
- For more information, call Tom at (210) 771-5824. ❖

RSVPs are Important!

Please RSVP if you plan to attend the monthly luncheon. RSVPs are very important – they let us know how many meals to order! ❖

Engineer Spotlight

(continued from page 1)

• Family/Children?

I have been married to my wife for 15 years and have five sons between the ages of 11 and 23. My wife is also a property manager which keeps me on my best behavior, as word travels fast in this profession.

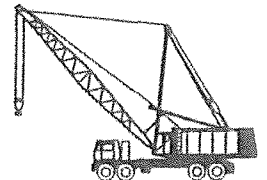
• What is your outlook on life?

Humor is the greatest stress relief there is. As long as you can laugh at your mistakes and enjoy the company of others, it will be much easier to keep that spring in your step. ❖

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Tech Talk #118

The Plain & Simple Truth About Building Maintenance by Charles Mikolajczyk, CBE-M

Over the years, many things have changed in our industry; some have survived and remained the same, some have not. We are referring to how some buildings can become maintained in the most undesirable manner. This can best be illustrated by breaking this into different categories—Productive Maintenance, Preventative Maintenance, and Destructive Maintenance.

Productive or Proactive Maintenance (√+) is best applied to a property where a well-versed building engineer performs a daily inspection of all operating equipment. This highly skilled individual can detect abnormalities by sound or other characteristics. This ability is developed through both experience and repetitiveness. Yes, it is boring, but this individual can detect when a piece of equipment is not happy. That is the best way to put it. When a piece of equipment is not happy, something must be done to make it happy, or it will get an attitude and become angry. Nothing works right with an attitude, and it will only become angry if left unattended. Therefore, Productive Maintenance fixes items as they become apparent, not after they are angry.

Preventative/Preventive Maintenance (√) is a scheduled task at pre-set intervals and works best when also used with Productive Maintenance. The difference is that Productive Maintenance is merely an operational check-up between Preventative Maintenance schedules. During Preventative Maintenance, the equipment is stopped and inspected, cleaned, lubricated, data logged, etc. This is not only for the large chillers, package units, etc.; it also applies to the Air Handling Units, small HVAC units, etc. Unfortunately, many of today's buildings, for one reason or another, may not have experienced or enough staff to perform this task in-house. This work is then performed by a vendor typically under an agreement (we will cover maintenance agreements later in this article). All in all, Preventative Maintenance catches many things beforehand, but just as many things can get by or occur between intervals. This exemplifies the necessity for Productive Maintenance and skilled building engineers.

Destructive Maintenance is best defined as equipment that only receives attention after it fails (i.e. it has gone from unhappy, to an attitude, and it is now angry and too late). A simple bearing replacement that could have re-established this item to being happy has turned into a catastrophic event costing much more money and a possible failure during prime time. Now you are looking at down-time, additional worn items (i.e., shafts, housings, etc.), unhappy tenants and so on. Don't go here or get here!


Contracted Maintenance is when a vendor is used to perform the maintenance of the building systems. This could be because the task is too overwhelming for the building engineer, or a tenant may have special needs and equipment. It could also be due to constraints by the landlord or the attractiveness of having the security of a set dollar amount each month to cover

maintenance repairs. For the most part, nearly all major equipment will have a Preventive Maintenance agreement where a skilled individual performs this routine duty at predetermined intervals. In other instances, a Full Maintenance Agreement may be implemented on any or all equipment to cover the service and repairs.

The downside to a Full Service Agreement is that it is basically like insurance or an investment. In this application, labor and parts are inclusive, but certain items such as heat exchangers and other large ticket items may not be part of the agreement. Depending on how it is written (the exclusions, etc.), these agreements can work for you or against you. The only way this can work for you is when a well seasoned building engineer has knowledge of the agreement and oversees the work being performed. This could range from 24x7x365 to only certain hours, certain equipment, certain components within the equipment, etc. However, if the personnel involved are less than seasoned, or no one is involved at all, this can fall into the Destructive Maintenance category in a hurry. In other instances it is not uncommon to see "shotgun maintenance," where one makes an appearance, but nothing gets checked and the recording is pencil whipped. There are way too many variables where things can turn into a different direction; one has to keep things in check!

Typically, a Full Service Agreement will go out for bids. Hopefully, in order to keep the comparison "apples to apples," details were defined in the RFP. Now, in order to be competitive, one's pencil needs to be sharp. In other words, let's say it will take 20 hours a month to perform the Preventative Maintenance, and perhaps 4 hours per week for

(Continued on page 9)



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Tech Talk #118

(Continued from page 8)

service calls. One may cut corners and only bid for 15 hours per month and 2 hours per week to make their proposal monetarily attractive to the person requesting the RFP. Now, if the bid is awarded, the only way to make this profitable is to shorten the amount of actual time on the project. I am not implying that all Full Service Agreements are smoke and mirrors—some work and work well. However, some don't!

As an example, let's take this situation. During Productive Maintenance, an unusual noise is detected by the building engineer, prompting an inspection. It has been determined that one of the two belts on an air handler has cracks and one of the sheaves is worn and needs replacement.

Productive Maintenance: In turn, the building engineer will momentarily stop the equipment to make an inspection of the belts and sheaves, secure a matched set of two new belts, two new sheaves (probably adjustable types), record the rpm and the amperage, plan and shut down the equipment, replace both sheaves and both belts (matched set), align the sheaves, adjust the belt tension, replace the guards, and test the equipment (i.e. amperage, rpm, pressure, lubricant, etc.) and clean up after himself. Then, he documents everything into the PM log. (Cost: materials and maybe some after-hours labor.)

Service Call: The building engineer may have the option to contact a vendor for service. In this instance, and for the sake of running a profitable business, a technician can come by and look at the equipment, leave to pick up two belts, come back and install, then determine that a sheave needs to be replaced, leave and go pick up a new sheave or two, come back and find that the part is wrong or that a puller is not on the truck, go back to parts house and pick up more materials, come back, install new parts and spend the rest of the day on this project. (Cost: 6-hours labor, many parts, many miles, many frustrated tenants.)

Full Service: A technician is called to come out, look at the issue, leave to pick up "a single belt," come back (today or tomorrow), spin the new belt onto the sheaves without any relief or adjustments, and leave. (Cost: No cost to the owner, only 2-hours labor and one belt for the service company.)

Now, this is not to imply that all Full Service Agreements are bad. Some work for you, some work against you. The only way for the Property Manager or Building Engineer to keep from getting into this situation is to know exactly what the terms/scope are in the agreement, and to have a qualified person oversee what is being done. There are many good folks out there, but there are also a few on the wrong side of the fence as well! If you need assistance in writing an RFP for a Full Service Agreement, please feel free to contact me for more information.

What we are trying to illustrate is that well seasoned maintenance personnel are a must for each asset (building). It is an injustice to the landlord to try this in any other manner. However, there are landlords out there with bizarre constraints as well.

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Economic Stimulus Payments

Starting in May, the U.S. Treasury will begin sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million households. To receive a payment, taxpayers must have a valid Social Security number, \$3,000 of income and file a 2007 federal tax return. IRS will take care of the rest.

Eligible taxpayers will receive between \$300 to \$600 if single or \$600 to \$1,200 if married filing jointly. For more information, visit www.irs.gov. ❖



SAABE
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Charles Mikolajczyk Jr
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SAABE TIMES March Issue

Final Thought:

"A government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul." —George Bernard Shaw

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March Membership Meeting: Wednesday, March 19

"GREEN Buildings/LEEDS"
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Location: Alamo Café on 281
11:30 am

Upcoming Program:
Wednesday, April 16
"City MEP Inspectors"
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