



September 2021 Newsletter

From the President's Perspective:

Whew! August was a whirlwind of activity on the ASSP National and Chapter front! I have spent a LOT of time on ASSP business! If you haven't read previous Newsletters, please go to our website and review them. <https://nf.assp.org/>. You should be aware of the background so you have an understanding of what I am conveying.

As a Chapter, we are very fortunate to have some Members who are very engaged and some who step up and lend a hand when necessary. The changes that the Society (National, as we refer to.) are coming and not without controversy. I can confidently state that with Carol Schmeidler, as our Representative to what will be the last House of Delegates meeting, we have the best representation of interest any Chapter could have. Needless to say, there are some Chapters and Members who oppose the shift in governance, but the Society must do what is necessary to head in to the future, poised to carry on the core mission of ASSP.

On to Meetings! We now have 2 in-person meetings planned; we sincerely hope that they will work.

PLEASE WATCH YOUR EMAIL, ESPECIALLY IF YOU REGISTER FOR A MEETING! Pre-registration will be required for Meetings so we can plan resources. There are complex logistics issues involved. With the lifting of restrictions on gatherings, getting back to in-person meetings is going to be quite tricky and subject to rapid change! We are very aware of the current situation and the potential of COVID-19 to cause increased infection rates that will trigger a resumption of restrictions. **If that happens; we will pivot to a virtual Zoom meeting on short notice.** We are trying to operate on a one week notice and cancellation of in-person events; if we need to go virtual, we will issue a Zoom invite (if the speaker can also pivot) to all Members!

Since we began planning the Chapter Year in July and August 2021, we have been watching ever evolving changes. So far, we can conduct a Meeting without many restrictions. As I write this newsletter, we now have 10 attendees (That's a fair number early, good sign!); the JW Danforth Training Room will accommodate more with adequate room to maintain separation for those who value distancing. If you feel more comfortable wearing a face covering, you can do so. The reason we are offering wraps, chips and bottled water is that food is unit service; this means less handling. Also, there are no restaurants within walking distance of the Danforth Training Room (takeout or otherwise). So far, I figure (I have attended a lot of meetings at the Danforth Training Room.) we can accommodate about 30+ Members comfortably.

However, if restrictions/guidance's become more bureaucratic than this, we will pivot to Zoom format. At that point, I think most people will be uncomfortable in an indoor setting with others they only see at Chapter meetings and we don't have the resources to properly manage screening. A virtual format will allow for greater Member safety (no indoor gathering), an ability to see each other's faces, a comfort factor for our presenter and less liability for the Chapter. If we go virtual, please remember Zoom meeting etiquette if you want to attend in comfort!



I am asking for your understanding regarding how this makes logistical planning way more complicated than it used to be. It is not an easy task.

Our first meeting is in-person (at this time), scheduled for September 20, 2021 starting at 5 PM. It will be at the JW Danforth Training Room at 200 Colvin Woods Parkway in Tonawanda and will be the OSHA Update. Nick Donofrio will give us the latest of what is on OSHA's agenda regarding regulations and enforcement. They always do an excellent job of this. With OSHA now able to use Zoom, if we need to go virtual, this will happen on that date if we need to cancel the in-person event. The Meeting announcement has gone out.

The second proposed meeting will be on October 18, 2021 starting at 5 PM. It will be at a different venue for the Niagara Frontier Chapter! We will be at the Meeting House, 5658 Main St., Williamsville. The topic will be a timely one; the NYS Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (legalizing recreational pot) and how it affects administration of workplace Drug & Alcohol Testing programs. If you have a Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Program, you will want to attend this one! Mark the date! There is parking available at this venue.

The Meeting House is a restored church and as such, has seating in pews. Not conducive to serving food. However, there is a wealth of restaurants within the immediate walking area of the Meeting House. There is a great variety of food types (fast food, casual to fine dining, ice cream shops as well as a craft brewery), dining venues (takeout or sit down), and price ranges available. You can get a bite to eat before the Meeting and dessert or drinks afterwards! Check the Meeting notice when it comes out for what's available.

The Niagara Frontier Chapter will be making these first 2 meetings free of charge to attend.

There may be others. *The Meeting charge is for food.* We will have cold bottled water available for Members at no charge. What we would appreciate is a "free will" offering to help us offset the cost of the venue, but only if you can! I, and the rest of the Niagara Frontier Chapter Board, want to make Meeting accessible to ALL Members, regardless of income status. Please understand that we have a lot of skin in this game to obtain the Meeting House as a venue; understand that it is a new location, and a new group to work with (Village of Williamsville); we would like to go back there. The logistics of using this venue are a bit more than others; but the price is right and it seems like a neat location to try. Board Recommended!

I am asking for our Members to understand the situation beyond our control we have been handed to work with. I think we have been able to do so somewhat successfully. By the way, no one is truly happy or comfortable with the situation as it currently exists; we are trying to respect all Member's safety and philosophy without turning the Chapter Year in to a political event. As such, I am going to ask for your cooperation in trying to keep politics out of what has become a very controversial situation. COVID 19 is but ONE hazard our employees and the public are exposed to; we have a wonderful wealth of (confusing) prescriptive regulations, guidance's and mandates to address that situation. I think we need to broaden our hazard awareness and remember that the others can be just as or more injurious; let's not ignore them!