

The Direct Connection



A newsletter dedicated to Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention www.abpa-sa.org

February Vol. 36 Issue 2

“ETHICS and Public Water Systems”

As we all know, the development and protection of safe, potable water for consumption purposes is a mandate and essential. This mandate is from the initial treatment phase through the distribution and delivery phases. Additionally, this includes protecting the distribution system from contamination events involving actual/potential cross connections and backflow situations.

Focusing on Ethics the Texas Section of the American Water Works Association (“TAWWA”) and the Water Environment Association of Texas (“WEAT”) have enlisted Lloyd Gosselink attorneys at Law, to develop two Petitions for Rule making. These have been submitted to TCEQ and will involve additional CEU training for water and waste water operators.

Below is an excerpt from the Petitions being filled and as published in a TCEQ notice.

“The Petitions request amendments to administrative rules to require individuals holding a water or wastewater operator license to complete at least four hours of ethics continuing education prior to renewal of the license. These proposed amendments are important to protect public health and the environment, and to foster public trust in the integrity of water resource management and treatment operations. As the potential for adverse public health consequences from water/wastewater noncompliance has become publicly known, the need for operators who can perform their duties both correctly and ethically has become increasingly critical. Required continuing education in ethics would advance the goals of protection public health and the environment by equipping water/wastewater operators with the tools and information necessary to navigate ethical dilemmas.”

The petitions are very detailed and 26 pages long. AS we have discussed in our ABPA-SA meetings – Ethics has to be part of our Backflow World and enforced by the water industry.

BPAT Ethics:

“I CERTIFY, UNDER PENALTY OF LAW, INCLUDING POSSIBLE LOSS OF LICENSE, FINES AND PENALTIES, THAT I HAVE TESTED THE BFPA LISTED ABOVE AT THE TIME AND DATE LISTED AND ALL INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS ACCURATE AND I HAVE PERSONALLY COMPLETED THIS FORM IN FULL”. (This statement was developed by Bill Hamrick and Katrina Hamrick, Atty at Law, and was a result of numerous meetings between Troy Baird, Bruce Rathburn, Bill Hamrick and Fred Baird. There were many suggested enforcement modifications for water purveyors and plumbing inspection departments to control ethics and backflow testing).

February meeting Details

Meetings of the San Antonio Chapter ABPA are held the second Thursday of every month except December. Dinner and refreshments are served at 6:00 p.m. sharp with the meeting starting at 6:15. This meeting is:

Date: Thursday February 13, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM pre-registration only required to receive a meal

**Loc: SAWS Bldg. 2 Conference Room
2800 US Hwy 281 North**

Program title: Backflow and Stuff

Meeting Sponsor: Hugh Cunningham

**No alcoholic
beverages allowed**

Next meeting date: March 13, 2025

Last meeting thanks to:

Arbiter for sponsoring the meeting for January.

Thanks to Adolf for the training presentation on "Soft Skills for BATs".

Also the Chapter appreciated the Arbiter donation of the Quick Connect Test Fitting Set raffle prize.

February Agenda

- 5:00 p.m. General discussion and quorum confirmation
- 5:15 p.m. Call Meeting to order.
- 5:20 p.m. Secretary's Report. Read and approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5:25 p.m. Treasurer's Report. Discussion and approval of the treasurer's report.
- 5:30 p.m. Supply Officer's Report
- 5:35 p.m. Vice President's, Directors', and any other reports for the good of the chapter. Comments, new business, any discussion.
- 5:40 p.m. Training Report. Training & Meal Sponsors
- 5:45 p.m. Webmaster Report
- 5:50 p.m. President's Report. New & old business
- 6:00 p.m. Meal is served.
- 6:15 p.m. General Membership Meeting & Training
 1. Report from the Directors Meeting. President
 2. City, regional, and national reports. James Cantrell and/or any City personnel present.
 3. Training program for the evening.
 4. Raffle prize drawing.

Latest backflow incident:

December 2024 - Bay County, Florida

- 150 homes affected
- Cross connection found by local water department, sewer and potable water lines mistakenly connected by a local contractor

"Direct Talk" by the President

The February 13th meeting will be held in the SAWS conference room in the Tower II building located at 2800 U.S. Hwy. 281. The Director's meeting will start at 5:15 PM with the meal beginning at 6:00 PM and meeting starting at 6:15 PM.

Trinidad *Chairez*

Here is a good website for emergency information: www.sanantonio.gov/emergency/

Chapter Chatter By Your, Finding Humor in Everything, Secretary, Greg Shean

National ABPA Conference – Silent Auction: A chapter member again will donate an Arbiter Backflow MK5 Mako Master Pack with Brass Fittings. For more info: https://www.backflowpartsconnection.com/product-p/mk5mp_brass.htm. As an active participant in the last 15 silent auctions, the most popular gifts have been hard liquor or wine from the local chapter area than unique to that area. The same for nuts, sports clothing, and candy. Hawaii's chapter is famous for their macadamia nuts. Again, best to be a local favorite. Items advertised on TV that are "only available on-line...buy one and get a second for half price...free handling and shipping...supplies are limited." Gift cards at or over \$100. Cannot buy much at \$50 for your spouse/friend who could not attend the conference. \$50 gift cards are okay for nation-wide franchise like Taco Bell, Wendy's, Jersey Mikes, Burger King, etc. However, these are to be used by the winner and not to impress your date or spouse. As for least popular – everything is welcome.

A Pleasant Cruise Surprise: Your secretary and his wife just went on a Carnival cruise out of Galveston. He did not ask for it, but was given a handicap accessible cabin. It was complete with wide doors, a fully tiled bathroom with drainage grates, and a wheelchair accessible shower. Greg called this the Honeymoon Suit. It also had a smaller than usual TV. As Charlie Chan would say, "TV on honeymoon; very unnecessary." His wife had other thoughts.

Thankfully, Like Father, Like Son: Jeff Stricker is the son of Robert Stricker, former San Antonio Chief of Plumbing Inspection and plumbing code guru. Robert held up Jeff's backflow license until he got his plumbing Inspector license. Tough Dad. They work together on all backflow issues. Both, not afraid of speaking their mind. Thankfully, that "apple did not fall too far from the tree."

William Hamrick: The chapter continues to realize how much Bill did for the chapter, how difficult he is to replace, and how much of a void he left. We have an Army lined up trying to fill Bill's shoes..!.

MINUTES SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER-ABPA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Thursday, January 9, 2025

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – PRESENT	EXECUTIVE OFFICERS CONT. – ABSENT
Trinidad Chairez - President	Greg Shean – Secretary
Jeff Stricker - Vice President	
Keith Waldrep – Past President	
OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER – PRESENT	OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER – ABSENT
Carl Michaud – Gauge Testing/Certification	Joe Young - Program Director
Jeff Meeks – Sgt. At Arms	
Matt Wilgen - Webmaster	

DIRECTORS AT LARGE – PRESENT	DIRECTORS AT LARGE – ABSENT
Robert Stricker - 2 years	Jeff Hoffman - 2 years
Bruce Rathburn - 2 years	Bob Clark - 1 year
Fred Baird - 1 year	
Robert Stricker - 2 years	

Agenda Item #1. Trini started the meeting, asked that all turn off their cell phones and then asked for a moment of silence. INFO.

Agenda Item #2. Secretary’s Report: The November minutes were in the newsletter. Robert (as always) made a motion to accept. Passed. INFO.

Agenda Item #3. Treasurer’s Report: Art reported the checking account amount. Our bank account balance will be maintained at the current level so the chapter is prepared for emergencies. INFO.

Agenda Item #4. Supply Officer’s Report: No change. We are looking to reduce/dissolve our about \$2,000 inventory. The discussion was to keep the attire but need member input and vote. OPEN.

Agenda Item #5. Audit Committee: Jeff has worked with Art on some sorting, filtering, and formatting changes that could help with the P&L reports. CLOSED.

Agenda Item #6. Newsletter: Beginning in March, the newsletter (with a backflow article) will be e-mailed only quarterly to all addressees as before. In the other months, an abbreviated e-mail will go out only to active ABPA-SA members. The difficulty is finding informative backflow articles. Developing backflow related articles has always been challenging for both local and national. The quarterly newsletters will assist in alleviating this issue. All advertisements will be placed on the newly developed ABPA-SA web site. This is still an open chapter item. Article suggestions? OPEN.

Agenda Item #7. Meeting Sponsor: Arbiter Backflow sponsored the meeting. INFO.

Agenda Item #8. Meal: Arbiter Backflow sponsored the meal for those in attendance. Art donated and delivered the bottled water and sodas for the meeting. Please e-mail Art before 5 PM on Monday. The order is input at 5 PM. If you do not order – you will only get a meal if there is a no show. INFO.

Agenda Item #9. Raffle: Arbiter Backflow provided a 1/4-3/4 quick connect set as raffle item. INFO.

Agenda Item #10. Training: Adolfo Wurts, Arbiter Backflow, will present the training on Soft Skills For Backflow Assembly Testers. INFO.

Agenda Item #11. Webmaster: The chapter website has been updated and will continue to be updated. Thanks go out to Ashlyn Letourneau, Bruce’s daughter, who is familiar with the new hosting software required by our website host. OPEN.

Agenda Item #12. National ABPA: Troy, chapter member and ABPA membership are working on increasing membership, as well as our chapter. All member suggestions would be sincerely appreciated. The solution is not obvious. OPEN.

Agenda Item #13. SAWS: SAWS has transitioned their SAWS inhouse developed T&M recording program to Backflow Solutions Incorporated (BSI) On-Line. Jeff Stricker, a chapter member and not a BSI employee, connected his laptop to the overhead projector and ran through some BSI info regarding inputting T&M reports for annual, new install, replacements, and removals. He offered some suggestions for certain issues that he had come across. This was very important because BSI will be the T&M reporting company, started January 1, 2025. Backflow testers are responsible for submitting the white backflow certification copy to BSI.

Dan Crowley, SAWS Director of Governmental Relations, thanked Jeff for the presentation and asked if he would be the "go to guy" for everyone to send concerns to BSI and then Jeff Stricker who will then forward to BSI and SAWS. INFO.

Agenda Item #14. San Antonio Irrigation Association (SAIA): No report. INFO.

Agenda Item #15. City of San Antonio (COSA) Plumbing Inspection: Mike Morales said that there is a learning curve with regards to the T&M, BSI, etc.. He appreciates the training and input he receives at our chapter meetings. INFO.

Agenda Item #16. Membership: · The chapter will put together a brochure that will explain the cost savings of being a member of ABPA-SA. This includes free CEUs, gauge testing, and the TCEQ required hands-on, BAC-FLO Unlimited conducted, refresher class. The brochure will be sent to plumbing, irrigation companies and some supply company supply houses. We want to encourage more active chapter members. OPEN.

Agenda Item #17. Gauge Testing: Carl and/or Troy will do the gauge testing. If neither is available, the tester will be given a coupon for the gauge test. BAVCO will test at their office. As usual, non-active members will be charged \$45. The non active member can only have their gauge tested. The chapter already misses Bill Hamrick but Carl will continue until his retirement in December. Both were chapter founders, going back many years. INFO.

Agenda Item #18. Attendance Awards. The awards are now named after Bill Hamrick. You can see how much he did, behind the scenes. INFO.

Agenda Item #19. Training: Adolf provided the training involving many useful and productive skills of a backflow prevention assembly tester. Customer relations, ethics, knowing their field are all important in taking care of the customer and protection of the potable water supply.

Adjournment. Adjourn the meeting at X:XX PM for the raffle.



Greg Shean - Secretary ABPA San Antonio Chapter

THE PASSING OF JOE FAZEKAS

IT IS WITH A HEAVY HEART THAT WE SHARE WITH YOU THE PASSING OF JOE FAZEKAS. JOE WAS A GREAT FRIEND AND WORK ASSOCIATE TO MANY OF US IN AND AROUND THE SAN ANTONIO AREA. HE WORKED WITH ASSOCIA HILL COUNTRY MANAGING FOR HOAs IN SAN ANTONIO AND THE VALLEY AREA. JOE SERVED AS PAST PRESIDENT OF ABPA AND SAIA AND OFTEN VOLUNTEERED TO WORK THE BOOTH AT THE SAN ANTONIO WATER SYSTEM SPRING BLOOM EVENT EVERY YEAR. HE ALSO WAS QUICK TO HELP WITH THE STILE EVENT PUT ON BY SAIA EVERY YEAR FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION IN THE IRRIGATION INDUSTRY. JOE WOULD ALSO MAN A BOOTH FOR THE PHCC SPORTING CLAY SHOOTING EVENT AT NATIONAL GUN CLUB EVERY YEAR. HE PARTICIPATED IN THE ANNUAL COAST FISHING TRIP HELD BY ABPA AT CAST-AND-STAY, AND WAS ALWAYS A FUN GUY TO BE AROUND. JUST AN ALL-AROUND GREAT GUY THAT WILL BE GREATLY MISSED BY ALL WHO KNEW HIM. JOE'S SON POSTED ON FACEBOOK IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, DONATE TO THE MISSIONS ROOKIE FUND. JOE LOVED GOING AND WAS A BIG FAN TO THE MISSIONS BASEBALL GAMES IN SAN ANTONIO.

Quote of the Day:

When I started counting my blessings,
my whole life turned around.

Willie Nelson

B-B-Que Sauce Recipe

1 stick Butter
1 chopped onion
1 cup BBQ Sauce
½ can beer

Saute onions and butter

Add BBQ sauce and beer of choice, let simmer and enjoy!

SAWS / ABPA-SA MEETING

OCTOBER 24'



Change of areas for Backflow Inspectors

Thomas Hagan 210.233.2381
Carlos Tovar 210.233.3413
Robert Anderson 210.233.3429
Gabriel Gomez 210.233.3994
Bobby Rodriguez 210.233.3267

Thomas.Hagan@saws.org
Carlos.Tovar@saws.org
Robert.Anderson@saws.org
Gabriel.Gomez@saws.org
Roberto.Rodriguez@saws.org



Backflow related questions/submissions

Email: backflow@saws.org
Phone: 210.233.2910
MUST LEAVE VM



TCEQ/CSI related questions/submissions

Email: cs-tceq_csi@saws.org
Phone: 210.233.3080
Contact: Valerie Lopez
Valerie.Lopez@saws.org



Web-App related questions

Email: Patricia.Garza@saws.org
Phone: 210.233.3512



BPAT/Gauge Updates

Email: bpatgauges@saws.org



Fees/Tester Issues

\$18,279.50 issued credits, most due to tester issues/submissions. Testers need to ensure that they are submitting test reports via web portal and providing customers with copies.



2024 Compliance Percentage

70% as of October 1st, 2024. SAWS ended 2023 with 70% compliance. Thank you testers!

- ABPA-SA Hands-on Training - September 17, 2025 -

Members that have attended 5 meetings per year (min.) for the past three years are eligible to receive free hands-on CEU training offered by Bac-Flo Unlimited, inc. The member is required to verify and provide print-out of their earned hours the morning of attendance. Hours are on TCEQ's web site and must be shown to instructors the morning of Sept. 17th.



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PHCC- SAN ANTONIO UPCOMING EVENTS

**13
FEB**

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING
PRESENTER: CAST IRON SOIL PIPE INSTITUTE
MAGGIANO'S LITTLE ITALY 17603 I-10
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78257
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM



**27
FEB**

SPORTING CLAY TOURNAMENT
THE "PLUMBER PROTECTS THE HEALTH OF THE NATION"
5931 ROFT RD, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78253
CHECK WEBSITE FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
AND REGISTRATION FORM
11:00 AM LUNCH / 1:00 PM SHOOT BEGINS
4:00 PM AWARDS RECEPTION & GUN RAFFLES



**27
MAR**

MIXER & PAR 3 GOLF
PAR 3 GOLF, SIMULATOR, APPETIZERS
SAN PEDRO GOLF COURSE
6102 SAN PEDRO AVE, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78216
4:30 - 7:30 PM



2025 Contractor Membership & Benefits



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YOUR BACKFLOW PRODUCTS CONNECTION

NOTICE

ABPA-SA is saddened by the heartfelt loss of Bill Hamrick, of **ATB SERVICES**.

ATB Services, Inc. has been the Mid-West Instrument factory service center in the San Antonio area since January 1995. Bill's dedication to the Chapter over the years along with the top notch service he always provided to those needing their backflow gauges serviced, will be sorely missed.

The new service center for Mid-West Instrument for the San Antonio branch is **BAVCO**, located at **6017 Randolph Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78233**.
Phone (210) 451-7564. You may also contact them through (866) 318-0274.

QUIZ

(True or False)

T F 1. After opening the bypass control valve on the RP to test the #2 check, the next step in the test procedure is to close the by-pass control valve.

T F 2. After flushing the gauge at the beginning of the RP test, the tester accidentally leaves the by-pass control valve open. The effect would show up during the relief valve test with the relief valve Not opening.

T F 3. When testing the air inlet valve of a PVB the gauge goes to zero without the air inlet opening. This indicates the check valve is leaking.

T F 4. The tester can determine if backpressure is present on a PVB by closing #1 SOV and opening TC #1 and #2.

T F 5. In testing a double check valve assembly, the tester is required to use a bleed-off valve arrangement to obtain accurate test results if #1 **or** #2 SOV is passing water.

Answers on next page.

ABPA-SA Board of Directors 2024 - 2025

- 1) President – Trinidad Chairez
- 2) Vice President – Jeff Stricker
- 3) Treasurer – Arthur Trejo
- 4) Secretary – Greg Shean
- 5) Immediate Past President – Keith Waldrep

Special Officers to the Association

- 6) SGT-AT-ARMS – Jeff Meeks
- 7) Liaison to SAWS – James Cantrell
- 8) Program Director – Joe Young
- 9) Gauge Testing and Certification – Carl Michaud
- 10) Membership & Newsletter – Open
- 11) Webmaster – Matthew Wilgen

Directors at Large

Two-year term

1. Jeff Hoffman
2. Bruce Rathburn
3. Robert Stricker

One-year term

4. Fred Baird
5. Robert (Bob) Clark

Advertise in The Direct Connection	AD SIZE	Business Card	\$100	ONE YEAR <small>(11 Issues)</small>
		1/4 Page	\$150	
		1/2 Page	\$300	
		Full Page	\$500	

NOTICE: Mail Address: ABPA-SA - P.O. Box 47820 - San Antonio, TX 78265

#1- F, #2- T, #3-F, #4-T, #5-F

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- -- Hands-on training course every three years (\$115/yr. value)
- -- Annual gauge certification (\$95/yr. value)
- -- TCEQ license credits earned (\$173/yr. value)
- -- Monthly meeting meal (\$220/yr. value)
- -- State/local updates and valuable knowledge
- -- Opportunity to serve on Board of Directors
- -- Support and company recognition



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San Antonio, Texas 78233
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kevinb@testgauge.net
Hours: 7a – 4p

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info@speackbackflow.com



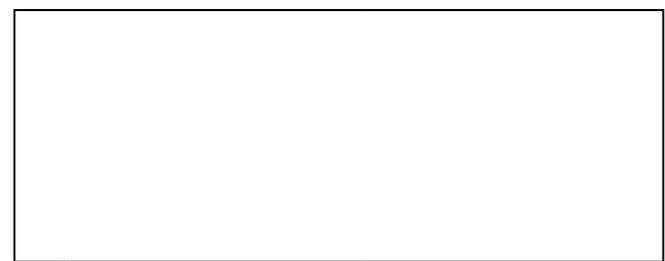
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How to join the ABPA-SA Chapter

There are two ways to join the San Antonio Chapter of the American Backflow Prevention Association.

The easiest way is to click on the QR Code and follow the instructions to set up your account and be presented with an invoice that you can pay with a credit card on-line or check the box to pay with a check. If you don't use QR Codes, click on this address. <https://www.abpa.org/page/Join> **IMPORTANT** Be sure to select the chapter/s (San Antonio Chapter) you want to join before selecting the payment method. If you elect to pay with a check, you will be able to print the invoice so you can send it with your check to the address on the invoice. If you pay with a credit card on-line, you will be able to print a receipt.

Click QR Code to Join



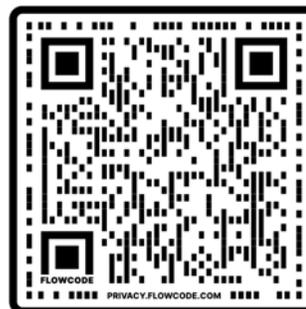
The other way is to print the Membership Application on the next page and send it to the address at the bottom of the page with your check.

How to renew your ABPA-SA Chapter Membership

There are two ways to renew your San Antonio Chapter membership of the American Backflow Prevention Association.

The easiest way is to click on the QR Code and follow the instructions to renew your membership and sign into your account and follow the instructions. If you don't use QR Codes, click on this address. <https://www.abpa.org/page/RenewNow> The program will present you with an invoice that you can pay with a credit card on-line or check the box to pay with a check. **IMPORTANT** Be sure the chapter/s (San Antonio Chapter) is/are selected that you want to renew before selecting the payment method. If you elect to pay with a check, you will be able to print the invoice so you can send it with your check to the address on the invoice. If you pay with a credit card on-line, you will be able to print a receipt.

Click QR Code to Renew



The other way is to print the Membership Application on the next page and send it to the address at the bottom of the page with your check.

Thank You for Your Membership



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

- US Membership \$65
- International Membership \$79
 - Sustaining Membership \$300.00
 - New Member
- Renewal - Member # _____

To join the American Backflow Prevention Association, simply fill out the membership application form and mail it with your check to the address listed below, or if paying by credit card you may fax the completed form to 979.846.7607. Local chapters have additional fees. Below is a listing of chapters by region. To find out if there is a local chapter in your area, please review the chapter information on our website at abpa.org or call the National Office at 979.846.7606. **Membership in the Association constitutes paying National dues.**

Sustaining Member:

- Must be a company or organization
- Assign only one person as the member of ABPA
- A Sustaining Member must submit a letter that designates their Voting Representative.

Please Print Legibly or Type

Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc	First Name	MI	Last Name (Include suffix)	
Organization (Agency/Firm)		Department/Division		Title
Address:				
City:	State / Prov	Zip + 4 Code/Postal Code	Country	
Daytime Phone	Fax	Email		
ABPA-SA		\$ 60.00		
Local Chapter (if joining a local chapter)		Local Dues Amount		

Method of Payment

- Charge \$ 125.00 to my Visa MasterCard American Express Discover Check Money Order Invoice Me

Credit Card Number	Card Expires (MM/YYYY)	CVC Number
Name as it appears on card	Signature	

Additional Information

How would you like to receive your Membership Renewal Invoice Notification? Email US Mail (Not available for International Membership)

Local Chapter Dues Listed by Region

<p>REGION 1</p> <p>New England \$12.00</p> <p>Rhode Island 18.00</p> <p>REGION 2</p> <p>Virginia \$25.00</p> <p>REGION 3</p> <p>Carolinas \$10.00</p> <p>Florida Suncoast 12.00</p> <p>Peach State "1788" 30.00</p> <p>Tennessee 20.00</p> <p>REGION 4</p> <p>Arkansas \$10.00</p> <p>Central Texas 20.00</p> <p>Corpus Christi 23.00</p> <p>Lower Rio Grande Valley 25.00</p> <p>North Texas 23.00</p> <p>San Antonio 60.00</p>	<p>REGION 5</p> <p>Colorado \$15.00</p> <p>Utah 12.00</p> <p>REGION 6</p> <p>Arizona \$20.00</p> <p>Central Coast 10.00</p> <p>Central Valley California 10.00</p> <p>Hawaii 23.00</p> <p>Silver State 23.00</p> <p>Southern California 15.00</p> <p>REGION 7</p> <p>Oregon \$20.00</p> <p>SRC4 20.00</p> <p>REGION 8 (USD)</p>	<p>REGION 9 (USD)</p> <p>REGION 10</p> <p>REGION 11</p> <p>Indiana BPA \$25.00</p> <p>Michigan 40.00</p> <p>Northern Illinois 23.00</p> <p>REGION 12</p> <p>Eastern Nebraska \$10.00</p>
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 (801) 436-7238
 Email: membership@abpa.org