



MEHA JOURNAL

MEHA JOURNAL

SPRING/SUMMER 2010

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Inside this issue:

- Treasurers Report** 2
- Regional Reports** 3
- Other News** 4
- Licensure Committee** 6
- Calendar** 8
- Editorial** 10

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello MEHA members:

I write this having just returned from the NEHA Conference in Albuquerque, NM. I was so proud to represent MEHA at the conference. The experience was rewarding in so many ways – the opportunity to learn about emerging issues in the environmental health field, networking with environmental health professionals from across our nation, and being inspired to do more than just the routine.

I urge each of you to attend at least two conferences next year; you won't be disappointed. Mark your calendars for MEHA's 2011 AEC, March 16-18, 2011, Park Place Hotel, in Traverse City. And NEHA's next AEC is in Columbus, Ohio, June 15-18; a close-by opportunity not to be missed. Michigan is a well respected NEHA affiliate and our Michigan caucus during the NEHA conference provides an opportunity for Michigan's NEHA members to meet and interview candidates for NEHA offices. Congratulations to Adam London, he is our new NEHA Region 6 Vice President.

The 2011 AEC planning committee, lead by chair Jennifer Kosak, is hard at work organizing next year's conference. Volunteers are needed to plan such a complex event. Contact the AEC planning committee to participate.

2011 AEC Chair
MEHA Board Liaison
Groundwater
Recreational Water
Food Protection
Wastewater
Public Health Topics
Moderators / Techie
Exhibitors / Sponsors

Jennifer Kosak
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The Licensure committee has also been actively promoting our Sanitarian Licensure Bill. Meetings have been held with MDCH, MDA, MDNRE, and several house and senate representatives. The results -MEHA's *licensure bill has been introduced in Michigan's house*. Many thanks to Adam London, Pat Donovan and Public Affairs Associates, Inc for guiding House Bill 6205 through Michigan's legislative process.

The MEHA Executive Board and MEHA committee chairs met June 23-24 for our annual strategic planning session at the RAM Center. We took a hard look at committee charges to assess how they meet the current and future needs of MEHA. With an updated strategic plan for the year and lots of ideas for meeting our goals, the executive board and committee chairs will be working to strengthen MEHA during the coming year. Suggestions from MEHA members are always welcome. Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for MEHA board members are posted at www.meha.net.

Several MEHA committees need new members. Consider becoming more involved in MEHA. The time and energy commitment is minimal, the rewards many. Involvement is very fulfilling and the experience gained will enable you to do your job better, develop your leadership skills, and add value to your professional credentials. For more information about committee openings contact me at lmadison@meha.net.

Lynne Madison

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

April 1 through April 30, 2010

Checking Account

| | |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Checking account balance 3/31/2010 | \$ 47,699.30 |
| Deposits: Total Deposits: | \$ 6,726.84 |
| Debits: Total checks and adjustments: | (\$9,337.39) |
| ENDING CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE 4/30/10 | \$ 45,088.75 |
| BUSINESS CHECKING | \$ 10.00 |

WELLS FARGO ADVISORS ACCOUNTS:

| | Balance last report: 3/31/10 | Current balance: 4/30/10 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Strategic Fund | \$ 9,117.07 | \$ 9,196.84 |
| Reserve Fund | \$ 9,902.45 | \$ 9,902.53 |
| Endowment Fund | \$ 83,005.95 | \$ 84,000.41 |
| TOTAL ASSETS: (ALL ACCOUNTS) | | \$148,198.53 |

Respectfully Submitted,

John F. Texter, Treasurer
May 20, 2010

Regional Reports

The **Upper Peninsula Environmental Health Association (UPEHA)** had yet another successful Annual Training Conference in February 2010. The committee worked hard at bringing in nationally recognized speakers on all levels of Environmental Health. The 2010 goal for UPEHA was to not only bring fantastic speakers to our U.P. local Sanitarians, but to also raise funds for the association. This was done by hosting the first ever on-line silent auction during the training conference. We were fortunate enough to receive several donations that brought in several hundred dollars to the association. Thank you to all of you that donated! We as an association are very excited to begin planning for the next UPEHA Annual Training Conference. Announcements will be made as to the location, date, and time later this year. We look forward to seeing you all in 2011.

Sincerely,
Christine Daley, UPEHA Chair

The **Southeastern Michigan Environmental Health Association** held its Winter Education Seminar on December 11, 2009 at the Bavarian Inn Restaurant in Frankenmuth, MI. The seminar was free to the first 75 registrants.

Our speakers for the day were Daniel Lee, Enforcement Officer with Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Brant Fisher of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and Gloria Blanchard from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission.

Due to limited travel opportunities, our next education seminar is tentatively scheduled for October 8, 2010 where will be holding elections for President, Secretary, Regions A, B and C representatives. Please contact a Board member for more information.

Submitted By:
Jamice Landrum, SEMEHA

The **Northern Michigan Environmental Health Association** is seeking volunteers to participate on its board of directors. Regional trainings and events cannot begin until volunteers step up. Sanitarians in the northern portions of the Lower Peninsula are encouraged to contact Becky Krzyzanowski for details. She can be reached at (517) 373-0043.

The **Southwest Environmental Health Association** did not submit a report.

Other News...



The Division of Environmental Health
invites you to
Submit Your Favorite Fish Recipe!

The MDCH Division of Environmental Health is creating a cookbook of favorite fish recipes from Michigan residents.

The cookbook, *Hooked on Fish: Recipes from the Great Lakes State*, will feature some of Michigan's favorite fish recipes, information about the health benefits of eating fish, as well as show you how to avoid some of the chemicals through trimming and cooking.

These recipes will be published in the cookbook and posted on the Michigan Fish Advisory website. For more information, call (800) 648-6942 or go to: www.michigan.gov/eatsafefish. The deadline for submissions is August 1st.

MEHA well represented in Albuquerque, New Mexico



Front L-R: Lynne Madison, Chuck Lichon & Adam London; Back L-R: Dave Kraker & Steve Hall

A number of MEHA members were able to attend the National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) annual conference in Albuquerque in June. As usual, NEHA provided a first-class opportunity for education and networking. Our Michigan delegation - consisting of those pictured above and many others - learned a great deal and had a lot of fun. The conference featured speakers from around the world speaking on a multitude of environmental health issues.

As per tradition, the MEHA affiliate also held its annual Michigan Caucus in order to interview the candidates running for NEHA's presidency. Our affiliate has quite a reputation nationally. Every year the candidates comment that Michigan is only state which puts them through "the ringer" with such a rigorous and challenging review. You will be learning more about those candidates in a future issue of the Journal.

MEHA is also well represented on NEHA's board of directors. Former Michigan resident and long-time MEHA member, Keith Krinn, has progressed to take on the role of NEHA President for this year. Another MEHA member, Adam London, was elected to the NEHA board of directors as Vice-President for NEHA's region 6 which includes Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio. Both Keith and Adam look to strengthen relationships between the state affiliates and the national association.

Next year, NEHA's conference will be held in Columbus, Ohio. This is an opportunity which shouldn't be missed!

Licensure Committee Update

Dear Fellow Members:

It is our pleasure to announce that the efforts of our profession to gain licensure are moving forward. A few months ago, MEHA entered into an agreement with Public Affairs Associates (PAA) of Lansing to represent our proposal with legislators. Since that time, your Licensure Committee has worked closely with Tyrone Sanders of PAA to seek legislative sponsors. We have met with members of both parties in both chambers of the legislature. Earlier this month, Representative Stanley, a Democrat from Flint, and 14 co-sponsors introduced our proposal as House Bill 6205 in the House of Representatives. HB 6205 was referred to the House Committee on Regulatory Reform. That committee held a hearing on our bill on June 30th and voted to move the bill forward to the full House for approval.

In the meantime, we have also met with a number of Republican Senators regarding the introduction of our proposal in the Senate. Regardless of political affiliation, we have observed support for our proposal and we have been encouraged by the fact that we do not anticipate this issue deteriorating into partisan politics. We are happy to report that Senator Nofs, a Republican from Battle Creek, has introduced our licensure bill as Senate Bill 1407. We expect a Senate committee hearing on the bill soon.

At this time, we are also working to gain an audience with Governor Granholm. We have every indication that she is supportive of our effort, but we believe it is wise to make sure that she is very familiar and comfortable with the proposal.

We have also met with representatives of the state departments of agriculture, community health, and natural resources and environment. As employers of a number of sanitarians and environmental health professionals, they have concerns and questions which must be addressed in the process. There are, of course, a number of other stakeholder groups which we have met with. These include the associations of homebuilders, realtors, retailers, restaurants, etc... We have met with, or will soon be meeting with, all of those interested groups. We want to ensure that we don't have significant opposition to our bill if at all possible.

From the very beginning of this process we have recognized that the closer we get to our goal, the less control we will have over the details. In the drafting of our initial proposals, our profession was solely in control of the language. Legislators, special interests groups, and other stakeholders all have concerns which may be addressed in the bill's language. Your licensure committee in conjunction with MEHA's Executive Board will do its utmost to assure that environmental health and MEHA's interests are well represented during the process.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick Donovan, RS

Adam London, RS

MEHA 6th ANNUAL ENDOWMENT FUND



GOLF OUTING

at

THE EMERALD AT MAPLE CREEK

8103 N. US Hwy 27
St. Johns, Michigan

Friday, September 24, 2010

Registration 9:00 AM.
Shotgun Start at 10:00 a.m. Sharp!

Four Person Scramble - \$75 per person

Entry Includes:

Green Fees, Golf Cart, Door Prizes
Doughnuts, Coffee, 1 Beverage Coupon (beer/pop), and Steak Dinner at 3:00 PM

Prizes Awarded for:

Longest Drive Holes
Closest to the Pin
\$10,000 HOLE IN ONE

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY IS SEPTEMBER 10, 2010
THEREAFTER, ENTRY FEE WILL BE \$80 PER PERSON

*...Weather forecast is sunny and warm; however,
rainout will result in dinner and replay at the Emerald...*

WE ANTICIPATE A GREAT TIME OF FELLOWSHIP
MEMBERSHIP IN MEHA IS NOT REQUIRED

Contact John Johnson at 269-686-4501 to register your team.

Calendar of Trainings

- July 27 Mercury Spill Response Workshop
Holland, MI (call 517-373-7672 for details)
- September 24 Endowment Fund Golf Outing
St. Johns, MI (see page 7 for details)
- October 8 Southeast Michigan Environmental Health Association fall meeting
Location TBD
- October 27 - 28 Michigan's Premier Public Health Conference 2010
Bay City, Michigan
- March 16-18, 2011 MEHA 2011 Annual Education Conference
Traverse City, Michigan
- June 15-18, 2011 NEHA 2011 Annual Education Conference
Columbus, OH
-

Have an idea for the MEHA Journal?
Contact the editor at:

(616) 393-5625
e-mail: alondon@meha.net

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The MEHA Journal is looking for a few good sponsors!

The success of the Journal, and all of MEHA's activities, depends upon YOU. The MEHA Journal is read by hundreds of environmental health professionals throughout Michigan. If your business would like to take advantage of this opportunity, please consider a sponsorship.

Corporate Sponsor

The sponsorship is good for one year (4 issues) at a cost of \$500.00. Corporate sponsor will be offered a variety of incentives and privileges during the sponsor year. For more information contact: Chris Klawuhn at (517) 887-4527.

Editorial

What the heck is a *Sanitarian* anyway?

A good friend and former co-worker once told me a story which I think many of us can relate to. After spending at least four years in college and countless thousands of dollars on tuition, he was thrilled to get that first good job offer. After accepting the offer, he called home to announce the good news to his parents. He proudly told his father, "dad, I got a great job for the county working as a sanitarian!" After a few awkward moments of silence, his father replied, "well son, does that mean you get to drive the truck or do you have to ride on the back?"

I'm sure he isn't the only one among us who have had that conversation with family or friends. *You're a what? What the heck is a sanitarian anyway?* For those of you who prefer the *Environmental Health Specialist* moniker, that doesn't exactly ring with much clarity either. A review of the classified ads will find positions within the "environmental health team" of such-and-such business – those positions usually relate to janitorial work of one flavor or another.

Cops, teachers, engineers, nurses and other have it easy. All you have to do is mention those professions and everyone has a crystal clear idea of what that professional does. But wait, this wasn't always the case. Take "nurse" for example. The word itself has a Latin origin and means, "to nourish." Until the mid-19th century, the only understanding of this term would have been a woman who was paid to breastfeed children and care for their physical needs. The idea of a nurse as medical/health care provider separate from wet-nursing children is a very modern perception. And yet, no one asks, "what the heck is a nurse?" Nobody assumes that the nurses at your local hospital are breastfeeding anyone – except their own babies, of course!

How did nurses earn this level of popular understanding? I would suggest that there a number of reasons for this. Although, perhaps the most important reasons include a defined scope of practice and minimum standards for practice. The existence of these elements combined with a public appreciation for the need of their profession has brought the term *nurse* to an enlightened modern understanding throughout our society. As sanitarians, we would do well to pay attention to these lessons.

Our profession now stands at the crossroads asking itself – *what are we?* MEHA members have spent sweat, tears and money over the past years struggling with that question. The question has been answered through our proposal for licensure. Our MEHA licensure proposal, HB 6205, would require anyone that uses specialized knowledge and skills in environmental health science to determine and mitigate environmental health risk to be licensed as a sanitarian. If successful, this bill will go a long ways toward improving public health and establishing name recognition for our profession in Michigan.

By defining environmental health and our scope of practice, we are attempting to define what we do. By creating a standard for practice, we are challenging ourselves to meet our unmet potential. By protecting titles such as "sanitarian" and "environmental health specialist" we are putting our profession on a path to name recognition. Civil sanitation workers and janitors will no longer be allowed to trespass upon our titles. Hopefully, future generations of sanitarians will be able to proudly call home and announce their new occupation without making mom cry.

- Editor

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WWW.MEHA.NET

Save the Date!

MEHA - ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

March 16-18, 2011

Park Place Hotel
Traverse City, Michigan

-Have an opinion about an EH topic? Send a letter to the Editor!

alondon@meha.net

Editorial Policy

The accuracy of information presented in the articles is the author's responsibility. Opinions expressed in an article are the author's alone. Articles may be edited where space is limited. Advertisement of any product or service in this publication does not constitute endorsement by the Michigan Environmental Health Association or its membership.

Guidelines for Submitting Material for Possible Publication in the MEHA Journal.

Material should be submitted electronically (via Email), when possible. Be reasonable as to length of article. Keep as brief as possible without losing the context of the article. All materials submitted should be typed. Photographs should be business appropriate.

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