Fall Seminar a big success!

Submitted by Don Garrison, Asst. Chief of Engineering, Dept. of Veteran's Affairs, Togus, ME

Each of us is now back at work with time to reflect on the knowledge gained during the Fall Seminar, held in Portland, Maine in October. The information presented was exceptional. The speakers managed to keep everyone's attention, because what they had to say was timely and well presented. Mr. Bill Kulas gave a thorough presentation on what is involved in setting up a successful safety program at a medical facility. He pulled the Environment of Care standards together efficiently to show the changes that have been made. Bill also pulled together all of the different programs that a safety manager is responsible for and demonstrated how to monitor and report compliance to prevent citations. Bill's handouts are very useful. Give Bill a call at (207) 623-5720 if you didn't receive a copy (or weren't able to attend the seminar).

Fire Safety Presentation

Fire Chief Richard Beausoleil ("Chief Beau") entertained and educated attendees on fire safety in medical centers. From the comments I received, this was the best presentation on fire safety that most people had ever seen. Chief Beau has a wonderful way of presenting useful facts in a colorful manner. For those who weren't able to attend, a videotape of Chief Beau's presentation is well worth ordering.

Electrical Circuit Hazards

Lance Gurney used real life devices to explain what can happen if we fail to respect electrical circuits. Mr. Gurney did a very thorough job of explaining ground fault interrupter circuits and how they can save lives. Mr. Gurney's presentation will be a part of the videotape that contains Chief Beau's presentation.

ASHE President Speaks to Attendees

For the second year in a row we were fortunate to have the president of ASHE speak to the group. This year Tim Peglow came and talked about how ASHE was working

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Exceptional Education is the Focus at the 1995 Fall Seminar

(continued from page 1)

with JCAHO to improve lines of communication and get rid of many things that engineers in the field find unnecessary. ASHE has outlined the top fifteen of these issues and will be working toward resolution of field engineers concerns. Mr. Peglow was a very dynamic speaker and it became apparent very quickly that we had not allowed enough time for his discussions. Mr. Peglow's presentation was not videotaped. This will probably be the case next year as well, when the ASHE president is again planning to attend. Therefore, if really want to find out what is going on at ASHE, you should try to attend next year's seminar. It will be well worth the time and expense.

1995 ASHE President Tim Peglow addresses current initiatives being undertaken with the JCAHO and AHA.

JCAHO Architect Addresses Environment of Care Standards

Mr. John Fishbeck, staff architect from JCAHO was a replacement speaker for Mr. Larry Gallager, acting director of PTSM for JCAHO. Mr. Gallager suffered an illness and was not able to attend. Mr. Fishbeck proved an able replacement. Being a Field Compliance Inspector as well as an office staff person, he brought a breadth of perspective to the discussion. Mr. Fishbeck gave an in-depth presentation on the new Environment of Care standards, and his comments should be useful to everyone. Mr. Fishbeck's presentation is also available on videotape.

A vendor describes the operation of ASCO's new "closed transition" transfer switch to a NEHES Engineer.

See order form on the flap of this newsletter for your opportunity to order these useful videotapes, whether you attended the seminar or not.

Looking ahead to 1996

By most accounts this was one of the best educational seminars we have had. The nominal cost of $125.00 for the opportunity to hear and speak to some of the most knowledgeable people in the field of hospital engineering should not be passed up. Mark your calendars immediately for the first week of October 1996 and plan to attend the Fall Seminar in Connecticut. More details will follow in your mail, and also in this newsletter. It will probably be the best educational opportunity you will have all year. Hope to see you there! ▼

Fall Seminar Chair Don Garrison presents lucky raffle winner George Silva with a certificate for a Pentium Computer.
Rethinking Customer Service

Some great tips from a system that is working!

Submitted by Steve Cutter, Director of Engineering Services,
The Cheshire Medical Center, Keene, NH

In these times of shrinking resources, Facility Managers need to "work smarter, not harder". Several years ago, the Engineering Supervisor and myself were looking for ways to improve how work requests were processed in our facility. Generally, our system in place at the time went like this:

- Work requests were received via one of three methods:
  1) Written request.
  2) Computer-generated request.
  3) Telephone request (in which case the customer was asked to follow up with a written or computer-generated request).
- The Engineering Supervisor evaluated and prioritized requests, and made work assignments from a pool of mechanics.
- Once assigned to a task, the mechanic would coordinate with the customer to make sure the needs were fully understood, and to procure necessary materials, etc. The work was then scheduled, completed, and all necessary documentation returned to Engineering for filing.

Common complaints about the system were that it was slow, that requests appeared to disappear into "never-never land", and that the customers didn't know to whom the work had been assigned.

As a result of our evaluation of this system, we developed what we call the "Floor Mechanic System". The basic tenets of the program consist of empowering staff and trusting them to communicate effectively. We made some job description changes and assigned mechanics to specific areas of the Medical Center. We introduced the staff within each area to "their mechanic", and encouraged them to contact this individual for all routine situations. Each mechanic was expected to set up functional communication systems that facilitated routine customer requests. Most relied on a clipboard system, where staff could quickly jot down their needs and concerns. In addition to customer needs, each mechanic also had clearly defined facility maintenance functions. They were free to schedule their own time to accommodate both facility and customer needs. They also had to establish coverage for days off, and to communicate these arrangements to their customers.

The response to this system has been extremely positive. The mechanics have developed a real sense of ownership within their areas and champion many concerns. Their customers know them very well, know that they can rely on them, and love the "personal" service. The mechanics essentially become part of the area staff, but are still accountable to the Engineering Services Department. The entire process has become much more efficient, freeing up supervisor time for more productive purposes.
Tobey Clark wins ASHE award

NEHES President-Elect Mark Cappello presents Tobey Clark (left) of the Technical Services Program at the University of Vermont with ASHE's prestigious SASHE recognition award. See below for more information on ASHE's APEX recognition program.

The APEX Program

How to qualify and apply for this prestigious ASHE Designation

Submitted by Tobey Clark, Technical Services Program, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

The APEX program was established in 1997 to honor the efforts, achievements and accomplishments of an individual in the area of health care facilities, equipment and technology management. At this point in time, there are approximately 300 individuals nationwide who have been awarded this status.

The goals of the program are:

- To recognize outstanding levels of achievement for all eligible members of ASHE
- To provide defined goals of achievement
- To provide direction and encouragement for professional growth
- To motivate members of ASHE to work toward excellence in the health care facilities management profession.

Two levels of the program exist — Senior (SASHE), and Fellow (FASHE). Voting members in good standing for five consecutive years and meeting the required criteria are eligible for Senior status. Two year Senior members who meet additional criteria are eligible for the Fellow designation.

An APEX committee will judge applications containing the following information: Education (formal and informal); Experience in the Health Care Field; Health Care Facilities/Equipment/Technology Management Participation (publications, committee participation, meeting attendance, organization membership, etc.); Major accomplishments; Community activities.

This information must be submitted to ASHE by July 31. The APEX committee will notify applicants by September 15 as to their eligibility to go to the next step — submission of an original research paper contributing to the field of health care facilities/equipment/technology management. The paper must be submitted by January 15 with the applicant receiving a response by March 1. If successful, a press release is sent to the Chief Executive Officer and the local newspaper, and the individual may then use the title SASHE or FASHE. The framed formal awards are presented at the ASHE annual meeting.

The Senior process/award fee is $100, while the Fellow designation process/award fee is $125. We hope that some NEHES members will seek this prestigious designation.
Guests enjoy Seminar too!

Careful planning made this year’s Fall Seminar Guest program a big success. On the first day of the seminar there was a get-acquainted arts and crafts project. This was followed by a lunch at Carburs Restaurant, in the “Old Port” section of Portland. The afternoon saw tours of Portland and Cape Elizabeth before being reunited in the evening with seminar participants at the Mariners Church Banquet Center in “Old Port”.

Thursday offered an opportunity for guests to travel to the popular town of Freeport, where there are numerous outlet stores, as well as the headquarters for L.L. Bean. Thursday night was the Annual Awards Banquet where everyone enjoyed the Western theme, complete with line dancing instruction and a popular country band, “Silver and Lace”.

The feedback from guests who participated this year has been very positive. We are glad to be able to offer engineers and their “special someone” the chance to get away and have a mini-vacation, as well as the opportunity to attend a fabulous educational seminar. We hope the Guest Program continues to grow, as the overall quality of the seminar seems to be better when the Guest Program is strong. Next year’s seminar in Connecticut is sure to offer guests the opportunity to try lots of new and exciting things!

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**NEHES Fall Seminar Videotape Offer**

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<th>1) JCAHO Environment of Care</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
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<td>3) Effective Safety Program Management</td>
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Please make your checks payable to NEHES, and mail this completed form to:

**Department of Veterans Affairs**

**Attention: Don Garrison MDP 138**

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