

The Direct Connection



A newsletter dedicated to Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention www.abpa-sa.org

JULY Vol. 34 Issue 7

Understanding a 501 (c)(3) Organization

A 501(c) organization is a nonprofit organization that is exempt from Federal Income taxes. The 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations are organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, educational or other specified purposes and that meet certain other requirements. A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization is generally a business entity that adds to the public good. They are non-profit groups with a dedicated mission from which they cannot deviate or they will lose their non-profit status. The ABPA-SA Chapter is a 501(c)(3) organization so they do NOT have to pay income tax and donations to the Chapter may qualify as a tax deduction for the donor. The Chapter qualifies for this designation by operating exclusively to further education and testing for public safety.

None of the net earnings may be used to benefit any private individual or group, including its members. All earnings must be used solely for the advancement of its cause of educating its members and the general public. It is also required to remain true to its founding purpose to retain the tax-exempt status. There is an annual filing required with the Internal Revenue Service.

ABPA-SA Mission Statement

To promote public health, safety and welfare through the improvement of the quality of drinking water delivered to the public through the development and furtherance of understanding the problems of cross connections relating thereto by:

- (1) advancing the knowledge of the design, construction, operation and management of water utilities and developing standards for procedures, equipment and materials used by public water supply systems to control backflow;
- (2) advancing the knowledge of the problems involved in the distribution of safe water supplies;
- (3) educating the public on the problems of cross connection and promoting a spirit of cooperation between consumers and suppliers in solving these problems;
- (4) conducting research to determine the causes of contamination of potable water in the distribution system and proposing solutions thereto in an effort to improve the quality of the water supply provided to the public;
- (5) conducting seminars and other instructional classes and administering certification tests for backflow prevention instructors and backflow prevention assembly testers; and
- (6) making distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future amendments thereto) ("the Code").

Gauge testing for members starts at 5:00 PM at SAWS

July meeting Details

Meetings of the San Antonio Chapter ABPA are held the second Thursday of every month except December. Dinner and refreshments are served at 6:00 p.m. sharp with the meeting starting at 6:15. The next meeting is:

Date: Thursday July 11, 2024

Time: 6:00 PM Pre-registration only required to receive a meal

**Loc: SAWS Bldg. 2 Conference Room
2800 US Hwy 281 North.**

Program: TCEQ will be presenting the training for our July meeting.

Meeting Sponsor: BAVCO will be sponsoring the meeting.

No alcoholic beverages allowed

Next Meeting: August 8, 2024

Big Thanks to

Bruce Rathburn for presenting the training for the meeting.

The meeting was sponsored by the ABPA-SA Chapter.

ABPA-SA Chapter provided a \$50 Gift Card for the raffle.

July Agenda

- 5:00 p.m. General discussion and quorum confirmation
- 5:15 p.m. Call Meeting to order.
- 5:16 p.m. Secretary's Report. Read and approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5:20 p.m. Treasurer's Report. Discussion and approval of the treasurer's report.
- 5:25 p.m. Supply Officer's Report
- 5:30 p.m. Vice President's, Directors', and any other reports for the good of the chapter. Comments, new business, any discussion.
- 5:40 p.m. Training Report. Training & Meal Sponsors
- 5:45 p.m. Webmaster Report
- 5:50 p.m. President's Report. New & old business
- 6:00 p.m. Meal is served.
- 6:15 p.m. General Membership Meeting & Training
 1. Report from the Directors Meeting. President
 2. City, regional, and national reports. James Cantrell and/or any City personnel present.
 3. Training program for the evening.
 4. Raffle prize drawing.

Ongoing Goals of ABPA-SA Chapter

1. Educational Outreach with public by presenting at PHCC meetings, engineering firms, schools, and neighborhood associations. Continuing goal.
2. Greater use of TCEQ website. Tracking of CEUs, Services available. Personal education.
3. Increase member awareness of importance of chapter meetings. Increase attendance and public awareness.
4. Increase website resource information. More detailed links to more information like TCEQ, COSA, and any place that would be helpful to our members

"Direct Talk" by the President

The July 11th meeting will be held in the SAWS conference room in the Tower II building located at 2800 U.S. Hwy. 281. Gauge testing starts at 5:00 PM and is iffy after 5:30 PM. The meal will start at 6:00 PM and the meeting will start at 6:15 PM. You may attend the meeting **without** pre-registering, however, if you would like a meal, you will have to register via the email you will receive about 10 days before the meeting. Stay safe.

Trinidad Chairez

Here is a good website for emergency information: www.sanantonio.gov/emergency/

Chapter Chatter

by Greg Shean, another Chapter volunteer

It's All About Volunteers

Chapters are built and continued on that. Sure, members will attend meetings for whatever is served, for the CEUs and for networking. However, it's the leadership volunteers that makes all this possible. So, how do you get those volunteers when everyone is so busy? You ask them. If not, why not? Tell them how much you need them. Be persistent. So, ask.

I was sitting on my hands at a monthly meeting in 2005 when there was a VP vacancy. Got a call from the president. What do I need to do? "Nothing." I can do that. He did not tell me that now I would have to attend the director's meeting before the membership meeting. Also, that I was next in line to be president. Backflow is still a hobby for me. After president, I volunteered to fill the vacant secretary position. The rest is history.

The Almost End of an Era

Bill Hamrick is the 2024 ABPA Meritorious Service Award winner. He is retiring after 62 years of business and will be turning 84 years young. He is closing ATB Services, Inc., a Mid-West Service Center for backflow gauges. Bill has been involved in certifying gauges for free for almost 30 years at our monthly chapter meetings. Carl Michaud is in charge of the gauge testing operation and Bill helps him with the actual testing. Bill constructed a water column back in the 90s and used it for many years but realized we needed a pneumatic gauge tester so he built the current one we have.

He will still be helping Carl at our meetings to certify gauges but will not be taking the ones that need repair or major calibration after December 20, 2024. This means anything that fails at the January 2025 and beyond ABPA-SA meetings will not be serviced by Bill. It is yet to be determined who the local service center will be. Jim Purzycki with BAVCO told Bill he will purchase all of his test equipment, tools, and inventory. Bill plans to continue with Membership and Newsletter as long as his health allows. No volunteers for those critical responsibilities yet.

The gauge unit used at the meetings is more than just a gauge. Inside the cooler enclosure is a pressure tank, check valves, pressure regulator, air compressor, battery, battery charger, etc. that he designed and built for the Organization. He built one for BAC-FLO Unlimited and for a group in Dallas and Delaware. Appears more than our chapter will miss Bill. Bill, live long, stay healthy, and keep from going Bat Crazy. All of us sincerely appreciate you.

The fishing event this year will be on October 11-13, 2024. More information later.

MINUTES
SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER-ABPA
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Thursday, June 13, 2024

Trinidad Chairez, President, presided over the meeting. The ABPA San Antonio Chapter meeting started at 6:02 PM in the Tower 2 Conference Room at SAWS HQ.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – PRESENT	EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – ABSENT
Trinidad Chairez – President	
Jeff Stricker– Vice President	
Greg Shean – Secretary	
Art Trejo – Treasurer	
Keith Waldrep – Past President	
OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER – PRESENT	OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER – ABSENT
Carl Michaud – Gauge Testing/Certification	Bill Hamrick – Membership and Newsletter
Joe Young – Program Director	Jim Cantrell – Liaison to SAWS
Matthew Wilgen – Webmaster	Supply Officer - Vacant
Jeff Meeks – Sgt. At Arms	

DIRECTORS AT LARGE – PRESENT	DIRECTORS AT LARGE – ABSENT
Bruce Rathburn – 2 years	Robert Stricker – 2 years
Fred Baird – 1 year	Jeff Hoffman – 2 years
Bob Clark - 1 year	
Guests: None	

Agenda Item #1. Trinidad started the meeting, asked that all turn off their cell phones, and then asked for a moment of silence. He then went through the open items in the May minutes. INFO.

Agenda Item #2. Secretary’s Report: May minutes were in the newsletter. Keith made a motion to accept. Seconded. Passed. INFO.

Agenda Item #3. Treasurer’s Report: Art reported the amount in our checking account. There was a motion to accept. Greg did not think it was appropriate to motion, second, and approve the bank balance without a more detailed physical report and time to review it like in the meeting minutes. He will check with Robert’s Rules of Order. OPEN.

Agenda Item #4. Supply Officer’s Report: Vacant. Art brought a selection in styles and colors. Still no volunteers. OPEN.

Agenda Item #5. Meeting Sponsor: The chapter sponsored the meeting. INFO.

Agenda Item #6. Meal: The chapter sponsored Firehouse sub box lunches of turkey, beef, or ham subs with potato chips, pickle spear, and a cookie. Art Trejo provided the water and sodas for the meeting. INFO.

Agenda Item #7. Raffle: The chapter provided a \$50 VISA gift card. INFO.

Agenda Item #8. Webmaster: Matt said the website does not work with the host’s upgraded software. There will be a meeting, after the general meeting, on how best to proceed. OPEN.

Agenda Item #9. SAWS: Dan Crowley, Director Governmental Relation and Regional and Federal Affairs, confirmed that the hazard backflow assemblies testing was still June 30th. He said that **outstanding T&Ms is at 46%. He did not anticipate an extension.** Fines will be assessed for late submissions. **SAWS continues to work with BSI. They are looking for a fall to start. The city ordinance still be changed from the June 30th deadline to a rolling 12 months which works better for the testers. SAWS is looking how to spread the testing out from 6 to 12 months.** INFO.

Agenda Item #10. San Antonio Irrigation Association (SAIA): Keith reported that the 1st Annual Irrigation Competition, scheduled for April 4th, has been postponed until October 19th and to check the SAIA website for details. The SAIA is still looking at the annual Missions baseball game. The SAIA is also working with SAWS on irrigation issues. Keith gave credit to Hugh M Cunningham & Assoc. for providing the hose bib vacuum breakers that were given away at the Home & Garden Show and SAWS S Spring Bloom. INFO.

Agenda Item #11. City of San Antonio (COSA) Plumbing Inspection: Mike Morales, COSA Plumbing Inspections, **Morales – city – thank all for everything. Mike requested that the water pressure be recorded on ALL T&Ms in the remarks section. He said they need the pressure for history. Inspectors do carry hose bib pressure gauges. Dan wants to meet with COSA in person and develop a plan.** INFO.

Agenda Item #12. Membership: Bill reported to me that there are 86 chapter members. There are 4 memberships that will expire in May and 9 at the end in June. Bill sent letters to those whose memberships expired in March and those which will expire in April and May. Get your dues in to support our chapter and national. Bill asked the members to check their ABPA account for their e-mail addresses. Some members use their company addresses where they may not receive chapter correspondence. INFO.

Agenda Item #13 Gauge Testing: **Carl said that Bill is in the hospital and plans on shutting down his gauge testing and repair business at the end of the year. Carl asked the members to check with Bill if they need gauge repairs or go to BAC-FLO Unlimited or BAVCO.** Testing at SAWS on meeting days starts at 5:00 PM. INFO.

Agenda Item #14. Training: Bruce Rathburn presented the Hazard Assessment Surveys from the Perspective of the Water Supplier. This was similar to what he presented at the 2024 ABPA 37th Annual Conference & Trade Show but a lot more focused on what the inspector would experience. This led to many more personal experiences than he could have described in the limited time presenters had at the show. For Bruce, more personal experiences, more questions and personal experience from the chapter members, to more of Bruce's personal experiences, and so forth.

Bruce related the opening slide of a skipper managing the sales of the large sail boat to a survey. There are many moving parts when managing a sail boat like there are a lot of moving parts when doing a survey. If you walk past one, it's lost forever. Do not focus solely on a backflow preventer. Sites can be very complicated and not just counting backflows. Very important is the environment and application of protecting it.

Bruce has done a lot of military buildings with the help of Mitch LeBas. He gave many different examples of bases with many different water sources. The water purveyor's responsibility is to produce quality water.

Need to know where the water source such as potable aquifer from water wells, privately owned water wells for potable and non-potable use, rainwater capture with storage tank filtration, filtrated brackish aquifer water from deep underground, and filtrated water from lakes, rivers and reservoirs. For filtrated, how is it treated, its chemical makeup.

However, the survey starts at the water meter. Inside the building all the pipelines can look the same. Need to trace the water lines from start to finish.

Now it is time to meet the players, and not just a “water guy” and not just specific to drinking water. What level of knowledge will this person have? What is their background? Plumber, irrigator or “tag you are it” for the survey? How long have they been on the job? How well do they know the facility? Could you request someone else if needed? Knowledge is the key where the “old guys” would be the source. Example: At one location all meters were turned off and yet water continued to flow. This could be an onsite unknown water source.

Since the example survey was of an Air Force base with many buildings, the following was requested: A grid map of the area you are going to survey. A block map, paper or electronic, for the areas you are going to work in. Map of the services that go to each building potable, fire or irrigation water. Know the number of buildings with no water. A good understanding of what the water is used for at each building. Bruce went through 8 items you should carry on your survey. A backpack would be very convenient.

Bruce gave examples of surveys he has conducted. One base, Bruce was told that many buildings do not have water but found that 80% of them did. There is no substitute for experience. Need to know when you can and cannot take pictures being part of the military protocol.

Take pictures whenever you are allowed. Document the room and building’s name and if it is connected another building. Write it down in detail if you cannot take pictures. Draw a rough sketch if you must. Bruce said, “Because peoples’ lives could be a stake.”

Bruce then went through 18 slides of what he and Frank documented. He asked for why he took that picture. More chapter members participated as Bruce got into the details. Bruce was building their experience. Situation: Meter and straight shot to the building which could have many T connections. Bruce showed many slides with red hoses. Permanent installation? This went on slide after slide. “What were they thinking and what is the solution?” There was an extensive use of hose bib vacuum breakers for different types of hazards. Commercial soap dispensers were a highlight. Bruce gave his experience on them and how they are misused. Some slides showed before and after where a hazard existed but now did not. Take pictures. Bruce was in 200-year-old buildings with a 16” feeder pipe. The pipes were of different non-standard colors and not plumbing code standards. The base commander picked some of the colors.

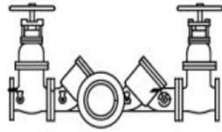
SUMMARY: The survey took a week. Many violations were fixed before the survey was completed. However, the corrective modifications were estimated at \$6M for fixing everything. The government requires this survey every 5 years. Bruce did not ask who did the last one. Base management was surprised at what was documented as “check the box” is what happened before. Cannot have enough pictures. The core goal is to protect lives.

Adjournment. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM for the raffle.



Greg Shean - Secretary ABPA San Antonio Chapter

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28
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10
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- 7) Liaison to SAWS – James Cantrell
- 8) Program Director – Joe Young
- 9) Gauge Testing and Certification – Carl Michaud
- 10) Membership & Newsletter – Bill Hamrick
- 11) Webmaster – Matthew Wilgen

Directors at Large

Two-year term

1. Jeff Hoffman
2. Bruce Rathburn
3. Robert Stricker

One-year term

4. Fred Baird
5. Robert (Bob) Clark

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Quote of the Day

“Backflow World - What we have learned and know about this field - is that - the more we know the more we realize we don't know!”

After over 50 years in the Backflow World - I came to realize this. Are there really - any experts in this field?

Fred Baird

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