



August 2020 Newsletter

From the President's Perspective:

The chapter year 2020 – 2021 finds us in a unique place. There have been a lot of changes impacting the Niagara Frontier Chapter (NFC); a change in administration, changes in the way we serve our members and a change in society that is truly worldwide. Addressing them in order:

Change in Chapter Administration; Tom Weisbeck became Chapter President and Tom Marino became Secretary/Treasurer on July 1, 2020. Karen Peissinger became Past President and Ryan Knoph became past Secretary/Treasurer after serving our Chapter admirably Both did the work of providing us with high quality Member Services and keeping us in good standing with the Society; this is not an easy task that requires a commitment of personal time that we would otherwise dedicate to other endeavors (like sipping a cold beverage while sitting in the shade on a hot day, going for a hike in the fall woods, you plug in your favorite activity). Their efforts once again enabled us to achieve Bronze recognition status from ASSP for the 2019 – 2020 Chapter Year. All Members should be thankful for their long standing service to NFC!

Both will still be involved in the Chapter and will be performing the important task of maintaining our new website; <https://nf.assp.org/>. That is another time consuming job and I am grateful that Karen and Ryan are doing it; both are skilled and talented in this task (much better than I).

A quick word about me; this is my 2nd go around as a Chapter Officer. I held all our Chapter Officer positions from 1988 – 2002; this gives me a good perspective on what each person does. I am also quite happy that Tom Marino stepped in to the Secretary/Treasurer position; it's an important and vital position with a fair amount of responsibility for our Chapter Operations. Tom is perfect for this position and I hope all of our Members will help to support him in the mission of making sure we funds to provide high quality Member services.

At our Executive Board Meeting this month, we decided to conduct our required 4 Technical Meetings virtually using Zoom. Sadly, we must take this approach as NYS Guidance's issued in conjunction with the current Emergency Declarations change frequently; are somewhat vague regarding "gatherings", and have rules for establishments that would not allow us to socialize as the people that are Chapter Members. My belief is that when faced with a challenge, take it head on and find a way to make things happen.

Our Chapter covers not only Erie and Niagara County, but Chautauqua and Cattaraugus as well. I've been a Member of NFC since 11/1990 (looking at the ASSE plaque on my office wall; it's been that long); I don't remember having an in-person Chapter meeting in either Cattaraugus or Chautauqua County. Virtual meetings will give our Members with an internet connection an opportunity to attend! Virtual meetings will also give our Members who live outside the Buffalo-Niagara Falls metro areas have a chance to attend; either from work or home! And if you are a NFC member who travels frequently for work, well,



again, you can sign in and attend from wherever you are (as long as you have internet access)! I'm guessing this means MORE Members have a chance to attend a Chapter meeting! When you get the emailed notice of a Meeting, sign up, you have fewer excuses than before to participate! **There will be no charge for any NFC virtual Chapter Meeting.** To reduce excuses, we will also be sending out a survey regarding start times for our virtual meetings; please let us know when you want to start. Meetings may be about 90 minutes (1 ½ hours) in length. The first 2 meetings of the new Chapter Year will be:

- **Monday, September 21, 2020**
- **Monday, November 16, 2020**

If NYS Guidance's will permit; later this year or early next, we will send out a survey regarding resuming some in-person meetings. We need to be mindful that there are different levels of risk tolerance among our Members regarding in-person Meetings that must be respected.

Regarding our new Website, <https://nf.assp.org/>; Karen has done a lot of work to bring it to reality; her efforts made it worth it! Not only is it now hosted by ASSP National, less expensive for us to associate with, but gives us access to resources from National with a few quick clicks. Give it a look as it will become one of the primary communication tools we will use regularly. We still have the NFC group on LinkedIn, the website gives us more reach and may be accessible during work breaks without violating your employer's IT security and terms of use. (Not that anyone uses LinkedIn to look for a new job.....) By the way, please request an invitation to join the NFC group on LinkedIn if you use that site, as we will be posting information there that we may not on the Website (like my technical articles and quick updates).

Regarding the change in society. The SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID 19 has caused a dramatic change in how we interact with each other. I'll state that it is very difficult to stay on top of the science regarding this disease and also determine fact from fiction. I don't pretend to know it all and won't state I do. What I do know is that this disease affects people differently; some who get it have mild symptoms of a respiratory infection, others die; suffering badly. I also know that if you consume a steady diet of media, you will become frustrated (from conflicting "facts" and ever changing political directives), fearful (from dire predictions of doom from medical professionals and politicians professing "to protect us") and soon fatigued (from absorbing it all). Take a SANITY BREAK! Turn off the media! Take a hike, call your friends and family, find projects around your house that need to be done and do them, learn a new skill (carpentry, gardening, cooking – especially since restaurants are highly restricted, read a book, etc.), do some outdoor exercise, clean and organize your living space, ANYTHING to distract you from the constant barrage of COVID 19 that surrounds us.

We are Safety Practitioners; remember the Hierarchy of Controls; Elimination, Substitution, Engineering, Administrative and, at the very bottom, PPE. It has worked to keep people alive for a long time; like before we even could define Hazard Control.



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Niagara Frontier Chapter

Next month, we hope to have a much shorter and more positive Newsletter. By the way, please let us know how we are doing at: president.nfassp@gmail.com. If you want to participate in Chapter Governance, you are most welcome and your contributions will be much appreciated.