

# Southwind

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Association of  
Electric Motor Repair Shops  
for Co-operative  
Self-Improvement

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## INTL BOARD DISREGARDS PUSH-BACK, PROTESTS, AND PLEAS CONTINUES EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE CHAPTERS

By Raymond K. Paden

After their proposal to end geographical representation in the United States by simply dissolving the U.S. Chapters and Regions met with widespread and vocal opposition, the International Board withdrew it and substituted an Alternate Proposal that would retain some aspects of geographical representation, but would also virtually eliminate chapter influence in EASA's governance and strip the chapters of any source of reliable funding by making chapter membership (and dues) voluntary. The International dues rebate the chapters receive is established by the Board's Governing Policies, and at its February meeting in Dallas, the International Board terminated the dues rebate for the chapters in the United States at the same time that it approved final wording for the Alternate Proposal.

Although the Board of the Southeastern Chapter was originally charged by its membership with opposing Chapter Dissolution, it was the considered opinion of the Executive Committee that, as the Alternate Proposal would eventually accomplish the same end as Chapter Dissolution (i.e., the elimination of the chapters/regions as vital, functioning components in the governance of the organization) the Board's mandate to resist Dissolution would extend to the Alternate Proposal as well.

At its meeting held February 12 in Dallas, the Board granted Southeastern Chapter President (and Region 2 Director-Elect) Brenda Cole permission to briefly address the Board before its deliberations on these matters began. [Please see Page 2 for the text of those remarks.] Also present outside the Boardroom were members of the Southwestern Chapter who arrived prepared to voice their opposition to the

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## SOUTHEASTERN VOTES TO OPPOSE DISSOLUTION

After hearing arguments at the Annual Meeting of the Chapter on October 9, 2004, the membership voted overwhelmingly to oppose the International Board's proposal to dissolve all chapters in the United States and to end geographical representation for the Active members of these chapters. The membership also instructed the Board to act to defeat the International Board's proposal to dissolve the chapters. Speaking for the Board's action was International Chairman Bill Nielsen, and opposing was Georgia State Director Ray Paden.

[Please see page 3 for the text of that motion.]



EASA International Chairman Bill Nielsen addresses Southeastern Chapter members

## Statement presented to the International Board of Directors, February 12, 2005 by Southeastern Chapter President and Region 2 Director-Elect Brenda Cole

Distinguished Chairman, officers, and ladies and gentlemen of the Board,

I am very excited about joining this body next June, but the impending events have driven me to take the extraordinary step of requesting an opportunity to address you. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the Board's indulgence in granting me a few moments of your time.

As I am sure you are all aware, at the direction of our members the Southeastern Chapter has been at the forefront in opposing both the original proposal to dissolve the chapters, and the alternate proposal to deny them direct funding. As Chapter President, I have taken a leadership role in this fight, both because it is my duty and because I firmly believe that either of these actions would be disastrous for our organization.

I do not deny the troubling trends in membership and conference participation that the Board attempted to address with these proposals. On the contrary, we in the Southeastern Chapter have recognized these problems ourselves and for years we have been working to deal with the challenges they present.

I do not deny that change will be necessary in order for EASA to thrive. On the contrary, I know that we must adapt if we are to continue in the face of these shifting industry trends and changing member needs.

I am here today because I and a great many other dedicated members of EASA believe that our greatest strengths lie in the grass-roots of this organization. Weakening those roots will *not* address the disturbing trends that we all recognize, but will be counter-productive to the long-term health of the organization we all love.

As you now examine the final text of the alternate proposal, I am here to request that you also reconsider the course that you have chosen. Battle lines have been drawn, and with the presentation of the bylaws amendment and the mailing of the ballot, the arrows are going to fly.

I did not come here because I fear that the alternate proposal will pass. I ask you to end this debate now, even though I am fairly optimistic that the alternate proposal will be defeated.

As Chairman Nielsen has said, in the end the membership will decide, but *however* the membership votes, the strife and division this radical restructuring of EASA engenders will not cease.

What if the alternate proposal should pass? I seriously doubt that EASA's long-term problems will be solved. Some angry and disaffected members will surely leave the organization. Some who stay will do so with a sullen and festering distrust of this Board and the internal working of EASA that definitely will not help boost membership or attendance at meetings. The \$80,000 gained by removing funding from the Chapters could easily be lost as the losers "vote with their feet" or simply stay away from future conferences. And if the predictions of eventual mortality for the Chapters prove true, this Board will not be able to escape the suspicion that this was their intention all along.

On the other hand, if the alternate proposal is defeated this Board will have suffered a very painful repudiation of two plans it declared were "the right course for the organization's future." The challenges the Board has recognized will still not be addressed, and those who supported the Board's decision will be just as angry and disaffected as those who opposed it would have been had it passed.

It is possible that the defeat of the alternate proposal might bring a new debate that could help chart a successful course for EASA. I believe it much more likely, though, that our membership, polarized, irritable and suspicious, will not be able or willing to conduct *any kind* of productive discussion for months to come.

I *am not* here to oppose democracy! I am a firm believer that this organization belongs to its members, and that the expressed will of those members *must* determine the future of EASA. But facing, as we do, serious challenges to our organization's health, this is not the time for division, strife and acrimony among the membership. I respectfully suggest that the Board drop both of these proposals, wait a few months for the membership to catch its breath, and then open membership forums and discussions that will help describe and publicize the challenges EASA is facing, and draw upon our members for participation and guidance as we try to effect the changes our organization must make in order to be successful.

Once again, I thank you for this opportunity to be heard.



Southeastern Chapter President  
Brenda Cole prepares to address  
the International Board

## PUSHBACK, PROTESTS AND PLEAS

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Alternate Proposal and to the original effort to dissolve the chapters. The protesters were peaceful and well-behaved (no bricks were thrown and no pepper-spray was needed) and were met cordially by the members of the Board.

Unfortunately, the Board was not swayed by the protesters nor persuaded by Mrs. Cole, and the Alternate Proposal was approved. The Board also voted to terminate the 10% dues rebate received by chapters in the U.S. (leaving the 15% dues rebate received by non-U.S. chapters intact) and to eliminate the requirement that regional director nominees be past-Chapter Presidents. With these changes, the stage is set for the elimination of any meaningful role the chapters may play in the governance of this organization. Should the Alternate Proposal be approved by the membership, control of EASA will be completely transferred to St. Louis and the chapters will be relegated to the status of social clubs. Denied any source of funding, they will be unable to fulfil even that limited role and will eventually disappear.

*Chapter Dissolution - phased in over time.*



Protesters from the Southwestern Chapter make their views known. Left to right: Debra Gray, Krystal Bunt, Ken Johnson, Chuck Burgess, Pat Johnson, Pete Fowler, Troy Gray, Richard Walter, Gene Hickson, William Walter, Dawn Hickson. Karen Fowler [not shown]

### A MOTION BY THE SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS OCTOBER 7, 2004 ADOPTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP IN CONFERENCE OCTOBER 9, 2004

WHEREAS, the International Board of Directors has voted unanimously to dissolve all Chapters and Regions in the United States and thereby end geographical representation on that body, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Southeastern Chapter is convinced that this action would be detrimental to the best interest of the Active members of the Southeastern Chapter, and those of the organization as a whole, to wit:

- That the votes and influence of individual members will be greatly diluted by causing them to be represented by seven directors among more than one thousand six-hundred members instead of one director among less than three hundred members,
- That national representation will eventually result in some geographical regions and Active members being represented by more directors while others are represented not at all,
- That the International Chairman will have undue influence in the selection of director nominees, and thereby the future constitution of the Board of Directors, and

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Chapter Board of Directors, while opposed to the dissolution of the Chapters in the United States, nevertheless desiring to ascertain the will of its members before committing the influence of the Chapter to the defeat of same,

Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this motion be presented to the Southeastern Chapter membership in convention at the annual meeting of the Chapter held October 9, 2004 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and be it further

RESOLVED, that this motion stand for approval or disapproval by the membership at said meeting, and be it further

RESOLVED, that upon approval of this motion, the influence of the Southeastern Chapter be and the same is hereby committed to the defeat of the proposal of the International Board of Directors to dissolve all Chapters and Regions in the United States and to end geographical representation on the International Board of Directors.

## WANTED!

YOUR OLD BODINE MOTOR



In celebration of their centennial, Bodine is searching for notable Bodine motors in three categories: oldest motor still running and doing its job, the oldest motor running or not, and the most unusual, unique or just plain weird use of a Bodine motor.

**\$1000  
REWARD**

Bodine will award \$1000 to a winner in each of these categories, plus a \$1000 reward to each winner's favorite charity.

For more details go to

[www.bodine-electric.com/oldmotor](http://www.bodine-electric.com/oldmotor)



**Southeastern Chapter  
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## AUSTERITY BUDGET

Words to strike terror into anyone's heart, but as you may know the International Board has voted to strip the Southeastern Chapter of a significant portion of our funding (more details inside.) At its annual Spring Meeting, the Southeastern Chapter Board will be considering many methods to cut expenses. One would be to increase the ways we communicate with our members electronically. By publishing our handbook in digital format last year, we were able to save over \$1000 in printing and postage expenses.

**Would you be willing to help us?** If you use email and are willing to receive the *Southwind*, your Chapter Handbook, and other important communications from your Chapter by electronic distribution, please contact me. By accepting these documents electronically instead of by "snail mail" you can help save the Southeastern Chapter *thousands of dollars* every year and make sure you will always be one of the first to "get the word" when there is any news.

To start receiving your information electronically, just contact me at [rkpaden@easasoutheast.org](mailto:rkpaden@easasoutheast.org).

You can rest assured that your email address will *never* be sold, rented or used for any purpose other than communications from the Southeastern Chapter.

*"Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Hear Ye!"*

The Southeastern Chapter Board of Directors will hold its Spring Meeting of the Board soon. Do you have any item of business or other communication you want presented to the Board? If so, please send it to the Chapter Office (address at the top of this page) no later than April 1, 2005.

If you prefer, you can email it to:  
[rkpaden@easasoutheast.org](mailto:rkpaden@easasoutheast.org)

Angry complaints, vitriolic denunciations, harsh criticisms and threats should be sent to:

Dead Letter Office  
U. S. Postal Service  
Washington, DC 20510