



# F. S. E. A. NEWSLETTER

VOL. 1, No. 2, FALL 1982

## Editorial

by Bill Leseman, President FSEA

Having lived in Tallahassee for over 14 years, one becomes conditioned to the workings and non-workings of state government. State government procedures that appear to everyone else, as foreign as a druid fertility rite are common place for Tallahasseeans. One advantage in knowing how our government works is the opportunity to provide some input during the initial planning of major projects of particular interest.

A current project of interest to myself and FSEA is the proposed plan by DER to expand their lab facilities. According to Dr. Bob Patton, the lab expansion is now at the "program plan" stage. This means that DER will submit a request to the legislature for the Department of General Services to produce details of a new lab structure which would be located near the present Twin Towers structure. The total package including the building and capital equipment comes to just under 3 million dollars.

Dr. Patton stated in our conversations that extensive ground work has been laid so that there will be no conflict or overlap in work performed between the Department of Agriculture Commodity testing labs, HRS labs and the DER new lab.

What benefits might be obtained by participating in this planning stage of the project? I feel that through constructive suggestions the following goals could be reached:

1. The new and expanded DER lab facility will be able to act as a referee between laboratories concerning analytical technique and expertise.
2. The state wide quality assurance program that is now under the direction of Jack Merritt could be expanded to perhaps include the drinking water certification program. What this will mean is that certification of water, wastewater, and hazardous waste laboratories will be under the direction of one agency.
3. The new DER lab will be able to provide training. Before those of you who do this for a living have a coronary arrest, I wish to expound on this idea. I feel the training should involve new and unique procedures and techniques only. If a fast procedure were developed for, lets say, the analysis of PCB's in transformer oils, then those of us in the field would first need to learn that procedure before we could teach anyone else. Instruction might consist of nothing more than a notice describing the procedure, or could include hands on training.
4. With its expanded certification and referee status, the DER could certify contract labs that might wish to bid on state work when state labs are overloaded. I don't think this idea has been proposed before now and would require only a slight change in thought by state agencies.

I feel we should support the DER lab people in their request for an expanded facility. Their workload is expected to triple based on DER in-house projects scheduled for the next two years. The key to successful coordination between our organization and Dr. Patton's group is cooperation not conflict.

Please let me hear from you with any ideas you might have on this subject.

## FSEA SUPPORTERS

In addition to membership involvement and advanced leadership, it is necessary to have financial stability in order for a society to function. One source of funds is exemplified on this page as the following have contributed to FSEA in the form of paid advertisements. We would like to take this opportunity to thank these organizations for their continued support of FSEA!



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Anyone interested in touring EnviroLab's facilities is invited to call Sandra Fettes, the Laboratory Manager, at 904/672-5668.

# FSEA MEETING INFORMATION

AS A PART OF FSEA'S YEARLY ACTIVITIES A MEETING IS HELD IN BOTH THE SPRING AND THE FALL. THIS SECTION INCLUDES HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MOST RECENT MEETING AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING MEETINGS.

## 1982 FALL MEETING INFORMATION

The fall meeting will be held in Orlando on Friday, November 19, 1982 at the Ramada Inn South—18700 S. Orange Blossom Trail.

There will be a Board of Directors meeting Thursday night at 7:00 in room 102. Registration the following morning will be from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

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### EPA APPROVES NITRATE ELECTRODE

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Those of you who have battled with Brucine or cursed Cadmium Reduction will be overjoyed to learn that the EPA has approved the Nitrate ion electrode for nationwide use. One has to question why the Brucine method was ever approved in the first place, since it was designed for seawater and suffered from a staggering interference from copper, a common contaminant of tap water. In any case, the electrode method has been shown to be at least as good as Brucine. The electrode is available from Orion Research and Corning Glass.

EQUAL TIME—Some of you may recall the article that appeared in the Spring 1982 FSEA newsletter outlining the experiences of one lab with Perkin-Elmer's Service Department. Their response appears below.

Mr. Lyle Johnson  
Spectrum Labs  
4550 N. Dixie Hwy.  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL., 33334

Dear Mr. Johnson,

A copy of the F.S.E.A. Newsletter for Spring 1982 has been given to Perkin-Elmer and I have taken the liberty of responding to it.

After reading the newsletter I turned the letter over to Bob Matovina, our Service Manager, and asked for his response; his letter of reply is enclosed.

Your newsletter was very kind to Perkin-Elmer with statements such as "performed flawlessly for seven years" and "P.E. produces superbly engineered products" so we were, understandably, concerned about the service problem.

I think Bob's letter explains service's viewpoint however, I would like to add a few comments. We value all of our Perkin-Elmer customers and it is disappointing to us when you are displeased with either sales or service.

Perkin-Elmer's Service Department has a mammoth job in servicing nine product lines consisting of over 100 different instruments and major accessories. These 100 instruments are in current production and this figure does not include all of the earlier produced instruments, many of which are still actively being used, that are in the field.

The serviceman's job of scheduling calls, having the right part and handling the unexpected is very demanding. The expense involved is unbelievably high because of traveling cost, parts, overhead, inventory (10-yr. span), etc.

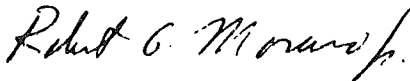
For instance, to replace a digital display on an instrument out of production requires us to ask the supplier to manufacture the item in a special batch. Naturally, he charges us more for this item than one under current production.

One might ask, why not supply the currently produced "digital display"? Because of Perkin-Elmer's rigid performance specifications we could not guarantee that the part would work satisfactorily in all instruments without prior testing. A bit conservative perhaps, but certainly to the benefit of our customers.

I did not intend to belabor a point, but rather to explain our position. We are sorry that our service costs appear to be exorbitant and we hope that this explanation will help, in some way, for you to understand our position.

We value our relationship with all of our Perkin-Elmer customers.

Sincerely,  
PERKIN-ELMER



Robert G. Moreno, Jr.  
Sales Office Manager

Robert Mereno, Jr.  
Perkin-Elmer  
510 Guthridge Ct.  
Norcross, GA, 30092

Dear Bob,

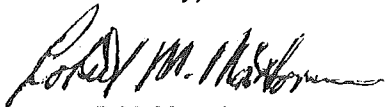
I've reviewed that F.S.E.A. Newsletter in question and there are a few things that come to mind that should be pointed out.

If we provided a DMV in the same manner that the instrument in question was repaired, we would have charged this customer \$495.00, the exchange price for the part. The cost on this part is obviously higher being obsolete so we pay more for it, before we resell it. As you know, using substitute parts is avoided unless approved by engineering because of possible degradation of any instrument parameters, original specifications or the reliability of any instrument. I may point out that as the customer says in his letter this instrument has performed flawlessly for several years (well designed) and has given them the reliability they need. This to me demonstrates our rigid engineering and service standards. The display he put in for \$180.00 will probably function well for a good lifetime, however we have no way of knowing this if we did it until after the fact. We would be responsible for premature failure, causing customer down time and inconveniences.

One other point is a service man in the area. Things come to my mind like, was he prepared for this model instrument, did he have the parts for this model, did he have the time without causing other committees to suffer? Would this customer have been upset if the service man came by and couldn't finish it for one of these reasons and had to pay an extra travel charge because of this.

We (Perkin-Elmer) make cost effective analytical instruments for all types of applications and dozens of various markets. Where would we be if we short-changed our customers on service or alter our standards for a seemingly innocent repair?

Sincerely,



R.M. Matovina  
Sr. Branch Service Manager

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**REGION III**

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The next issue of the NSEA Newsletter will be published in the spring of 1983. Those of you interested in placing a business card advertisement should submit their ads no later than April 1st. Cost of placing this ad is \$25.00.

A new feature of this newsletter is a classified section in which members can place ads for employment, lab equipment wanted/for sale, special products/services, etc. For the next issue there will be no charge for placing an ad in the classified section. For further information contact: Lyle Johnson  
c/o Spectrum Laboratories  
4550 N. Dixie Hwy.  
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.  
1-305-491-4691

## Societies liable for codes set by members

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The Supreme Court ruled last week that a professional society can be held liable under antitrust laws for standards and codes issued by its members, even if the society is unaware of any personal benefits accruing to those members as a result of their actions.

The ruling has stunned engineering societies, particularly those that set voluntary standards in their respective industries. Chemical societies, however, do not appear to be so strongly affected.

The case concerns two members of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, who acted in their society's name for their personal gain. They were serving on a sub committee responsible for setting standards for boiler safety devices. The men—one a vice president of a firm marketing such devices—conspired to cut a competing company out of the market. They accomplished this by arranging for their subcommittee to issue a standard that made the competitor's boiler device appear to be unsafe. The competitor went out of business and sued ASME, which lost in court and on subsequent appeal.

The high court stated that the ASME members acted with the 'apparent authority' of the society, thus implicating ASME in their illegal actions.

The ruling is "quite a shocker," admits Lois Ferson, manager of standard services at the Instrument Society of America in Research Triangle Park, N.C. ISA has some 60 committees (comprising about 2000 members) working on developing standards for instrumentation, process control equipment, and other applications.

Other organizations, such as the American Chemical Society and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, apparently have less to worry about. At ACS, the Committee on Analytical Reagents probably is most affected by the ruling. The committee regularly publishes a compendium of standards of purity for chemicals used in analytical applications.

According to chairman Wallace G. Rohrbough, the ACS committee recently formalized its operating procedures in the hope of ensuring the society "adequate protection" from possible liability due to the actions of its members.

TO:

FLORIDA SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSTS  
C/O SPECTRUM LABORATORIES, INC.  
4550 N. DIXIE HWY.  
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