



# SAABE TIMES

A publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

February 2007

Mark Your Calendar—

## JOIN US FOR OUR FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

The next General Membership Meeting of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers is set for 11:30 am on Wednesday, February 21 at the Alamo Cafe on 281 (just north of Bitters). This month's program is sponsored by CPS Energy, and the speakers are Bob Nelson and Fred Beebe. They'll talk about CPS Energy's business services and rebate programs.

Speaker Bob Nelson works as an Engineer for CPS Energy in the Technical Services Section. He performs power quality investigations, energy efficiency audits, thermo imaging, inspections for commercial rebates and provides other technical support to CPS Energy's commercial and industrial customers.

If you would like more information about the CPS Energy commercial rebate program, please call (210) 353-2728.

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.

Please RSVP to (210) 408-1699 by Tuesday, February 20. PLEASE RSVP so we can be sure to have enough meals on hand!

We hope to see you there! ❖

## BOMI Study Course

11:30 am–12:30 pm (sometimes 1:00 pm)

Bring your own lunch

First and second Thursday of each month

One Oak Park, 1020 NE Loop 410

We gather as a group of interested individuals from all levels of building maintenance to review areas that participants have studied individually. An area to eat and review textbook materials is provided in the One Oak Park building conference room.

We also visit sites whereas we can practice and illustrate the many different components that we commonly test, measure, and record the operating parameters of each piece of equipment that we have studied (a hands-on approach). Vendor experts may teach some chapters, so our group can benefit from the many years of experience that our vendors bring to this "hands-on" classroom study group.

We invite all maintenance personnel to come see the continuing education/training SAABE is pursuing to further enhance the skill levels of your engineering staff.

SMT (Systems Maintenance Technician Program)

- 1) Refrigeration Systems and Accessories (completed January 2007)
- 2) Air Handling, Water Treatment, and Plumbing Systems
- 3) Electrical Systems and Illumination
- 4) Boilers, Heating Systems, Applied Mathematics
- 5) Energy Management and Controls

The application fee for the BOMI SMT Program is \$175 (covers all five courses). The application fee for individual courses is \$75 each. Individual course material textbooks are \$425. SAABE also has a scholarship program for those in need (see page 3 for details).

In February, we start our next text, "Air Handling, Water Treatment, and Plumbing Systems."

For additional information contact Doug Graves (828-7712) or Tom Lasater (771-5824). ❖

## A Message from the President

by Charles Mikolajczyk, CBE-M

Geez, how time flies! It is now my second month at the helm already...I sincerely hope everyone can share in my enthusiasm! It only seems like only a week or so ago we were all out celebrating the New Year. Already the Bexar Country Junior Livestock Show, the Verizon BBQ Cook-off, and the Go Western Gala have come and gone. The San Antonio Stock show & Rodeo will also be gone before you know it! To all those whom participated/donated their time to these events...our hats are off for your support! It was also my pleasure of seeing each of you at these benefits and getting in some quality conversations as well!

Hopefully, everyone is on track with their equipment overhauls or replacements by now...cooling days never seem to quite leave San Antonio ☺. For those of you whom may be involved in some neat projects this year...please take some photos (digital if possible) so that others may share in your adventure. Maybe we can put some photos together to share/pass around highlighting the different projects around town!

Two other items around the corner that come to mind will be the Third Annual SAABE Picnic and the SAABE/SABOMA Tradeshow! I intentionally left off the part about the lake for I have no idea if Medina will still be classified as a Lake come May/June ☺ At the First Annual Picnic, we were getting our feet wet (pun intended) and applied our experience to the Second Annual...we didn't have 100+ degree weather but we did have some concerning showers! The way I figure it, the third time should be a charm but remember our Social Committee Chair (Mr. Jeff Turov) plans these days so don't shoot me...I'm only the Piano Player! All things aside, we hope you are making plans to attend these festivities/events and hope to see everyone there as well! Don't forget we try really hard to make this a family event as well whereas those with children of all ages can come out and have fun too!

# PAVECON

**BRIAN HARRISON**  
PROJECT MANAGER

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We hope to have a fun [and educational] time this year within SAABE. In regards to fun over education, this is mainly directed at my philosophy...if you enjoy doing something the educational part becomes much easier. If it feels good and you like what you're doing, do it! There are already some classes going on this year/planned that could apply for the young and old alike. I have found long ago that you can never stop learning, and you're never too old to take a refresher course either. Tom Lasater and Doug Graves have put forth a lot of effort every year to provide training. Please see if you can join these two at some of their classes! We also hope to bring a lot of educational items to the floor at the luncheons as well, and revive the last Thursday training. But for this we have to rely on our vendor members to help us help each other. It is sad but it seems the more technology advances to make our life easier and save time...we have less time ☺ If anything, please take the time to consider helping in providing training...or at the least, thank those who are donating their time. ❖

## 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 geographical 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](http://www.saabe.org). ❖

\* Systems Maintenance Technician and Systems Maintenance Administrator

### 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! ❖

## SAABE Marketplace

Pictured at right are a “SunarHauserman” desk and credenza (made in Canada) that cost over \$1,500 20 years ago. These items are heavy-duty and made to last a lifetime. Hines Interests is seeking \$500 or best offer.

They want to sell it ASAP as it is taking up valuable space, and they do not want to pay for storage.

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## Tech Talk #114: Benefits...Do You Know the Ones You Have (part 1) by The Charlie

Recently, we have discovered there are vast differences of offered benefits within the companies that employ us. Let's just say we were amazed at the findings after we did a little research. So much so that we felt compelled to illustrate these differences in the hopes that you may learn something as well. The most shocking reality to most in our professions is that we are mostly all 30-days from unemployment at any given time. This is due to a typical contract between the landlord and the management that either party may terminate upon a 30-day written notice...an eye-opener huh? In addition, in most instances, if severance is available, you may not be entitled to it due to specific clauses (i.e., if an asset is lost to competition and you are offered a job...nada). Many companies do not even offer severance ☹

### What are Employee Benefits?

Employee benefits are those non-cash extras one enjoys in addition to a salary at a job. These benefits vary greatly in our industry and may include paid health insurance for the employee; retirement benefits; paid vacation, holidays, and sick leave; life insurance; paid bereavement and jury duty; gym reimbursement; child care assistance; flu shots; legal assistance; well-being assistance; travel; severance package; bonuses; and more.

Earning a salary alone often isn't enough to keep an employee happy, bonded to the company, and financially viable. Companies offer benefits to stay competitive, retain employees, and help the employees stay afloat financially. In fact, benefits can comprise about 40% of an employee's total compensation package in addition to a salary. This is often referred to as "labor burden". Employee benefits are a big business, and an area where company's really shouldn't skimp. However...☺

We have found that the offered benefits vary in great deal between the different companies here. The following is an example:

- **Paid Vacation:** From 0-0.8 days per month the first year, 5-10 days the second year, 5-15 days the fifth year, 10-20 days the tenth year, 10-25 days the fifteenth year...some only have 10 days per year no matter how long you've been employed
- **Paid Holidays:** From 6-10 days per year
- **Paid sick time:** From 3-11 days per year
- **Severance:** From yes to no...mostly no. The ones that offer severance usually offer six months of pay after about 10-15 years but the conditions are extremely limited.
- **Mileage:** From \$0-\$0.485/mile (IRS Standard Jan. 1, 2007)
- **Retirement:** From "none" to matching 50% of employee's contribution (up to 6%)

### Perks!

Perks, on the other hand, are benefits of a different sort. These are the smaller extras that make employees more comfortable. An example is direct deposit, free soft drinks/coffee, a company vehicle, a reserved parking space, the use of company tools/equipment for personal use, mileage reimbursement, 2 or 3-hour minimum pay when called after hours, uniforms, boot allowance, clothing allowance, etc. These are considered perks outside of the normal realm of benefits.

When it comes to making employees happy and retaining them, the list of benefits and perks is bound only by the imagination, and the budget, of the company in question.

**Next Month:** Benefits, Part 2

**CHARLIE'S LAW:** Firearms only have two enemies: rust and politicians!

JUSTA MAINTENANCE MAN ❖



### CBE and Scholarship Applications Online

You can now download an application for the Certified Building Engineer and Scholarship programs on SAABE's web site at [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org)

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by Laura Bray

**The Ten Worst Things to Do at a Meeting**

According to CareerBuilder.com, you should never do these ten things at a meeting:

- Show up late: It's rude and shows you're disorganized.
- Be unprepared: Make sure to read materials ahead of time.
- Monopolize the conversation: Let the most senior folks speak first, and keep your comments on-topic.
- Make your statements sound like questions: You sound more authoritative when you make statements.
- Misread signals: Listen carefully and watch body language.
- Get intimidated: Defend yourself politely if someone starts picking on you.
- Chew gum: See above note on "rude."
- Keep your cell phone on: Put it on buzz, at the very least.
- Wander off topic: Stay focused on the subject at hand.
- Skip it: If you were invited, there was probably a reason.

**Next month:** Getting Organized ❖

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## Job Openings

The following job openings are 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.

**Apprentice/Journeyman/Assistant:** Live Oak Group has an opening for an Assistant for their San Antonio Office Building's. The building's are Located all with in 5 miles of San Pedro and Thousand Oaks, there are 4 buildings and soon to be a fifth as we are currently in the Development Process of a multi use property on Stone Oak. Please Note this will be a roving position. Required experience includes a minimum of one years building maintenance experience, Must have reliable Transportation. Live Oak Group is an up and coming property Management Company who is based out of Austin and has been established for 24 years and is very motivated with the San Antonio Market and offers an HR package for its employees. If Interested, Please send resumes to jr@liveoak.com, or fax to 210-496-7401.

**Assistant Engineer:** Cambridge Realty Group is looking for an assistant engineer for One Riverwalk Place. Job requirements include a minimum of 3 years experience; electrical, HVAC, and plumbing knowledge; familiarity with chillers and cooling towers; and an electrical maintenance license. Please email resumes to Nancy Russell at nrussell@cambridgerealty.com or fax to 271-9628. ❖

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## Committee Assistance Needed

Several SAABE committees need your participation and assistance:

- **History Committee:** Chaired by Tom Lasater, this committee researches and documents the twenty-year history of SAABE.
- **Program Committee:** Chaired by Allen Mangrum, this committee works on programs and training opportunities for SAABE members (including last-Thursdays lunchtime seminars).
- **Mentoring Committee:** Chaired by John Cauley, this committee works on SAABE's new mentoring program (see page 7 for more details).

- **BEOTY Committee:** Chaired by Mike Halvorsen, this committee evaluates candidates for SAABE's annual Building Engineer of the Year award.
- **Social Committee:** Chaired by Jeff Turov, this committee plans SAABE's two annual socials (one in the summer, one in December).

Please contact the committee chair (see last page) if you'd like to participate on these or any other SAABE activities. ❖

## Engineer Spotlight

by Jeff Turov

### Art Martinez, CBE-J

RM Crowe  
8626 Tesoro Drive, Suite 306  
San Antonio, TX 78217  
(210) 828-4435  
amartinez@rmcrowe.com

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

Art has been involved in this industry for eleven years. In that time he has worked retail, residential and commercial office building properties. He currently oversees operations at the Petroleum Towers and has also worked One Alamo as well. Art has been a member of SAABE since 2000.



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

While at One Alamo, Art's maintenance team won the "Building Engineer Team of the Year" award from Transwestern Commercial Services. He also holds his CBE-J designation from SAABE. He is a member of the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), and

is studying to gain his home inspection license.

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

Art has many diverse after-hours activities that keep him busy. He is one of the founders and the defensive line coach of the minor league San Antonio Ravens football team. This team has been recognized by the NFL as a source for professional level talent and is scouted regularly. Currently they are playing pre-season with regular season play beginning in March and lasting through July. Check 'em out at [www.saravens.com](http://www.saravens.com). Art also owns his own DJ service called Gigamix. In his spare time—if he finds any—Art also likes to fish and play golf.

- **Family/Children?**

Art is married and has three kids ranging in age from 18 to 21.

- **How has the CBE-J designation helped you in your career?**

Art stated that it is an impressive designation to place on your resume which has assisted him in working with property managers and building owners alike. Through this designation he has gained more respect from his peers and feels that it has assisted him in career advancement. Art recommends that all engineers work toward obtaining this award.

- **Any interesting stories from your years in the business?**

During his stint as building engineer at One Alamo, Art was told a fish story that he was not sure he should believe or not. It was that at some point a predecessor had stocked the in-ground cooling tower at this building with fish. Although he was tempted to break-out his rod and tackle he never found the time. He did however find fish bones around the strainer during an annual cleaning. ❖



## SAABE Mentoring Program

SAABE has started a new program to mentor local high school students, so they can learn more about the building engineer trade. Mentoring Committee Chair John Cauley and Education Director Jock Tilghman have worked with local counselors and determined that the best "first step" is to offer periodic building tours to interested students. The goal is to offer a tour once a month.

If you are interested in offering your building or facility as a tour host, please contact me or John (646-6800, [jcauley@1031NNN.com](mailto:jcauley@1031NNN.com)). If you have any questions about the mentoring program or would like to get involved on the committee, John would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your support of SAABE and our efforts to bring more young people into the building engineer trade! ❖



San Antonio Association of Building Engineers  
PO Box 780785  
San Antonio, TX 78278

CELEBRATING  
**20 YEARS**  
OF EXCELLENCE IN  
BUILDING ENGINEERING

## SAABE TIMES February Issue

### *Final Thought:*

*“One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.”*

— Elbert Hubbard

### 2007 Board of Directors

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

### Membership Luncheon Wednesday, February 21, 2007

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

**Location: Alamo Cafe on 281  
CPS Energy Business Programs and Rebates  
Sponsored by CPS Energy**

**Upcoming Program:  
Wednesday, March 21**

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



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