

Save the Date:

- Annual Meeting: March 9-11 2011
- March 9th - Golf Tournament
 - March 10th - Trade Show
 - March 11th - Education / Business Meeting

Coming Soon:

New sponsorship opportunities for The Annual Meeting and Exhibit



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The President's Message



It is hard to believe that the holiday season is upon us. I truly wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. My hope and prayer is that we all have a successful and prosperous new year for our families and for our businesses.

GaSHE has come a long way this year. One of our most successful changes has been the implementation of "hospitality night", which takes place prior to our quarterly meetings. This has resulted in a remarkable increase in attendance. This success is due to the hard work of your Board of Directors and the Ambassador Task Force. I have much appreciation and gratitude for each and am so thankful for their support of GaSHE's mission and vision.

Our Annual Convention and Trade Show is coming up March 9-11 in McRae. We have made some positive changes to sponsorship opportunities; I hope you will select the one that best fits your needs. This year, we will be including hotel accommodations with some levels of sponsorship, this is to show our appreciation for our sponsors. We know that our society would not be successful without the support of our business partners and vice versa, so we will continue to work to develop and grow these relationships.

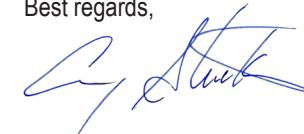
If you have not participated in our annual meeting, I encourage you take advantage of the opportunity. You will be sure to further relationships and develop business contacts that can greatly benefit you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us or refer to our website. Speaking of websites, ours is undergoing a makeover and I hope to unveil it at our December meeting. It will better reflect the progress we have made and our vision to become the premiere healthcare engineering society in the southeast.

I am very pleased to announce that our society will be offering our annual conference and trade show at no cost to our hospital engineers. We will be paying for accommodations and meals at this year's events, so all you have to do is provide your own transportation. We require that you send in your registration form ASAP so that we can make arrangements at the lodge. As you know, rooms fill up quickly at the lodge and we will be providing overflow accommodations in nearby Dublin, Ga. If you would like to stay at the lodge in McRae and are willing to share a room with someone, please let us know, as that will improve your chances of getting a room there. We will have more details available the first of January.

If you are not a member of our society, I would like to give you a little information on who we are. The Georgia Society of Healthcare Engineers is an organization that greatly benefits its members. Our objective is to give our members the tools and information they need for growth and enrichment in their careers. At present, we have approximately 200 members who provide a rich resource of information for healthcare engineers of small or large facilities. Our organization draws from these resources to provide seminars pertaining to technical and managerial aspects of healthcare engineering. These seminars are offered at no cost to our members and are usually provided by our business partners.

For more information on upcoming meetings and agendas, please check out our website at www.gashe.org. If we can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,



Craig Stuckless
President
Georgia Society for Healthcare Engineers

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December Newsletter is Sponsored by:



Ambassador Taskforce Spotlight

Stacey Chapman - Heery



A veteran marketing professional with strong credentials in relationship management, organizational development and business networking strategy, Stacey Chapman brings a creative focus and best practice approach to her clients and assignments. A recent graduate of the Buckhead Business Association's Leadership Buckhead program, Stacey works passionately to create connections among those with whom she works, whether in her job with Heery International or through her involvement with numerous charitable and philanthropic organizations. Most recently, Georgia Trend magazine, recognized Stacey among Georgia's 40 under 40, which showcased achievers in business, government, politics, education and non-profit.

Since 2006, Stacey has worked at Heery helping define the company's reputation as a leading provider of architectural services in the healthcare market. She takes personal pride in the strong relationships and connections she has developed within the community. Stacey has made a significant impact in the healthcare market specifically, having represented the design studio at multiple conferences while developing new opportunities with some of Georgia's leading healthcare systems. Both a passionate advocate and volunteer for GASHE, she currently serves as a valuable member of the Ambassador Taskforce. In addition, Stacey was recognized with GASHE's 2010 President's Award and being named 2010 Business Partner of the Year. As a recognized leader in marketing professional services, she has spent approximately 15 years helping companies serve their clients better.

The Buzz of Commissioning in Energy Efficiency

By Emily Violette, LEED AP - Heery International, Inc.

In this day and age, many of the buzz words circulating in the building construction industry revolve around energy savings. In particular, Commissioning has developed as a buzz word that is used quite frequently, yet in practice has still remained somewhat of a misunderstood entity. Commissioning by definition is a process in which equipment and building systems, whether electrical, plumbing and/or mechanical are tested to verify their function according to their design intent and specifications. As a result of performing these tests, the intended energy savings presented in the design is confirmed, therefore leaving the owner with a building system that operates to today's standards of energy efficiency. Something that is often overlooked when the word commissioning travels from person to person and project to project is that it is an actual process, not just the testing of a completed building design. In order to provide the owner with a complete and functional building, the process begins during design development and follows through to testing during the Construction Administration phase. It is important to know that it is throughout the entire process that energy savings are realized, not only through testing of the building systems and equipment.

During the design development phase of a project, the Commissioning Agent performs design reviews. It is during these design reviews that energy savings from an overall design perspective can be most helpful. By giving a 3rd party's view of the design at this stage, a fresh look can lead to utilizing various energy savings methods, such as heat recovery, or waterside and airside economizer, not already incorporated in the design. Energy savings methods such as these tend to have rather large impact on a design, so it is best to have them incorporated early in the project.

During the construction administration phase, the Commissioning Agent begins to transition from a role of aiding in the design of a project to that of implementing it as the building undergoes construction. In this stage, the Commissioning Agent becomes less of a behind the scenes advocate and more of an onsite representative that tracks the coordination of the project. Part of the Commissioning Agent's responsibility is to make sure that what is specified in the construction documents is actually installed, constructed and operates as it is intended. It is during this time that installation, calibration, and operation are verified and tested, and energy costing mistakes in faulty installation and inaccurate measuring processes are more readily prevented.

All phases of the commissioning process focus on the up to date energy savings methods proven to be beneficial to today's lean toward sustainability measures in building construction. One of the key aspects of commissioning that helps keep this process running smoothly and effectively is communication. By keeping the communication lines open between the owner, engineer and contractor, the commissioning agent can aid in bringing problems to light that may impact the schedule and operation of the building, so that the final phase of testing can show that the building was in fact constructed per the design intent, and all of the energy savings methods will successfully provide energy savings.

Society Benefits for Healthcare Engineers

The GASHE quarterly meeting held December 10, 2010 at McRae, Georgia was highly educational and we had a great time visiting with our peers and partners. I've seen tremendous improvements over the last couple of years for the society and the healthcare engineers are really missing out if they are not attending. Attendance from the engineers needs to improve. The educational programs that are offered keep us up to date on the constant changes in healthcare trends. The various topics discussed are anything from mechanical rooms, boilers, cooling towers, commissioning/retro-commissioning, infection control issues, the latest code changes, budgets and cost saving ideas. As engineers we need to have a good understanding of this information in our field and its all free information for us. There are 50 years of engineering experience and more for us to draw upon from these meetings. The engineers that attend these meetings are valuable resources for you to get information from, they have solutions to the problems you are dealing with and you won't have to reinvent the wheel each time you encounter a difficult problem at your facility. They share JCAHO info and the latest pet peeves on the last inspection at their facility; this information will be of great value to each of you.

By attending these meetings it shows leadership; you are ambitious and constantly seeking additional education in your field in the healthcare arena, you get this info at no cost to you or your facility. One of the greatest benefits of GASHE is that with the exceptional business partners sponsoring the quarterly meetings and the annual meeting, your cost is able to be offset. This is something you should definitely take advantage of.

Additionally, it is important that if you register and state that you will attend, that you do, in fact, try and show up. Our business partners base the hospitality suite food and beverage, the dinners and the supplies necessary for the educational meeting on the attendance list provided based on those of you that register. If you sign up and cannot attend, please notify us at your earliest convenience.

I have been attending these meeting since 1989 and was recognized as Engineer of the Year in 1995 and 2010. I was President in 1996. I place a lot of value on what this organization has to offer, it has help me continuously throughout my career, so I would like to see you at the next meeting in March, 2011.

Michael E. Mobley
Past President of GASHE

Business Partner Spotlight



Former surveyor for The Joint Commission joins Prime Power Service, Inc.

Terry Parish has joined Prime Power Services, Inc. as their Healthcare Development Coordinator. Terry's 27 years in Healthcare Facility Management plus his experience as a Life Safety Code Specialist for The Joint Commission, will enable Prime Power Services, Inc. to assist clients with their Environment of Care needs. This initiative will assist Prime Power Services, Inc. to continue maintaining the highest standard of maintenance, service and oversight of Emergency Power Supply Systems (EPSS). Whether it be the timely response to emergency calls or providing comprehensive Preventative Maintenance on Generators, Automatic Transfer Switches, and Switchgear, Prime Power Service, Inc. stands at the ready. Additionally Prime Power Services, Inc. can provide Loadbanks, Breaker Testing, Arc Flash Analysis, Commissioning, Infrared Scans, as well as installing all facets of EPSS, Switchgear Retrofits, and GTi Bi-Fuel Systems.

Healthcare Health Hazards - Part 2

By Matthew S. Parker, MS, CIH, CSP, ARM - ATC Associates

Industrial Hygiene is the science and art engaged in the anticipation, recognition, evaluation, and control of these other workplace health hazards. In the last newsletter, we discussed ethylene oxide, formaldehyde, and glutaraldehyde. These are the most significant and most common IH hazards in a healthcare setting, but many more remain. In this issue, we will focus on mercury and waste anesthetic gases.

Employee exposure to mercury from accidental spills can occur during repair of broken thermometers, sphygmomanometers, or during sterilization and centrifugation of thermometers. Mercury can also be found in some pressure-sensing instruments (barometers and sensors in machine rooms), as well as electronic equipment, and some older, medical devices. When spills are not promptly cleaned up, mercury may accumulate on surfaces and then vaporize and be inhaled by unaware workers. Mercury can also be absorbed through the skin. Short exposure to high levels of mercury can cause severe respiratory irritation, digestive disturbances, and marked renal damage. Chronic exposure: Chronic exposure to mercury may result in weakness, fatigue, anorexia, weight loss, and disturbance of gastrointestinal function.

The OSHA PEL for mercury vapor is 0.1 mg/m³ (milligrams per cubic meter) based on an 8-hour time-weighted average. The ACGIH set their recommended limit (TLV) at one fourth of that value or 0.025 mg/m³. These levels are low and easily exceeded when mercury is spilled or otherwise released in the work environment. Additionally the cleanup values established by the EPA can be hard to achieve and keep affected areas of your facility unusable for extended periods of time. Cleanup can be a challenge because the liquid metal can seep into nooks and crannies and continue to evolve vapors. ATC has discovered liquid mercury under cabinets or in u-drains where mercury is no longer used.

Waste Anesthetic gases include nitrous oxide and halogenated agents (vapors) such as: Enflurane, Isoflurane, Sevoflurane, Desflurane, Halothane. Exposure occurs from poor work practices (spills), leaking gas-line connections, inadequate maintenance anesthesia machines, and patient exhalation in the recovery room. Potential adverse health effects of exposure to waste anesthetic gases include loss of consciousness, nausea, dizziness, headaches, fatigue, irritability, drowsiness, problems with coordination and judgment, as well as sterility, miscarriages, birth defects, cancer, and liver and kidney disease. A more detailed discussion of this matter is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-151>

Look for more health hazard examples in the next newsletter. Health hazards are often hard to see. They are insidious and do not present like the needle sticks, back strains, and slips trips and falls that dominate your accident files. A good hospital protects the health of its employees as well as its patients. Please contact ATC Associates at 706-722-3310 or 770-427-9456, for assistance with any of your industrial hygiene-related needs or questions.

Hospital Spotlight Meadows Regional Center



Meadows Regional Center is located in Vidalia, Georgia and has been in operation since 1961. Always striving to improve its service to the community and to keep abreast of all the latest in medical technology and patient care, Meadows is in the construction phase of a brand new, state of the art facility. The 194,000 sq. ft. building is nearing completion.

The new Emergency Department will feature 22 trauma, diagnostic and treatment rooms. This will double the size of MRMC's current emergency room. The Cardiovascular Lab will enable both diagnostic procedures for detecting potential blockages and interventional procedures to open the arteries during a heart attack. The six new surgical suites are among the most technologically advanced in the entire state and will have all monitoring, imaging and equipment controls integrated and ceiling-mounted to create the most efficient environment for the surgeon and the patient. Every room at the new facility will be a private suite with a private bath. These rooms will also include a sleeper sofa for family members who may choose to stay overnight with a patient. The Imaging Department will include a Toshiba Titan MRI, which is the only one of its kind in the region. It boasts high definition 3-D images that can make joint replacement surgeries more precise and can earlier detect breast cancer in women at high risk. The medical center will also have 160-slice CT scanning technology. MRMC will be the only hospital in the state to feature two 160-slice Toshiba CT scanners.

Planning for the new facility has taken several years, but the actual construction time has been well within the projected timeline. Alan Kent, CEO of Meadows Regional stated, "We are anticipating a patient move in February 2011. We anxiously await the unveiling of this technologically advanced patient focused Regional Medical Center to the community."

The Meadows organization employs over 725 staff members with an annual revenue budget of \$275 million.