

Region 1 Leadership Recall interview

Past

How long have you been a member of ASHRAE? **I joined in 1972 as an associate member and became a full member in 1974.**

How long were you a member of ASHRAE before you got involved as an officer or BOG member? **Going from memory, in 1978 I was asked to be the Education/Manpower Committee Chair (Now it would be Scholarship Committee) and did that for 2 years, then was asked to join the Board of Governors June 1980.**

Do you recall if there was any particular reason you decided to get involved? **I WAS ASKED. That is the single most factor involved in any member contribution, from joining a committee to donating to Research. People want to be asked. They seldom volunteer. Additionally I'd have to add Pride as a reason. It was an honor to be participating above the "go to the meeting and leave" member. You were looked up to and that's a good feeling. Now days, being on a committee or on the board are an interference with work and home. We need to re-instill the old values of honor and pride.**

Was there some particular person that helped or encouraged you to get involved in ASHRAE? **Yes. Tom Boniface. He moved away or something (I don't recall) but he was the ME Chair and asked me to take it over so he could move on.**

Were there any "horror stories" that you heard when you were considering becoming an officer? **Not a one.**

Which Chapter were you the president of? **New Jersey**

If you had to pick one thing that you did during your tenure as an ASHRAE Officer that benefited the chapter what would it be? **I can think of only a few small things, like creating the paid administrator position, and making sure we had good attendance by doing a dinner theme each meeting.**

When you were running the chapter, what would you say got the most members together and generated the most involvement? Monthly meetings? Trade Shows? Social Events? **Definitely the meetings and seminars. We usually had 10% to 12% of our paid membership that attended both regularly. We used the Handbooks as a source for meeting topics, picking out a chapter in the book (different handbook each meeting) and seeing who was part of that chapter's authorship and inviting them to come in and talk about "their chapter". I always asked the speaker "How do you get to be an ASHRAE author?" and had several NJ members contribute over the years.**

What did you find was the most difficult while you were president of your chapter?

What did you find was the easiest? **I can't remember anything being easy or hard in particular. I had a great team that supported me. There were no agendas or internal fighting as I see with some chapters. I had a lot of fun being president, as in our chapter, as President, you were on a pedestal. The professional recognition assisted me when I went to call on an engineer. I got in the door a lot quicker than my competitors.**

Did you feel like you had adequate training and mentorship available when you became chapter president? **The years on the board did that. I had some great mentors ahead of me that were always a phone call away.**

If you were asked to be a chapter officer again, knowing what it involved would you do it again? **Absolutely!!!!**

How do you recommend getting new members involved in ASHRAE, or any other professional society? **ASK. I think YEA is a great start, we need the young engineers to join and be involved. Better than 50% of our members are over 50 years old. Who is going to be revising the standards and creating new ones in 25 years when the older generation is gone or out of the picture?**

Do you think that your chapter faces any unique problems? If so what are they? **Presently, politics. I am trying to defuse that.**

Is there something that your chapter does that you feel is unique or innovative? **Speaking to the negative, the meetings have done away with the Tech session and the main presentations are not drawing the engineers. We need an "E" in ASHRAE campaign.**

Have you ever been active in any other chapters aside from the Chapter you were president of? If so what Chapters? How did they vary from your chapter? **I was the newsletter chair for the Bi-State Chapter of ASHRAE when they first formed. They struggled with getting volunteers where at the time the NJ chapter was a model to follow.**

Have you ever attended another chapters meeting? **Many.**

Have you ever been active at the regional or society level? If so what positions have you, or do you currently hold? **Region I CRC'90 General Chair, RVC RP, RP Committee Vice Chair, RP Committee Chair, RP Seat on Technology Council, Scholarship Trustee, 2008 Handbook Subcommittee Chair, Regional Chair to name a few.**

Do you intend to become active at a different level? If not what would you say would be the number one reason that would keep you from being active? **I will consider any assignment that I am nominated for.**

Was there a good mix of age groups that were active in the chapter when you were president? ie. attending meetings and events? **Yes, back then. Not so much now, mostly my generation.**

What would you say was the percentage of attendees from the different disciplines at ASHRAE meetings when you were in office?

Utilities/Consultants/Vendors/Contractors/Estimators/Management

When I was in Office 1% / 70% / 15% / 10% / 0% / 0%

What is one thing that you would say you gained from being involved in running the chapter? **Leadership skills, how to conduct meetings, know how to recognize who is doing or not doing their job, punctuality, and time management.**

Present

What is your current position/title at work? **Vice-President and Director of Building Automation Services**

Did you hold the same position when you first became a chapter officer? **Nope – Back then I was a Vendor – Sales Engineer for a controls company.**

Are you a registered Professional Engineer? **No.**

If so in what states and discipline? **N/A**

If you were asked to help mentor a new member about the benefits of being a leader in professional society, would you be interested? **Yes.**

In one sentence, what would you tell someone to encourage them to be active in the chapter? **“John, if you don’t go the next ASHRAE chapter meeting and volunteer to be RP Chair, you’re fired.” Seriously, I would look for a meeting that I know hold interest for that person, and invite him/her to go with me, then introduce him/her to the others, and stick close. So my sentence would be, “John, come to the meeting with me next Wednesday, The topic is radiant heat floors and that’s on the major systems on your project. It’ll be interesting to you, and I’ll introduce you to the guys. By the way, we have a few female engineers that regularly attend”.**

When was the last time that you were at a Chapter function or meeting?

Ie. Past Presidents meeting or any other? **November was PP night and I went. Went to the January meeting as well**

What types of chapter activities are likely to attract you to attend? **Interesting topic/speaker.**

What would you say is the biggest draw for your attendance to meetings?

Location, Speaker/Topic, Networking, Socializing, or Professional development?

Has to be the topic and who’s there. I think we need to get the building owners to

attend (join meeting with BOMA) and that will start to pull the engineers out of the woodwork (food chain mentality).

Future

If you were to give one tip to next years, or any future years leadership what would it be? **Time is running out for a lot of things. Focus on what you do the best and do your best at it. That statement runs the gamete from your personal lives/family to work/ to ASHRAE.**

What would you say was the optimal percentage of attendees from the different disciplines at ASHRAE meetings should be in a healthy ASHRAE chapter?
Utilities/Consultants/Vendors/Contractors/Estimators/Management
Owners (20%) to draw the Engineers (30%), to draw the Contractors (20%), Vendors (20%), and others (10%)

What do you feel would be a good way to encourage Consulting Engineers to attend meetings? **Get them interested in the food chain as stated above. Also, global warming is a real threat that may be too late to correct already. Our programs should start to focus on the “what if” future. I saw a documentary that says when/if the ice caps melt, the south coast of Florida will be what is presently the north coast of Lake Okeechobee. Where will all of those people go?**

When members are polled for ideas about potential topics at Dinner meetings the responses back are extremely minimal, what would you recommend as a way to encourage and receive feedback for new topics? **Manipulation. Use politics to get it moving. E.g. Hillary is thinking about What did you think? Should we explore that so we will be informed voters? Etc.**

What areas of the industry do you think need ASHRAE’s attention the most? **Anything to do with sustainability and global warming. If you haven’t watched “An inconvenient truth”, watch it and be scared for your grand children. (You have to blow off the cheap political comments during the first 90 seconds, once past that the facts speak for themselves.)**

Is there anything that ASHRAE is doing now that concerns you? **Yes – everything. Sustainability, energy conservation, co2 footprints, etc. It all concerns me (and you) and ASHRAE is working to improve the lot.**

Have you been to any ASHRAE winter or summer meetings? If so what did you like or dislike about them? Would you encourage members to attend? **Yes. I like the events and I learn so much from others. I don’t like going to Chicago in January or Orlando in June. Can’t we switch that? Members should attend and become involve in TC’s of their particular interest or discipline.**

Is there anything that ASHRAE has been involved with that you believe directly influenced your day to day practice in the HVAC&R field? (political topics, standards, codes, training, etc.) **Handbooks, Seminars and Standards**

Bill,

Great survey and questions. I would be interested in your response summaries.