

Sections and Chapters Council Meeting

Ron Farley, Vice Chair

I represented the Southern Section at the Sections and Chapters Council ("S&CC") meeting in Chicago on October 3 & 4, 2009. Much of the meeting was intended to prepare for the pending change in leadership of the S&CC that will occur in January as the new Council officers take their positions. The Council's primary responsibilities are to encourage and monitor the viability of the Association's individual Sections and Chapters, to facilitate communication among the various Sections and Chapters, and to serve as a liaison between those entities and the Association's Executive Board and staff. Much of the discussion centered on the health of these entities from both financial and membership perspectives.

Generally, it appears that the individual Sections and Chapters are, for the most part, viable and financially sound. There are a few exceptions to this, but on the whole, these individual entities appear to be in good shape. Unfortunately, the same does not appear to be true of the international Association.

That the Association itself is experiencing difficult financial issues is not new information. It was the point of much of the presentation by Robert Hall, the Association's Acting Executive Director during the A&WMA Annual Meeting in Detroit in June. What was somewhat surprising is the apparent magnitude of the situation. The Association is expecting an operating loss of approximately \$550,000 for this calendar year. There has also been a significant drop in the Association's reserve fund. That fund was \$1.1 million on January 1, 2009, and it is forecast to be reduced to approximately \$690,000 by the end of this year.

These financial issues were described as having their origin in two primary areas: membership and revenues from programs and publications. Membership is down, apparently substantially from the end of 2008, and programs and publications have not brought in expected revenues. Recent specialty conferences have not been well attended, and planning for next year has been very limited. Of a total of 13 specialty conferences tentatively planned for 2010, only 8 have any substantive planning at

this time, and the first specialty conference is not currently scheduled until May. Some of this has to do with the fact that, as of the date this article was prepared, the Association was still seeking a permanent Executive Director and also to fill other key staff slots. Currently, headquarters staff is down to 18 persons, well below a staffing level of approximately 55 that was in place only recently.

What, if anything, can individual Sections and Chapters do to relieve these problems? Initially, it is important to recognize that many of the Sections and Chapters, perhaps understandably, focus only on associate memberships and do not encourage their members to join the international Association. For whatever reasons, membership in the Association is dropping. Officially, it is said to be down over 5%, but some within the Association indicate that the number is actually significantly higher. One step the Association is taking to try to reverse this trend is to contact lapsed members and offering a special rate to re-join the Association. Under this program, individuals whose membership lapsed prior to September 30, 2008, and renew their membership for \$135.00 rather than the normal fee of \$180. This discount will be good for the remainder of this year.

Finally, the financial health of the Association could be bolstered considerably from a strong turnout at next annual meeting in Calgary in June, 2010. Those representatives at the Chicago meeting were asked to encourage their respective Sections and Chapters to send members to the annual meeting.

For many of us, our involvement with the A&WMA is focused on our individual Chapters, and occasionally on the Section. Direct involvement with the Association itself is very limited. Nonetheless, the Association provides an important umbrella of organization and support services. It deserves our efforts to help it overcome these immediate problems and to set it on a sound financial footing. The Section will be monitoring these issues over the coming months, and we encourage you to take steps individually to help relieve this situation.

Notes from the Editor

Justice Manning

This newsletter comes with an apology, which is the last thing with which one wants to begin any correspondence. Nevertheless, your editor has done a poor job of keeping you apprised of the happenings within the Section, as well as the Association, this year. With that behind me, I want to report what must be one of the most rewarding experiences for the Section this year. We had our own **Dallas Baker**, Secretary, Mississippi Chapter, nominated and elected to the **International Board of Directors**. Of course, Dallas deserves a hearty **CONGRATULATIONS** from all of us. He will represent our Section and the Association well.

We have been fortunate with Section leadership again this year. Both the Chair and Vice Chair have attended key training/meeting events sponsored by HQ. Elizabeth Peeler, Chair, attended the Leadership Training Institute in Pittsburgh in April. She plans to post some material of interest to leaders on our web site later this year. Ron Farley, Vice Chair, attended the Sections and Chapters Council (S&CC) in October in Chicago. His summary of the meeting with some interesting news, not all of which is good, is the lead article for this issue of the newsletter. A note to supplement his report of the reduced staff that likely is of interest to many of you is that Karen Houlihan, member services representative, was one of those caught in the reduction in force in May 2009.

Without exception to my knowledge, all leaders in the Association, whether local or national, have found their experience to be rewarding, with its value depending on the individual serving. Because of the need to help the Association grow, I would like to add my own 2¢ worth on the value of serving at the International level. I was Secretary and Chair of the Health and Environmental Effects Committee (AT-3) in the Air Toxics Pollutant Division, Air Group, Technical Council in the late 80s to mid-90s. This was, and remains, an invaluable effort for professional development for me. Another of our Section members, Stan Vasa, is serving as chair of the Toxic Air Pollutants Division through June 30, 2012. You may access the following web site to get his contact

information.

(http://www.awma.org/about/tech_council/index.html)

I'm sure he would be happy to discuss the benefits of such service with anyone interested. Of course, many other divisions are available in the Technical Council, as well as the other council in the Association, i.e., Education Council. You may get more detail on either of these 3 councils at <http://www.awma.org/about/index.html>.

However, it appears that those willing to step forward and accept leadership positions seems to be dwindling. If you are one who is willing and have not been contacted, please take the initiative and contact your current leadership. If you happen not to know who they are, you can find the Section and Chapter officers with contact information on the Section web site: www.ss-awma.org.

Speaking of the web site, we have been slow in posting presentations from this year's Annual Meeting also, again for various reasons. We experienced computer problems during the meeting and have had trouble contacting the presenters since the meeting to obtain copies of the additional presentations. We still need about 6 or 7 papers for posting all available presentations. Maybe I can get that done prior to Christmas. Unfortunately, one of the more interesting presentations (from my perspective, of course) did not have slides or a script. It was the permitting of the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga presented by Bob Colby and Steve McKinney. A picture during their presentation is included below.

Another bit of information that follows right along with Ron's S&CC report occurred in May 2009. Many of you likely have worked with Karen Houlihan in the past with respect to any question regarding membership. She was one of the staff who was released. **Stephanie Glyptis** (1-800-270-3444 x 6006) is the one to contact regarding membership issues, or possibly one of her staff. These persons are Gerald Armstrong (x 6018) and Kate Fischer (x 6029).

Annual Meeting

Exhibitors at our Annual Meeting were:

Airgas South, Kennesaw, GA

Compliance Assurance Assoc., Inc., Memphis, TN

Eagle SWS, Eastland, TX

Enviroics Inc., Tolland, CT

ERM-SE, Inc., Brentwood, TN

E. Roberts Alley & Associates, Inc., Nashville, TN

Jim Robbins & Assoc., Inc., Chattanooga, TN
 M & C TechGroup, Springhill, TN
 PPM Consultants, Inc., Birmingham, AL
 Resolve Environmental Engineering, Inc., Marietta, GA

The next biggest thing that happened within the Section is our **Annual Meeting** in Chattanooga. For those who missed it, Chattanooga has become quite the “cleaned up” city. However, this meeting was not as big as the one last year in Biloxi and we can all surmise that one of the reasons was the economy. The final financial status from the meeting has not been received, so we are uncertain whether we “broke even,” or ended up in the **red** by a small amount. Later in this newsletter are some pictures from the meeting that came out well enough to be used, including some of the speakers. Your editor forgot his camera for the second year in a row and had to rely on someone else’s camera.

The number of **exhibitors** this year was down, as was attendance. I do have a photo of each exhibitor’s booth except one who left early. We do appreciate the support of our exhibitors, most of whom are members of the Southern Section also. They are listed above. To each of these participants we extend a very cordial thank you and hope that you will be interested in exhibiting in Mobile, AL next year. **Hot off the press!!** The meeting next year will be Tuesday, August 3 (golf at the Robert Trent Jones course) through Friday, August 6 at the [Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel](#) in Mobile, AL. More details will be forthcoming.



Scott Biggs

STI CEMS Services, Waldron, AR
 Veolia ES Technical Solutions, LLC, Mooresville, NC



Art Eberle (Compliance Assurance) & Snapper
 Armstrong

This space is for Eagle SWS, Eagle, TX
 They disassembled their booth before
 I was able to get a picture. If they have
 one that they would like to place in a future
 issue of the newsletter and they will send it
 to me, they will get a second mention.



Mary Lou Colombaro



Scott Sanderson



Bryan Jones



Snapper Armstrong (Alley) & Craig Wood (ESC)



Steven Shugart (Resolve) & Bryan Jones (PPM)



Roger Reehl (URS) & Roy Vincik (M & C)

Jim Robbins





Wade Day

Hugh Moore & Tom Dibernard (Veolia)
w/ Jim Robbins looking on

Some other highlights of the meeting

An agenda will be posted along with the presentations of those who had slides. I hope to get that done before Christmas. One of the more interesting presentations from your editor's perspective was the description of the permitting process for the Volkswagen facility just north of Chattanooga. This presentation was made by Bob Colby, Director, Chattanooga-Hamilton County AP

Bureau and Steve McKinney, Partner, Balch & Bingham, Birmingham, AL. Interesting aspects of this presentation included the speed with which the permit was prepared and issued. The local permitting agency had two extremely dedicated employees who spent time necessary, including uncompensated personal time to achieve this result.



Bob Colby and Steve McKinney

Some interesting points were made in the **first plenary session** by Alec Van Ryan, who was "Johnny on the spot," so to speak. Probably the main point of his talk was that information exchange is changing faster than the average person can keep up with. Had a lot to say about sustainability of our old, tried and true means of communication. Younger professional people are just as adept at "tweeting" and "blogging." That is the means of communication of today. Who knows what it will be like tomorrow? However, this is not to say that we should discard our tried and true text books, or good reference books just yet. Stay tuned, and keep your cell phone upgraded.

Another interesting aspect of the Annual Meeting is the **Regulatory Updates** presented by the four states within the Section boundary for both air and solid waste. Unfortunately, GA & EPA were not represented this year. Hopefully, that will not be the case for future meetings. GA did provide a link for their regulatory updates on the web site maintained by the GA Chapter, A&WMA. <http://www.gaawma.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=29769&orgid=aiwmagc>. In addition, we also had the Acting Administrator for EPA Region 4, Dr. Stan Meiberg, as one of the keynote speakers, thanks to Dwight Wylie. Dr. Meiberg with Dwight, Past Chair, and Elizabeth Peeler, Chair, Southern Section, is shown below.



Dwight, Stan & Elizabeth

Here are a couple of the State representatives who provided regulatory updates for their programs.



Quincy Styke III, TN Air



Gerald Hardy, AL Waste

We were fortunate to have Rick Sprott, A&WMA President, with us as a luncheon speaker. He did not spend his time in trying to convince those present what a great deal being a **member** of the Association is. **We all know that!** He talked about the main theme of the conference, which was sustainability. He made some interesting points in the role that good science and engineering can play in the task of protecting the

environment. He also talked of the role that cooperative effort between the regulated and regulator must be a part of any good decision to protect the environment.



Rick Sprott

Another item that should be of interest to our members is that the Section awarded 3, \$1500 **scholarships** this year. The winners were: Heather S. Thomas, MS State University, Dept. of Chemical Engr.; Candace J. Watson, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Civil Engineering; and Shannon Wilson, University of Mississippi, Environmental engineering. The first two are Ph.D. students, while Ms. Wilson is a masters student. Only one winner, Heather Thomas, was able to attend the Annual Meeting for acceptance. One was over seas and another was working in the Washington, DC area for the summer. Below is a picture of Heather Thomas, a Ph.D. student at MS State, receiving her award being presented by the Section Chair, Elizabeth Peeler.



Heather receiving check from Elizabeth
(Heather's advisor is Dr. Mark Bricka, who presented two papers at the meeting.)

A few other pictures are provided to give you a flavor of this past **Annual Meeting**, encouraging you to **mark your calendar** now for next year's meeting in Mobile, AL on **August 3 – 6, 2010**. If you are a golfer arrangements to play one of the premier Robert Trent Jones courses in west Mobile are being made. Visit the web site regularly

after the first of the year for details.



Corey Masuca, Risk Assessment



August Panel for Opening Session on **Sustainability**
Lem Stevens, Ken Mitchell, Elaine Zoeller, Steve
McKinney, & Alec Van Ryan (l to r)
(The panel was moderated by Doug Neeley.)



Larry Brown, AL Chair; Elizabeth Peeler, Section
Chair; and Tim Owen, AL member



Tim Martin receiving door prize from Tom Busmann

Yes, the door prizes are always nice and a big draw for attendees.



W. R. Davis receives the Grand Prize, iPod Shuffle,
from Elizabeth

Training Opportunities

For interested parties: EPA Region 4 is conducting a training session on December 17 in Atlanta that will cover **green house gas (GHG) mandatory** reporting requirements. A **flyer** with details is available on the Southern Section web site: <http://www.ss-awma.org/events.php>. A limited number (75) of spaces are available which will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis. [34th Annual A&WMA/EPA Information Exchange](#) is scheduled for December 1 – 3, 2009 in the Research Triangle Park. Click on the above link to access details of the event. A **webinar** that will provide some training from your own computer is scheduled for December 10, 2009 on [Coal Combustion Residues and Beneficial Uses](#). For those interested in biomass another webinar is scheduled for December 10, 2009, entitled [Renewable Biomass Energy: Reducing Carbon Footprint and Saving on Fuel Costs](#). A third webinar sponsored by the Association for the near future is on modeling. It is entitled **Air Quality Modeling: Introduction to CALPUFF**. No details appear to be available for this one just yet as no link is provided. For all the others above you may obtain details at the link provided.

A final reminder: next year's Annual Meeting will be held in Mobile, AL from August 3 – 6, 2010. For those who enjoy golf, arrangements are being made to host the event on one of the premier Robert Trent Jones courses in west Mobile. After the first of the year, check the web site, <http://www.ss-awma.org/>, regularly for details.