



ABPA News

3rd Quarter 2020

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Blake Anderson
International Vice President

Billie Vines
Secretary

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Tim Brown
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Kevin Turcotte
Region 2 Director (D.C., DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)

Kathy Riley
Region 3 Director (AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN)

Message from President Frank Snyder **'Growing ABPA membership is my top priority'**



New ABPA President Frank Snyder
hopes members will make it a goal
to recruit more people to our ranks.

Over the years, as I've attended conferences, seminars and chapter meetings, I have tried to talk to as many people as I can. I like learning how things are done in other parts of the country. Things we do in Texas may not work in snow country, and vice versa. You never know when some little tidbit of information will be useful.

I became your ABPA Vice President in an unorthodox way. The Board of Directors followed the by-laws, and there I was. I commend (Past President) Tim (Brown) and his predecessors who were forced to deal with several management company fiascos (I would not have had the patience).

Now that we are settling in with AMS as our management company, our association faces a new set of challenges. COVID-19 has disrupted ABPA just as it's disrupted our daily lives. But this too, like the flu, shall pass.

I believe, without question, our biggest association challenge now is our shrinking membership.

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I cannot sit here in my office and tell you what you need. I need you to tell me. What is needed at the chapter level is unique to each state and region. Your national leadership must focus on what is best for the entire association, while also supporting individual regions and chapters in their endeavors.

I believe the greatest benefit to ABPA membership is at the chapter level. We have lost members in recent years, because we were forced to focus on management issues while not tending to chapter needs. This association was founded as a member-driven organization. My intent, as your new president, is to return us to that tradition and to restore our membership levels to where they belong.

How do we accomplish this? Two ways. First, from the top, down.

I pledge to talk to each region director at least quarterly and will accept invitations to speak at as many chapter activities as possible.

I pledge to talk to each region director at least quarterly, to see what is needed to assist their region and find out what they are doing to support their chapters.

I also expect each region director to speak with all of their chapter presidents at least quarterly, and to visit each chapter at least once per elected term. As states reopen –

Board of Directors Continued...

Troy Baird
Region 4 Director (AR, LA, OK, TX)

Jesse Bockhouse
Region 5 Director (CO, NM, UT, WY)

Lyle Greenhill
Region 6 Director (AZ, CA, HI, NV)

Allen Wilder
Region 7 Director (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA)

Open at this time
Region 8 Director (AB, BC, MB, NT, NU, SK, YT Canada)

Region 9 Director (ON, PEI, PQ, NB, NL, NS Canada)

Region 10 Director (MN, ND, SD, WI)

Danny Jurkowitz
Region 11 Director (IL, IN, KY, MI, OH)

Rich Koenig
Region 12 Director (IA, KS, MO, NE)

Mike Lueck
Director-at-Large

Useful ABPA Resources

ABPA Membership Brochure

Online Dues Renewal Instructions

Certification Program Resources

View the ABPA Community Calendar featuring upcoming Certification exam information and other local chapter events.

Contact Us

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<http://www.abpa.org>

and chapters begin reconvening meetings and seminars – assuming time and money allow, I will accept invitations to attend and speak at as many chapter activities as possible.

The second way I believe we bolster ABPA membership is from the bottom up. This is the more critical of the two, requiring chapters to communicate needs to their region director. Without bottom up communication, your national leaders have no idea how to best support your chapter.

Finally, a note to our individual members. The sharing of problems and ideas at your chapter meetings and seminars is invaluable. Any issue you are facing in the field has, in all probability, already been dealt with by someone else. Networking creates practical sharing opportunities.

If we want to be the go-to authority on backflow prevention and cross connection control, we need membership numbers that speak authority. Elected officials normally seek re-election. Numbers matter to them. The more people concerned about a given issue (like backflow and cross connection), the more politicians will listen, whether it's at the city, county, state or federal level.

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With this in mind, as my first directive as your new ABPA president, I challenge each member to recruit at least one new member, per year. You do the math. If we work together to accomplish this realistic goal, our ABPA membership – and, along with it, our political clout – will grow rapidly.

Thank you for supporting your ABPA national leadership. I look forward to reintroducing myself to many of you, and to meeting those new recruits you encourage to join our ranks!

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Vice President Election Utah ABPA chapter board member Anderson wins close race



Blake Anderson of Utah is the new ABPA Vice President.

In the first-ever ABPA vice presidential election held exclusively by mail -- with no ballot drop off option at the annual conference (thanks again, coronavirus) -- Blake Anderson of Utah defeated Michigan's Jeff Vlisides in a close race. Ballots were tallied soon after the election closed, June 20, 2020.

"I appreciate all the support I received from ABPA members and look forward to serving the association," Anderson said, just minutes after receiving the call from President Frank Snyder, notifying him of his election. "We have a lot of industry experience we can draw upon and share with each other. We have a lot of work to do and I am looking forward to it."

Just a few miles north of Salt Lake City, the West Bountiful City Public Works Department has been Anderson's professional home since 1999.

"I started as a water utility worker, then earned my testing certification in 2001 or 2002," Blake added. "I have been over our city's backflow prevention program since then. That is also when I first became aware of ABPA."

His election to vice president marks Anderson's first foray into national ABPA leadership. However, he has been very active for years in his local chapter.

"Early on, I began attending the annual Utah ABPA state conference and quickly found out, there is a lot of experience to be shared – particularly by veteran ABPA members," he said. "I am very supportive of the Utah board (of directors) and have served on it for several years. I plan to keep that board position as I also work as (national) vice president."

I appreciate all the support I received from ABPA members and look forward to serving the association. We have a lot of work to do and I am looking forward to it."

Anderson grew up in a small city that borders West Bountiful, graduating from Woods Cross High School in 1986. Several years later – after serving a 2-year mission for his church – Blake earned his bachelor's degree from Utah State University, the same year (1995) he married his wife, Lauralee.

The couple will celebrate their 25th anniversary August 19. They are the proud parents of six daughters and one son. Just a few months ago, that oldest daughter delivered Aliza into the family, making Blake and Lauralee first-time grandparents.



Educating school children is one of Anderson's top priorities.

The oldest three Anderson children have all graduated from Dad's same Woods Cross High School. The most recent had one of those COVID-19 virtual graduation ceremonies a couple of months ago.

"A lot of our family hobbies involve the outdoors," Blake added. "We are fortunate to live in Utah. We enjoy hiking, fishing and camping in our beautiful mountains."

Anderson's top priority as your new vice president aligns exactly with the key goal of new ABPA President Frank Snyder.

"I want to grow and strengthen our ABPA local and national memberships," he said. "I really love the water profession. It is very important and dear to me. I want to get the message out to the general public how important it is."

Association President Snyder has challenged each ABPA member to identify at least one new member to join them, over the coming year.

"I think that is a very realistic and reachable goal," Anderson concluded.

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Letter from the Editor
Still singing the coronavirus blues
By Carl Fauver, Communication Director

Remember when "spike" was a good word? It meant your volleyball team just scored a point, or even better, your prom night punch bowl just got more interesting. Heck, we even used to walk along the railroad tracks near Gramma's farm to gather them in tin buckets (and, no, I'm not sure why).

Out here in the Utah hinterlands, we've been enduring a coronavirus spike in recent weeks. Yes, I know many of your states are as well. I guess we really are all in this together...STILL.

But despite the health and social injustice challenges this summer has already delivered, ABPA life still marches on. In this newsletter, if you're perusing these articles in order, you've already read your first president's letter from Frank Snyder. You also just learned who your new ABPA vice president is.

Ahead you will...

- Get some tips on reopening businesses and schools in the COVID-19 era
- Learn who your annual ABPA award winners are
- Be introduced to this year's Harrington-Arthur Memorial Essay Contest winner
- Meet your new ABPA Treasurer, and
- See chapter notes from Rhode Island to Southern California

We appreciate the positive feedback we've received regarding our first two ABPA newsletters. We're also encouraged to hear, some of you are interested in contributing stories to this quarterly publication. Your Past President Tim Brown took us up on that "offer" this quarter, thereby putting to waste the bubbling tar and torn pillows.

We want future newsletters to contain the kinds of stories and information that serve you best. We invite you to share your ideas for future articles – or to offer any other comments or critiques – at info@abpa.org.

For story ideas, it would be very helpful if you include contact information for one or two individuals who can contribute to an article or would be available for an interview.

Here's hoping you and yours enjoy a pleasant and safe summer season, despite our 2020 challenges. Let's hope our next significant spike comes on Wall Street or at the end of a long touchdown run.

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Headquarters Update

Those long, hot, virus days of summer

By Patti Fauver, Executive Director

Time just keeps marching on...although it sometimes feels like swimming in molasses!

Lots of updates and information, so let's just jump right to it:

Membership Clarification – We have found a common misunderstanding when it comes to being a member or being an ABPA certified tester or specialist. This confusion usually occurs when individuals register for chapter or national conferences – expecting a reduced, "MEMBER" fee – and are denied.



ABPA Member - To be an association member, you must pay annual dues. There are three membership types:

US Member - individual membership where the member is located in the United States

International Member - individual membership where the member is located outside the USA

Sustaining Member - company membership where one fee is paid, covering up to five individuals, with only one voting privilege among them

Certification Only Non-member - Yeah, I know, a "non-member" member, right?!?! This type of "membership" was created to service ABPA certification programs, allowing an individual to carry ABPA certification without being an ABPA member (which, rightfully so, is not required for any of our ABPA certification programs). This designation allows the individual to be entered into a common database. However, **being recognized through ABPA's certification programs DOES NOT mean that person is an ABPA member!**

In short, if you are not paying annual ABPA **MEMBERSHIP DUES**, you are not a **VOTING MEMBER**.

Many individuals are ABPA MEMBERS and also certified. In this case, their certification credentials are data based under their ABPA individual member type (US or International).

Update Your Membership Profile – Please, please, **PLEASE** update your snail- and e-mail addresses in your membership profile. This is the only way ABPA can contact you about critical issues, such as:

Voting - The home address in your profile is used to send your ballot. This is how you express your voice about who you want to represent your member interests.

Membership Renewals - ABPA sends out automated reminder emails 90 and 60 days before your membership expiration, as well as the day after it expires. We have also reestablished a snail-mail reminder letter, sent about a month prior to your expiration date.

Certification Reminders - ABPA sends reminders at various times prior to your expiration date, in order for you to register for a recertification exam.

Announcements and Breaking News - ABPA regularly emails announcements for Board meetings, ABPA events and items of industry interest.

Newsletter - Distribution of this quarterly newsletter is to your email.

If your email or physical addresses are not current, the national office is limited in ways to effectively communicate with you.

2020 Conference – We are still processing the final few conference registration refunds, after reaching out to registered attendees and exhibitors twice for information. If you were registered – and have not seen the emails (or responded to them) – please call your national headquarters, at **801-436-7238**. We are excited to be in Charlotte for the 2021 conference, April 19-21. Hope to see you there!

Certification – A quick update on the ABPA certified tester and specialist extension: ABPA has expanded the range of expiration dates that will be eligible for an extension. Specialist and Tester certificates expiring between March 1 and August 1 of this year, are extended to August 31, 2020. Your ABPA Certification Team is closely monitoring travel and social distancing restrictions, and will adjust as needed. For a letter addressing certificate extensions, [click here](#).

Keep up the good work I know you are all doing and continue to keep you and your family safe by following the guidelines set out by your local and state health agencies!

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ABPA National Budget

Unanimously-approved \$461,500 budget is slightly smaller than the current one

Considering the devastating impact coronavirus has had on countless businesses and professional organizations over the past several months, the just-approved ABPA national budget, for fiscal year 2021, has taken only a very minor hit. Moreover, a 2.3% reduction in the new budget is more than offset by a 5% cut in Association expenditures.



"Right now, our biggest drawback is COVID-19," said President Frank Snyder. "We had to cancel the National Conference. The Western Regional Conference is also cancelled. It will remain a challenge until this pandemic is declared over."

ABPA Board members unanimously approved a \$461,500 budget for the new fiscal year, during their June 25, 2020 online meeting. The Board cited declining Association membership and a slight reduction in estimated certification program revenues as the primary reasons for the slight revenue shortfall.

A reduction of management company fees for Advanced Management Solutions was noted by the Board, as a primary reason why overall ABPA costs decreased 5%.

"I was glad to see costs went down," newly-elected ABPA Vice President Blake Anderson added, after

attending his very first Board meeting as a member. "We certainly have some work to do. But it was good to see some positives in the budget as well."

Board members report, certification programs are estimated to net some \$70,000 in FY2021. They also say discussions will begin immediately, on the structure of the next ABPA National Conference, now scheduled for Charlotte, in April 2021.

"The only way we are going to turn this Association around (financially) is to get new members, or get past members to come back," President Snyder concluded. "I think this newsletter is a good step in that direction. People see it is back. That is a benefit to our members and it will help in recruiting new members."



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Industry News You Can Use **Stagnant water - Flush it out!**

Secretary, Billie Vines

As we all begin to reopen businesses across our country and **especially school campuses from kindergarten through college**, ABPA would be remiss if we did not mention the issue of buildings with stagnant water, or low use of water, due to increased telecommuting. There are significant health concerns when water sits in piping systems for an extended time. Nothing good comes of this! In EPA's words:



Building and business closures for weeks or months reduce water usage, potentially leading to stagnant water inside building plumbing. This water can become unsafe to drink or otherwise use for domestic or commercial purposes.

For example, optimal growth conditions for undesirable pathogens, such as Legionella bacteria, can occur when hot water temperatures decrease and disinfectant residuals (e.g., chlorine) drop to low levels.

Water chemistry changes may also increase corrosion and leaching of metals, including lead, and may cause the formation of disinfection by-products. Turning on the water for immediate use after it has been stagnant can pose a risk to public health if not properly managed.

Additionally, turning on water after a prolonged period of non-use could disrupt pipe and plumbing scales to such an extent that microbial and chemical contaminants could be released into the water.

Here are several links outlining various steps to mitigate stagnant water health risks:

[**EPA - Maintaining or restoring water quality in buildings with low or no use**](#)

[**EPA - Restoring water quality in buildings for reopening checklist**](#)

[**CDC - Guidance for reopening buildings after prolonged shutdown or reduced operation**](#)

[**Association of State Drinking Water Administrators \(ASDWA\)**](#) - provides a map that will link you to your state's Drinking Water Program website.

[**ASTHO and ASDWA Release Factsheet for Building Water Systems on Water Quality Monitoring**](#)

Together we can ensure tap water is safe, as we begin to find the "new normal" – especially for our kids!

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Industry News You Can Use
ABPA certification in the age of COVID-19

Certification Programs Administrator, Mike Ahlee

To quote that great philosopher Jerry Garcia, "What a long strange trip it's been." And, my guess is, it's not over yet. When it started, we were all in a state of confusion. Most of us have been in that state, ever since.



For ABPA, the arrival of coronavirus has meant canceling our annual conference, along with many certification exams. For your Certification Committee, the pandemic has meant multiple emergency meetings – which have now turned into regular, weekly meetings – in an attempt to keep up with all the changes. We're working to find ways to restart our exam process, while complying with countless different COVID-19 mitigation procedures. For a while, the "rules" were changing every day.

The Certification Committee issued extensions to all ABPA-certified testers who have expiration dates from March 1 to August 1. We also restructured and rescheduled tester and specialist exams, starting last month (June 2020). Exam priorities are being given to those who had a previously scheduled exam cancelled.

As we attempt to get back to "normal operations," ABPA will temporarily suspend some of the time constraints associated with the exam process. We will be as flexible as possible with training providers wanting to schedule exams. We have reduced the 30-days in advance requirement for exam applicant registration to 7 days.

We are also coordinating with exam sites across the country to set up stand alone exams on a regular basis (in some cases weekly), to address the backlog due to cancelled exams and expirations. We have sites in Arizona, California, Colorado and Nevada. If you have an available test site (not under shutdown orders), please contact Brittany (Laswell) Robertson (brittany@abpa.org or 801-436-7238).

Your Certification Committee has been corresponding with training providers and exam sites in order to ensure the safety of ABPA personnel, as well as everyone else at the site. All exam site coordinators are required to provide a coronavirus mitigation plan. ABPA exam personnel will have access to those mitigation procedures, to allow them to be proactive and make informed risk management decisions.

Several new documents have also been added to exam packages. The Certification Committee, at the direction of President Snyder and the Board of Directors, is working in conjunction with ABPA management company AMS, in an attempt to stay in front of continuing coronavirus challenges. We are clearly in uncharted territory. Your patience and assistance are greatly appreciated.

To quote another group of great philosophers, we'll "get by with a little help from my friends."

Here's hoping we are all together in North Carolina next year, telling stories about the great pandemic crisis of 2020 – and how we weathered it so successfully.

See you in Charlotte!



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A note from ABPA Past President Tim Brown
Congratulations to our 2020 award winners

During our April 18, 2020 Board of Directors teleconference, I announced the winners of our annual ABPA awards, presented to chapters and individual members for their outstanding service to the association over the past year. As you know, these awards are historically presented during our annual conference.

It's unfortunate the announcements had to be made in this manner. These 2020 winners will be more properly recognized during our 2021 annual conference in Charlotte. We will also recognize next year's 2021 winners at the same event.

After discussing it with the Board of Directors, your Awards Committee elected NOT to bestow the Meritorious Service Award this year, because of the coronavirus schedule disruption. Instead, this award – the highest honor an individual ABPA member can receive – will resume with a presentation next spring, during the North Carolina conference.

These then, are your 2020 award winners, announced during the April teleconference:

President's Award for Chapter Excellence (PACE)

Carolinias Chapter
San Antonio Chapter
Tennessee Chapter

Click [here](#) to read the many things required of chapters to qualify for the prestigious PACE award.



Gold Eagle

Troy Baird - Troy has served as the active Region 4 Director, as well as the chair of the Public Awareness and Education (PAE) Committee, for several years. He also remains very active with the San Antonio Chapter. Baird was selected Director of the Year in 2017 and Committee Chair of the Year in 2018. As ABPA President, I could always rely on Troy to provide feedback on any Board issue. As PAE Committee Chair, Troy has overseen the important annual scholarship essay contest. This includes reviewing each essay submission for accuracy and completeness as stated in the rules, and then gathering scoring input from committee members.

Pete Keers – In nominating Pete for this award, Region 5 Director Jesse Bockhouse described him as a “tireless advocate.” Having served the ABPA Utah Chapter as VP, president and past president, Keers is now their office manager. Pete was instrumental in organizing our 2019 annual conference in Salt Lake City, has presented at WRBC and provides consistent support to the Utah Chapter annual conferences. His level of service over the years “exemplifies the best as a member of the ABPA.”

Michael Moss - This former ABPA national president agreed to serve a repeat term as past president in 2019-2020. He brought years of overall experience and Certification Committee expertise to our Executive Committee discussions. This was certainly a benefit to me. Following his many years serving the State of Utah, Michael continues to donate a significant amount of time and energy to the Utah and Idaho certification exams, helping to keep them cost-efficient.

Brittany Robertson - In serving primarily to organize the Certification Programs for Advanced Management Solutions, the former Brittany Laswell has done a tremendous job merging two existing databases, while working through certification exam scheduling and logistics. New to our industry, she has also astutely discovered issues that had previously gone unnoticed, such as registration problems and non-payment of fees. Brittany is self-motivated, conscientious, detail-oriented and a critical part of our management team.

Michael Robeson - Michael has served the Tennessee Backflow Prevention Association (i.e., the Tennessee Chapter) as membership director for the past few years, doing an excellent job promoting membership and keeping members well-informed. He sends renewal membership reminders and regularly asks our ABPA national headquarters for new Tennessee member updates, to recruit those people. Michael also sent updates to his members following this spring's deadly tornadoes in his state.

Greg Shean - An ABPA member since 1998, Greg is a former president (2006-08) and current secretary (since 2012), of the San Antonio ABPA Chapter. After serving 23 years as an Air Force officer (1969-1993), Greg began his relationship with ABPA while addressing irrigation and backflow issues, as the president of his homeowners' association. Shean is a strong supporter of ABPA's annual Silent Auction, helping to raise funds for our annual scholarship essay contest. This is his second time to win the Gold Eagle award (2014). He has also been instrumental in keeping the records to assist his Texas chapter in winning the ABPA PACE award, every year since 2006.

Director of the Year

Kathy Riley, Region 3 - For the second time in three years (Orlando 2018), an annual conference was scheduled in Region 3, putting more work on Kathy's plate. Despite our being forced to cancel this spring's conference, the event was completely organized and planned well ahead of time. Kathy was instrumental in making this happen, by helping to find the best hotel and serving as our local lodging contact, identifying and scheduling several conference speakers, lining up vendors, planning the Silent Auction, ordering supplies and completing countless other duties. We are so pleased arrangements have already been made to make use of the Charlotte site next year. We can all see what Kathy and the other members of the Conference Committee had planned.

Committee Chair of the Year

Bill Hamrick, Elections Committee - Bill continues to handle ABPA elections with dedication, ethics, accuracy, consistency and adherence to our association bylaws. In addition to one region director election, there were discussions this spring between Hamrick and the Board, about how best to handle a vice president election, when the only two nominations were received past our bylaws-mandated deadline. As always, Bill offered his opinion with thoughtful consideration and with the association's ultimate good in mind.

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Award Winner Profiles

Industry veterans Riley and Hamrick going strong after decades of ABPA service

We thought you might enjoy learning a bit more about your top two ABPA national award winners:

Director of the Year

Kathy Riley's Region 3 (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee) was poised to host the ABPA National Conference in Charlotte this spring, before COVID-19 forced a one-year delay. It's already been announced, the Queen City will instead host the 2021 gathering.

Region 3 Director since 2015, Riley has spent half her life – 25 of her 50 years – with the Charlotte Water Backflow Division.

"I knew nothing about backflow and cross connection when I first started with the city," Kathy said. "After I applied for the job, I went to the library to research what the industry was all about. I was hired in February 1995."



ABPA 2020 Director of the Year, Kathy Riley

Although she calls the East Coast home now, Riley was born and raised at the other end of the country.

"I was born in Los Angeles and grew up in the San Joaquin Valley," she said. "I was the 1987 Porterville High School Senior Class President. After that I moved south to attend San Diego State University."

While an SDSU Aztec, Kathy met Wayne Riley. The two married July 15, 1990, with their 30th anniversary now just a few days away.

Kathy and Wayne are the parents of two sons and one daughter. She says they are a "soccer family."

"Where I grew up there was a lot of soccer; I never played, but I watched a lot," Riley said. "All three of our kids played and Wayne coached them all."

Working for Xerox in the early 1990s, a career opportunity for Wayne took the Rileys across the country.

"Our ABPA Carolinas Chapter was formed in 1996, shortly after I went to work for Charlotte Water," Kathy added. "The very next year we hosted the ABPA National Conference in Asheville. We were looking forward to the conference returning to our state this year."

Prior to becoming the Region 3 Director five years ago, Kathy served as the ABPA Awards Committee Chairperson for several years. She also logged time on the Conference and Cross Connection Control Manual Committees.

"I am as optimistic about ABPA as I have ever been. We now have a board that is focused on the task at hand."

"When you work with more individuals, you get better ideas," she added.

As for her future in ABPA leadership, Riley isn't sure at the moment.

"If COVID-19 was not in the mix, I would for sure run again in 2021 (for Region 3 Director); but as it is, I am not sure about it," Kathy said. When asked whether she would ever try to become ABPA's national president or VP, Riley added, "I will have to have that discussion down the road. I am not ready to consider it yet; but I have also not ruled it out."

Kathy is confident about the future of the association.

"I am as optimistic about ABPA as I have ever been," she said. "We had a couple of hiccups...we had to take our beatings. But things have worked out and we have come out better. I think we have a great board, which makes me more excited to take on tasks. I think now in 2020, we can look at the challenges of the past, take a deep breath and move forward. We now have a board focused on the task at hand. Just like anything in life, you will face obstacles. But how you handle them is what matters."

Committee Chair of the Year

Bill Hamrick – from ABPA's San Antonio Chapter – is no stranger to being honored by the national association. Prior to winning Committee Chair of the Year this year, he earned the same honor in 2017. He was also given the Gold Eagle Award in 2018.

"I don't know who nominated me this year," Hamrick, 79, said. "As the **Election Committee Chair** there were some issues I had to handle – some unusual election situations that we did not have in years past. But I was totally floored (to receive this award), because I just felt I was doing my due diligence. I did not consider it to be above and beyond the call of duty."

For starters, coronavirus – and the cancellation of this year's national conference – threw a huge monkey wrench into the traditional ABPA election process.

"We have always mailed ballots out; but members have always been able to drop their ballots off at the conference," he explained. "Also, we did not have the national vice president candidates finalized in time this year. This was the first time we had to split the VP election from the region director race."



ABPA 2020 Committee Chair of the Year, Bill Hamrick

At the ABPA national level, the Election Committee is the only one Hamrick has served. But he's held a number of positions in his San Antonio chapter, including the presidency back in the mid-1990s. He's now the editor and publisher of their colorful and informative monthly chapter newsletter.

"I was totally floored (to receive this award), because I just felt I was doing my due diligence."

Hamrick has been active in the backflow industry for more than a half-century, starting first through the car wash business he founded in 1964.

November 1966) and we ran the business together for 42 years, before selling it in 2006."

"I got into the car wash business after my father came home from his Kiwanis Club meeting, where a member was looking for someone to work for him," Bill added. "Soon after that, I got married (to Lorraine, in

Hamrick became involved in backflow because his car wash operators were asking him to help test their backflow preventers.

"I earned my backflow testing license while attending a class at Texas A&M in 1988," he said. "I normally tested about 350 per year, on the weekends. When we sold the car wash business, I kept the testing part of it. I still test and certify backflow gauges."

In order to accomplish all of his career goals, Hamrick admits he didn't do much besides work.

"We only took four vacations in 56 years, and each of those were from Thursday through to the next Tuesday," Bill said. "But we also put our two daughters through medical and law school without a penny of student debt."

Hamrick learned a part of his self-discipline during his six years in the Air Force reserve, from 1963 to 1969, as the Vietnam War was intensifying.

"I decided on my own to join the reserve, and when I returned home – the day I was sworn into the reserve – my draft notice was in the mail," he said. "Except for a 2-week training one year, in Biloxi, Mississippi, I served my entire reserve duty around San Antonio."

"It's an honor to be recognized for my work on the ABPA Election Committee."

The San Antonio ABPA Chapter has a current membership of about 125. But the newsletter Bill produces is so popular, it is emailed to twice that many people.

"It's an honor to be recognized for my work on the ABPA Election Committee," Hamrick concluded.

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Scholarship Essay Winner Lone Star student standout pockets \$1500 scholarship



"In today's world, where safe drinking water is the most treasured resource, it is imperative water purveyors accept their role and responsibility to enact cross connection control programs to ensure safe drinking water for all Americans."

That's how Plano (TX) High School Junior Jishnu Basu closed his scholarship-winning essay, not long after first learning words like "backflow" and "cross connection." Unlike many previous winners of ABPA's annual Harrington-Arthur Memorial Essay Competition, Jishnu did not become aware of it through a family member working in the field.

Jishnu Basu of Plano, TX is the 2020 essay contest winner.

The essay contest was established in 2000 to reward students who seek to increase their knowledge and understanding of how cross connection control and backflow prevention help ensure safe drinking water.

"My parents are both accountants and I learned about the essay contest through an online scholarship forum," Basu said. "I am so glad I did. As I began researching, it opened up a new world to me. Now I understand the importance of (backflow prevention) and how it connects to everything in society."

While still in diapers, Basu immigrated with his parents, from India to Minnesota in 2005. His father attended college... the young family later moved to Connecticut... but has been in Texas since he was in second grade. In 2010, a younger brother followed.

"In reading Jishnu's essay the first time, it was obvious he answered the question more comprehensively and on a broader scale than the other work submitted," Scholarship Committee Chairman Troy Baird said. "The essay was backed up with an extensive bibliography along with an impressive biography not often seen from a high school student."

"It was an excellent essay that focused well on the topic, was concise and written with excellent grammar," ABPA Past President Tim Brown added, in a note to Basu. "There were two other strong essays, but yours was seen as superior by the entire judging committee."

The essay topic was: **"Explain cross connection control in relation to protecting the public's drinking water from a water purveyor's viewpoint. Discuss the water purveyor's role and responsibilities and ways to eliminate contamination risks in a city or town's water supply system."**

Jishnu is excited about earning the \$1500 scholarship, though he is not yet sure where it will be spent.



Science fair competitions began keeping Jishnu busy, several years ago.

"I'm not 100 percent sure where I want to go to school," he said. "I want to earn an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering and a master's degree in biomedical engineering. My ultimate goal is to develop effective medical devices for impoverished areas. I would like to go back to my home country (India) to assist people."

At the moment, Basu is awaiting the results of four different Advanced Placement (AP) exams he took on line (due to coronavirus) in the spring.

He's also hopeful he and his classmates can return to their normal, in-school classes this fall, for his senior year. Jishnu is on the Plano High School swim and debate teams, and also active in the National Honor Society and Science Club.

"Thank you for providing me the opportunity for this scholarship," Basu concluded. "Throughout this competition, I learned about the role of water purveyors. It really opened my eyes. This is something members of the public need to understand."

To read the entire award-winning essay, click [here](#).



Board Member Profile

New ABPA Treasurer Jerry Cook getting acquainted with the books



New ABPA Treasurer Jerry Cook

In the midst of our pandemic “lockdown,” Jerry Cook of Springdale, Arkansas has been getting his feet wet as the new ABPA national treasurer. Having just completed his three-year run as the vice president, president and past president of the Backflow Prevention Association of Arkansas (BPAA) last year, Cook was named to his new post during an April 22 ABPA Board of Directors conference call.

“My goal is to improve the organization, so when I leave it is better than when I arrived,” Cook said. “We have faced financial challenges in ABPA and I am excited to do all I can to help.”

Cook admits, he does not have a lot of background as a treasurer. But he’s confident he knows what to do. And having gone through a lot of secretary-treasurers during his BPAA leadership stint, he believes he’s learned a lot of things NOT to do.

“I went through two secretary-treasurers in the one year I was (BPAA) president,” he added. “Then we had another guy in the position for 18 months before he decided to step down. This will be a whole new ball of wax for me. But I know the board has to set a budget and then my job is to maintain that budget and operate within it.”

Compared to many ABPA members, Cook is a relative newcomer to the cross connection and backflow world.

“We have faced financial challenges in ABPA and I am excited to do all I can to help.”

“I’ve worked for Springdale Water Utilities for 17 years but did not begin my work as a cross connection technician until May 2013,” Cook said. “I spent my first 10 years with the utility reading meters and maintaining water tank pumps. I joined ABPA in 2014.”

Cook’s utility is a recent winner of the “Arkansas Governor’s Quality Award for Performance Excellence.” According to their website, “Springdale Water Utilities...is the first utility in Arkansas and (only) the second government-related entity in the 24-year history of the award to win the highest recognition at the Governor’s Quality Awards Celebration.”

“I have a great employer that always wants employees to do well,” he added. “They knew I was also considering the secretary-treasurer position at the state level. They just asked me to choose one or the other, so I would not be stretched too thin. I passed on the state position, hoping to get the ABPA national treasurer job. So, I am glad it worked out.”



Jerry and Lisa Cook enjoy 2-wheel country drives.

When not working, Jerry and his wife Lisa enjoy taking cruises. In fact, even as the coronavirus pandemic continues, they were hoping to join friends on a cruise in mid-July.

“We’re addicted to cruising,” he said. “Over the past three years we have cruised to Cozumel, St. Thomas, Puerto Rico, Belize and other places. We’re planning an Alaskan cruise in two years.”

Unfortunately, coronavirus cancelled this month’s cruise. Instead, this fall the Cooks plan to participate in their other favorite leisure activity – scenic motorcycle riding.

“In September we are going to ride (a world-renowned stretch of highway, near the Tennessee-North Carolina state line, called) the Tail of the Dragon,” Cook added.

The Cooks have no children – but something close.

"We got legal custody of Lisa's (13 years) younger sister 16 years ago," Jerry said. "We raised her through the good years: braces, boyfriends and cars. She's now married with two kids who live about 1½ miles away. So, we spoil them like grandkids."

As for his new ABPA Treasurer's post, Cook hopes to be in it "for the long haul."

"My goal is to improve the organization, so when I leave it is better than when I arrived."

"I kind of wanted to get my foot in the door at the national level; but I am not thinking about the ABPA vice president or president positions," he concluded. "I'm not trying to just put something on a resume'. I would like to be treasurer for several years so I really get to know the job."

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Certification Program Update Hands on hints: shut off valves

By Mike Ahlee, Certification Programs Administrator

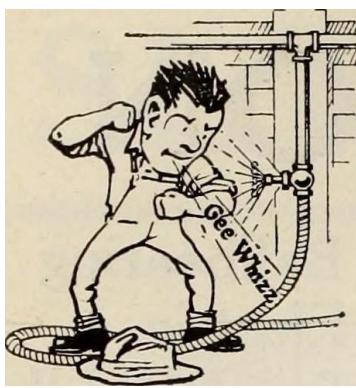
Shut off valves (SOVs) are extremely important to the proper operation of backflow prevention assemblies. However, they're often not given much thought, unless they leak.

When we field test backflow prevention assemblies – using ABPA-accepted field test procedures – and find we don't need to use any leaking shut off valve compensating procedures, it's easy to assume that means the SOVs are not leaking. Probably the most common response is to just not consider the condition of the SOVs at all. After all, we got a good field test result and did not have to move beyond the initial steps of the field test procedures.

Shut off valves probably leak more often than they close drip tight.

But in reality, this just means if there is a SOV leak, it is small enough that no additional compensating procedure was needed during the field test. Truth be told, SOVs probably leak more often than they close drip tight. I am aware some may find this statement controversial; but please allow me to try to make the case.

In laboratory conditions, the term "drip tight" means just that: not even one drip passes through when shut. Anything else is considered a leak. A leak can be anything from a slight drip to enough flow to require using compensating techniques in order to obtain accurate field test results.



A good example would be the field test of a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention assembly (RP). I'm sure you have noticed, a really large percentage of the time (maybe 90 to 95%), the apparent pressure drop across #1 check valve of an RP is higher than the actual pressure drop across #1 check valve. Why would that be?

Thus the #1 check valve is NOT fully closed.

It could be, anytime a check valve opens and closes it may hold at a different value. Unless there is debris, or the disc is old or damaged, this would not be likely. If, however, there is a leak in the #2 SOV, the apparent reading you obtain for #1 check valve will be under a slight flow condition.

This has the effect of making #1 check valve appear to have a higher reading. Even a dirty or old check disc will show a better reading while under a flow condition, as long as the spring is in good shape and the check valve moves smoothly. This is why the apparent reading is typically a little higher than the actual reading.

At some point SOV leaks can get so large, we do need to move to one of the leak compensating procedures. Without those compensating procedures, we would be in the unfortunate position of having to fail assemblies that have relatively small SOV leaks.

Compensating procedures allow us to still accurately determine the condition of the backflow preventing components (i.e., check valves, relief valve, etc.), which is the primary purpose of the field test procedure. If leaking SOVs were considered the only reason for failing a field test, property and business owners would end up footing the bill to replace SOV valves on a regular basis.

That would be bad enough on smaller assemblies (½ thru 2"), but can you imagine replacing 2½ thru 12" SOVs on a regular basis? It's a given, the larger the SOV, the more leak prone it is.

Even with the advent of resilient seated shut off valves, the problem of leakage still plagues the industry. Differing water conditions across the country make some areas better than others. But as we all know, we often find stuff (i.e., debris, rust, etc.) in water lines.

As testers, it is extremely helpful for us to understand the hydraulics of what is going on within the backflow prevention assembly.

Anytime a SOV is closed on a hard object (sand, pebbles, rocks), the possibility of leakage increases. Once the SOV is damaged, in all likelihood it will continue leaking from that day forward.

for us to understand the hydraulics of what is going on within the backflow prevention assembly. This is true not only when things go well, but more importantly when they do not.

Happy testing.

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Chapters' Corner

From Rhode Island to California, coronavirus still creating challenges

Between the virus pandemic and nationwide racial injustice demonstrations, it's been a challenging couple of months across America. In the midst of everything going on, nearly all ABPA chapter activities remain ground to a halt. But in the meantime, here's what a couple of your ABPA chapters have been up to recently.

Rhode Island ABPA Chapter



Region 1 Director Mike Hebert remains the ABPA point person in America's smallest state, as he continues to serve as the Rhode Island chapter president along with his national duties. He says life has been pretty quiet of late.

"Our Governor (Gina Raimondo) is very conservative when it comes to reopening our state (due to coronavirus)," Hebert said. "Our annual May training seminar was scrubbed. And I am not sure if we'll have any chapter meetings the rest of the year. Our last big activity was the annual ABPA Rhode Island State Conference, held last October."

Region 1 Director Mike Hebert

Hebert has particularly fond memories of that event because his backflow and cross connection mentor, Peter McLaughlin, was honored.

"Peter has had health issues for quite a while and was not able to attend last year's ABPA National Conference (in Salt Lake City), where he received an award from the national board for his years of service," Mike explained. "I was able to accept it on his behalf in Utah. But I wanted him to receive it at a big event, so he could be honored. Luckily, he was feeling up to attending our state conference last fall, and (ABPA Region 3 Director and conference presenter) Kathy Riley was here to present it."

The Rhode Island ABPA chapter has about 150 members, representing nearly all New England states. Hebert was chapter VP under McLaughlin until he took over the presidency in 2018. The following year he was announced as Region 1 Director, during the national conference in Utah.

"Peter has been an incredible mentor; I learned so much from him," Hebert concluded. "I sent the letter (to the ABPA National Board of Directors) nominating him for the award. I was so pleased he received it."

Silver State ABPA Chapter

Las Vegas native Lyle Greenhill won this spring's only contested election for region director, as he was re-elected to oversee activities in Region 6 (Arizona, California, Hawaii and Nevada).

"This is my second time to be Region 6 Director; I was in the position 6 years the first time around," Greenhill said. "However, I have not served as president, vice president or secretary of our local ABPA chapter. I am a member of our chapter's board of directors."

Like most others, the Silver State ABPA Chapter has been cancelling regularly-scheduled meetings left and right this spring. Greenhill said, when the Las Vegas Strip casinos are closed due to health concerns, it's pretty difficult to get people out to discuss backflow issues.

"It still looks like Vegas at night, because the casinos have not turned off their lights," Lyle added. "But it is strange to not see anyone around. The casinos are also keeping hotel lights on, and using curtains to darken windows to spell out 'stay strong' messages and to create heart shapes." (Some casinos have now begun to reopen).

Greenhill established Southern Nevada Backflow Services with a partner in 1999. A decade later, he created Southern Nevada Backflow on his own. Although the names are nearly identical, Lyle says the two companies perform very different services.

"My partner and I provide schooling through Backflow Services; we teach backflow and cross connection classes," he said. "Then after retiring from UNLV (after 31 years), I established Southern Nevada Backflow to do testing and repairs."

Greenhill and his partner conduct quarterly tester classes and had never cancelled a class before, until they were forced to do so in mid-March. He expects more frequent classes, perhaps monthly, once he's able to reconvene them.

"At least certifications have been extended during this quarantine period," he concluded. "Our testers are still able to do their jobs."

Southern California ABPA Chapter

"They like to call me 'Chapter President for life,' we announce election information every year, but no one ever seems to want the job – so I stay in it."

That's how Southern California ABPA Chapter President Pete Peters explains his plight.



Newly re-elected ABPA Region 6 Director Lyle Greenhill



ABPA So. California Chapter
President Pete Peters

After working for the Cucamonga Valley Water District for 40 years – 35 of them running the agency's cross connection control program – Peters, 60, retired two years ago. His Southern California ABPA Chapter stretches from the Mexico border to Ventura, well north of Los Angeles.

"Each spring we normally host our Backflow Industry Product Fair (BIPF), which features multiple events, refresher courses for testers and lots of vendors," Peters added. "That was supposed to be in April, but we had to cancel. We were also going to have a June conference in the San Diego area, but that got cancelled as well. Now we are just hoping we can hold our annual conference in San Bernardino in December."

The Southern California ABPA Chapter has about 160 members. It also enjoys a strong association with the University of Southern California Foundation for Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research. Foundation Chief Engineer Henry Chang is the ABPA chapter secretary.

"USC encourages me to help the backflow prevention industry," Chang said. "(The Foundation) just celebrated its 75th year. We are not just a training provider. We have a full-blown laboratory and an evaluation program (lab and field) for the approval of backflow prevention assemblies."

Normally events through the year allow Southern California ABPA Chapter members the opportunity to tour the USC laboratory. But coronavirus has curtailed those visits as well.

Still, all things considered, Peters believes his chapter is being responsive to members during these challenging times.

"I think we are doing a great job, given the monkey wrench we've been thrown this year," Peters concluded. "We are still answering phone and email questions. We're trying to do the best for our members."



ABPA So. California Chapter
Secretary Henry Chang

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