

# Southwind

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

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## STATE OF THE CHAPTER ADDRESS

By EASA Southeastern Chapter President Ray Paden

*Fellow EASAns of the Southeastern Chapter:* this is the time of year when the President of the United States addresses the Houses of Congress, the Supreme Court (unless they boycott him) and the American people in order to present his assessment of the current state of our nation. He describes the challenges we face, his vision for the future and how he intends to spend the next trillion dollars picked from our pockets. In a few short months my tenure as Southeastern Chapter President will draw to a close, and I thought it would be good to offer the same to my chapter (except for the trillion dollars thing.)

### The State of the Chapter

The Southeastern Chapter is, without a doubt, one of the finest in EASA and I am proud to be associated with her. In size, prosperity and influence our only rival is sister Southwestern Chapter. Our leadership is committed, our membership stable and our financial condition sound. But despite all of this, I am forced to concede that our chapter is in trouble today.

The greatest challenge our chapter (and our organization) faces today is *apathy* among our members. Now I am not going to turn this address into another litany of complaints about lack of participation, nor am I going to whine any more about how chapter offices are going unfilled, but I do want to describe this problem and explain why I believe it threatens the very survival of our organization.

EASA is an organization run (for the most part) by *volunteers*. On both the International and Chapter level, almost all of its officers, directors, committee members and workers are members of the association who work on its behalf. There are some paid professionals, but they are supposed to follow the directions of the volunteer members ... not direct the future of the association. The fact is, this organization cannot find its way without the participation and interest of its members. Unfortunately, this is exactly where we are today in the state of our chapter and EASA in general.

Why has this come about? I can only give

### Inside this edition of Southwind...

- **Southeastern Chapter Board of Directors to meet soon.**
- **Seats still available at the cost-subsidized EASA Seminar "Mechanical Repair Fundamentals of Electric Motors" to be held in Charlotte April 3-4.**
- **New Region 2 Director Charles Wilson takes office early.**
- **Chapter handbook available**
- **Where are you?**
- **Pay dues on time or throw money away.**

my opinion, but here it is: members have little interest in their organization because the authority and *responsibility* to govern and direct this volunteer association is no longer theirs. Over the years, that authority and responsibility has gradually been ceded away, and now little is required, asked or expected of members except to pay dues, participate in surveys and attend the International Convention. I believe that EASA members no longer see themselves as *owners* of the association who have a duty to participate and direct, but as *customers* who simply pay money and expect services in return.

It was only a few years ago that forces within EASA put forth a concerted effort to eliminate the chapter structure from the organization's governance. As I pointed out then, this would have eradicated any local control over EASA and consolidated all authority in St. Louis. The Chairman would hand-pick the Nominating Committee, which would hand-pick the Board, which would hand-pick the next Chairman. Do you *really* think such an EASA will be *more* responsive to your needs and concerns? Well don't quit thinking about it just yet because this idea has *not* gone away.

Back then a broad coalition of members came together and defeated the Chapter Dissolution bylaws amendment, and when the Board stripped the chapters of International funding, that same coalition (many represented by proxy) went to Nashville prepared to overturn the Board's action in the annual meeting. In the face of this effort the Board relented and restored the chapter's funding, but that Nashville meeting was not forgotten. Now the International Board proposes a new bylaws amendment that would severely restrict your right to be represented by proxy at a meeting, making it virtually impossible for the Board to be challenged again in this manner. Little by little, the ability of members to affect EASA policy slips away. Inch by inch the noose tightens around the throat of the chapters (and the concept of local control.) Eventually Chapter Dissolution will return and even if the will then exists, there will be no means to fight it.

"State of the Union" (or chapter) addresses should not be negative, but it is impossible for me to write about our chapter and our organization's future without describing the serious nature of

these challenges that face us. If the problem of member apathy and noninvolvement is not somehow addressed, if member interest in this association cannot be restored, then the days of the Electrical Apparatus Service Association are numbered. As I have said, EASA may continue to exist, but it will not survive as an organization that serves the electric motor repair industry.

So what do we do? Surrender to this trend and accelerate the migration of authority and responsibility away from members and chapters? I say no. I believe the best course for EASA is to reverse the flow. Restore responsibility and authority to the members, ask, encourage and even *require* that they participate in determining the future of their organization. We can do this by restoring and advancing the opportunities that members have to participate in the governance of their association. We can do this by presenting problems to the membership and asking them to help solve them. We can do this by reminding our members that *they* are EASA and that if they do not do the work, it isn't going to get done. But what we must not do is to continue restricting the rights and powers that members now have to direct their organization.

Some of you may know that I am no longer the "designated voting representative" of an EASA member firm. My new employer, EASA member Cole Electric Company, has allowed and even encouraged me to remain active in EASA's affairs and in the posts that I hold in the Southeastern Chapter, but as my term of office as chapter president draws to a close, I am ready to "pass the gavel" on to current Vice President Lenwood Ireland. I believe that Lenwood will work tirelessly for the good of our organization, and I look forward to serving under his leadership. But even though my circumstances may change, my dedication to EASA and my desire to see her prosper will not. Please join me in striving to maintain a strong, open and responsive association that exists to serve the electric motor repair industry.



## Latest Chapter Handbook Available for Download Now

Every year we publish a handbook listing all of our members geographically and alphabetically. Also included is an alphabetical listing of member contacts and phone numbers. For the past few years our method of distribution has been to publish the handbook to our website where any member can download it freely. Unfortunately, through an oversight on my part, this year's handbook was finished but never posted or distributed. Please accept my apologies!

If you are a member, you can download your copy at <http://easasoutheast.org/handbook.htm>

Ray Paden  
Chapter Executive Secretary/Treasurer



## MONEY GONE!

I hate to see money lost ... even if it isn't mine. That's why it's so troubling when chapter members pay their dues late. When paid on time, EASA remits 10% of the International dues to your chapter. When paid late the chapter gets *nada*. This policy provides support to the chapters in recognition of the important role that they play in the association ... and also as a member incentive for prompt payment.

Please don't throw money away. Pay your International dues by April 1.

## WHERE ARE YOU?

Every time I mail the *Southwind* (or anything else) some of them invariably come back because of incorrect addresses. Usually it is "moved, forwarding order expired" but I also get plenty of "unknown" or unable to forward. When members change locations, they usually remember to notify EASA International, and it is possible that they assume International will in turn notify their chapter. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

If you change your mailing address, *please* take the time to notify the chapter office.

## Newly Elected Region 2 Director Charles Wilson takes office early

As announced in last quarter's *Southwind*, Charles Wilson of Crimson Electric in Greer, South Carolina has been chosen by our members to represent Region 2 (the Southeastern Chapter) as our director on the International Board. Charles was scheduled to take office at the Annual EASA Convention in June, but incumbent Brenda Cole resigned as director in January and, at the request of the International Board, Charles has agreed to serve the remainder of Mrs. Cole's unexpired term. He attended his first board meeting as Region 2 Director in February.

## "Your Seat is Waiting!"

**conundrum:** "A paradoxical, insoluble, or difficult problem; a dilemma."

When business is good, you can't send your technicians for training because you need them to get the work out of the shop. But when business is slow, you still can't send them because you're afraid to let go of the money. Yes, it's a conundrum, but keeping your workers up to speed is a necessity. Now you have a chance to give them some classroom training and save money at the same time.

Seats are still available for the Southeastern Chapter training session April 3-4 in Charlotte, North Carolina. This seminar titled "**Mechanical Repair Fundamentals of Electric Motors**" is presented nationwide by the engineering staff of the Electrical Apparatus Service Association at a cost of \$409 per student. Thanks to a generous grant from EASA member Electrical Equipment Company this class is being hosted by the Southeastern Chapter here in our region at a special reduced price of only \$315 per person. This offer is open to chapter members first. After February 29 registration will be open to non-members at a reduced rate of \$375. (The International price for non-members is \$459.)

This seminar will be held at the Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel, where we have a negotiated room rate of \$129 per night (plus tax). For more information consult the 4th Quarter 2007 *Southwind*, see our website [www.easasoutheast.org](http://www.easasoutheast.org) or call the chapter offices.

As of this writing we have many seats available ... *too many!* Please support your chapter and take advantage of this superior offer without delay.



**Southeastern Chapter  
Electrical Apparatus Service Association**

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## **SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO MEET IN APRIL**

The chapter Board of Directors will meet on April 5 in Charlotte, North Carolina to conduct the business of the chapter. Among the business that will come before the board:

- A review of the chapter's financial reports for the fiscal year 2007
- Presentation of the current membership report
- A report from the Southeastern Chapter Training Committee chaired by Lenwood Ireland
- Review of plans for the 2008 Fall Conference
- Consideration/selection of candidates for the office of Secretary/Treasurer for the 2008-2009 membership year
- A motion to amend the chapter bylaws to extend the terms of service from one year to two years for the following chapter officers:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary/Treasurer
- Director-At-Large (immediate past president)
- A motion to amend the chapter bylaws to remove the restriction of state directors to two consecutive 2-year terms
- Any other business that may be properly brought before the board
- Inauguration of new Georgia State Director Lyn Johnson.
- Inauguration of new Florida State Director Jack Heinz.
- Inauguration of the following new chapter officers:
  - President Lenwood Ireland
  - Vice President Robin Ireland

Do you have an item of business that you would like the board to consider? If so, please send to the chapter office no later than March 17.