



# TheReactor

New Orleans Section -  
American Institute of  
Chemical Engineers

Volume 17, Issue 4  
January 2005

## Chair's Corner



*Dr. Paul Fanning*

Chair, 2004-2005  
New Orleans Section AIChE

I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May everyone have a blessed, prosperous, and safe 2005.

By all accounts, our November 2004 meeting was a grand success. It was the best attended meeting of the three held so far. (I counted 20 attendees, but there even may have been a few more.) Many thanks to our speakers, Aaron (Skeets) Williams and Art Pollack, for an informative presentation on post-9/11 chemical plant security.

A regular Section meeting

### Fourth Meeting for the 2004-2005 Year

This month's meeting is being held jointly with our sister section—the Baton Rouge Section.

Dr. Mike McDaniel, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality will be our featured speaker.

Please see Dr. McDaniel's

is not normally scheduled for December. But that did not stop the Officers and committee Chairs (and even one Section member) from participating in a special Officer's meeting on 12/07/04 to discuss the 17 Section-related issues on the meeting agenda.

Topics discussed included an update on membership activities, plans to finalize the 2005 meeting program, education outreach endeavors, and the budget status, amongst other things. I want to thank all those who attended for giving of their time (especially during the Christmas season) in service of the Section.

Thanks are also in order for Ron Ondechek, the Education Outreach Chair, for submitting a ProjectConnect Grant application to AIChE National. The proposed program concept is to conduct mock interviews for students and recent graduates in order to give them a realistic simulation of the interview proc-

ess that an entry-level engineer might likely encounter. Let's keep our fingers crossed that our Section will be awarded one of the Grants.

Finally, our January 2005 meeting will be a joint meeting with the Baton Rouge Section. The meeting details are provided in the Newsletter. Let me extend my personal invitation to each of you to attend the meeting on Thursday, 01/20/05, at the Bull's Corner Restaurant in LaPlace. (Recall that this is where we held last year's joint meeting.)

Feel free to bring a co-worker, colleague, friend, spouse, or anyone else who you think might be interested in attending. Let's make this joint meeting even more successful than last year's meeting.

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### Proposed Future Meeting Programs:

(subject to change)

- February 8, 2005
- March 8, 2005
- April 12, 2005

*Meeting Schedule*  
*Cost: \$22/person*  
*Students: Free*

6:00 — 6:30 P.M.	Social
6:30 — 7:30	Dinner
7:30 — 8:30	Speaker
8:30 — 9:00	Meeting
9:00 P.M.	Adjourn



## Section Officers

“Anyone wishing information regarding becoming an officer, should contact the Section Chairman”

## New Orleans Section Officers 2003-2004

Dr. Paul Fanning—Dow Chemical—985-331-1873	Chair
Kelvin Langlois—ERM—831-6700	Vice-Chair & Program Chair
Christopher Day—Chevron Chemical—391-6584	Secretary
Michael Waguespack—Middleberg, Riddle & Gianna—207-7340	Treasurer & Awards Chair
Robert Sharshan—467-8339	Immediate Past Chair
Bill Boutall—Wink—243-4539	Membership Chair & Director
Greg Tragitt—KBC—837-9228	Finance Chair & Director
Ron Ondechek—	Education Outreach Chair
Anthony Fregosi—Cytec Ind.—431-6598	Newsletter Editor

## Company Contacts

Chevron Chemical—Christopher Day 391-6584	M. S. Benbow—Rachel Wiggins 281-6282
Crompton—Robin Cherre’ 504-779-1665	Nalco/Exxon—Joy Usener 1-800-366-2526
Cytec Industries—Anthony Fregosi 431-6598	Occidental Chem.—Linda Bergeron 783-7365
DEQ (B.R.)—Freddie Touro 225-219-3122	Petro-Marine Eng.— <b>Contact Needed</b>
Dow Chemical—Paul Fanning 985-331-1873	Shell Chemical— <b>Contact Needed</b>
Entergy—Jim Dean 576-7174	Tulane Univ.—Dr. Brian Mitchell 862-8257
EDG, Inc.—Leon Barnett 455-0858	URS (Walk)—Jay Hendrickson 599-4926
ExxonMobile—Tom Doolin 281-6154	W.H. Linder—Herb Roussel, P.E. 835-2577
KBC Advanced Tech.—Don Hoppens 837-9228	Wink Engineering—Bill Boutall 246-7924
Monsanto—Matt Barrows 985-785-3475	

“Please Contact Jim Dean at 576-7174 if you would like to become a company contact—or to report any changes”



*Anthony F. Fregosi*  
Editor

“Send comments to  
Anthony.Fregosi@cytec.com”

## Editor’s Soap Box

We will again be having a joint meeting with the Baton Rouge Section this month. In the past—our joint meetings have been very well attended—so make sure you contact Chris Day to let us know you will be coming.

The officers held a meeting last month in December. This was

a first for the section. It was required because the section is embarking on several new initiatives and there has not been enough time at the regular meetings to adequately discuss them!

Section activities and planning is at an all time high. If you would like to get involved, there has been no better time than now. You will be put to work very quickly! However, no one

has been asked to do more than they are willing or able. Please contact any officer if you are interested in learning how you can give back to the profession through involvement in section activities.

Why not invite that new engineer or that “old” hand to the next meeting? There is always room for more.

See you January 20th.



## Article of the Month

It's Not Easy Being Lean

by Nancy McGuire

Senior Web Associate, chemistry.org

In the low-carb diet game, baked goods would appear to be firmly behind the eight ball. Take away the high-carb flour and sugar, and what's left?

Charles Pizzi, the new CEO of Philadelphia's Tasty Baking Co., was unfazed. He had promised the shareholders an "innovative product line" in 2004, and the pressure was on to deliver the goods. Marian Uhlman reported that, although Pizzi didn't announce any specifics, the product line he envisioned was a selection of low-carb baked goods (A Trimmer Tastykake. Philadelphia Inquirer, page E1, May 16, 2004.)

In January 2004, during her second week as Tasty Baking's director of business development, Karen Schutz launched the super-secret Project Greta Carbo. Research manager John Sawicki started with a cookie recipe, reducing the amount of flour and replacing the sugar in the recipe with maltitol, a sugar alcohol.

Because the body absorbs sugar alcohols more slowly than sugars, sugar alcohols provide the same sweet taste without the "carb rush". Maltitol is less apt to cause digestive problems than some other sugar alcohols; even so, eating too much can cause unpleasant side effects.

The new recipe produced some very flat cookies. Cutting back on the maltitol and adding modified cornstarch solved the flatness problem, but bumped up the carb count.

In the meantime, Pizzi and another idea—could these products be low-carb and sugar-free? And instead of launching the product in September, could the research team have something ready to go by late June?

Needing a quick success, the product team came up with a series of recipes where maltitol and sucralose replaced granular sugar and high-fructose corn syrup, and some of the flour was replaced with modified corn starch.

The result was a cookie recipe with 28 total carbohydrate grams per serving: 20 grams from the maltitol, 1 gram from fiber, and 7 grams "net carbs". Compared with a competitor's product, Atkins Quick Quisine Cookie Mix (6 grams net carbs), the Tastykake cookies were looking good. Unfortunately, the low-carb cookies were also low-taste. They absorbed water from their icing, causing the icing to "bloom", or turn white, after only a few days on the shelf.

The research team redoubled their efforts, and they presented an array of low-carb, sugar-free doughnuts, muffins, and cookie bars to the board of directors in March. The treats passed the taste test, but the maltitol caused intestinal problems for several of the tasters.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was developing standards for "lower carbohydrate", "reduced carbohydrate", and "carbohydrate free" food designations. Tasty Baking would have to tailor their products to match those requirements; and the federal rule-making process could extend well past their projected June launch date. (As of September, the FDA was still "planning to propose regulations and guidance for carbohydrate claims on food labels".)

Other companies were going low-carb as well, and the increased demand for maltitol had bumped up the price to nine times that of sugar. Sawicki replaced some of the maltitol with polydextrose, a carbohydrate that is not fully digested. He also added glycerin, a sugar alcohol that has less of a tendency than maltitol to cause digestive problems.

By early May, the cookies were coming out in 900-pound batches, each cookie with 21 carbs, 7 net carbs, and no sugar. The product label would include a caution against overindulgence to avoid the laxative effects from the maltitol—an added incentive to practice portion control.

At a mid-May preview presentation, Tasty Baking's 60 district sales managers gave the product development team a well-deserved standing ovation. The product line, dubbed Sensables, was announced to the public on August 10.

## JOKE OF THE DAY

Q. What is the dieter's element? A. Nobelium — Q. Where does one put the dishes? A. In the Zinc.

## Humor – What a Difference 30 Years Makes!



"Laughter is the best  
Medicine."

1974: Long hair  
2004: Longing for hair

1974: KEG  
2004: EKG

1974: Acid rock  
2004: Acid reflux

1974: Moving to California because it's cool  
2004: Moving to California because it's warm

1974: Trying to look like Marlon Brando or Liz Taylor  
2004: Trying NOT to look like Marlon Brando or Liz Taylor

1974: Seeds and stems  
2004: Roughage

1974: Hoping for a BMW  
2004: Hoping for a BM

1974: The Grateful Dead  
2004: Dr. Kevorkian

1974: Going to a new, hip joint  
2004: Receiving a new hip joint

1974: Rolling Stones  
2004: Kidney Stones

1974: Being called into to the principal's office  
2004: Calling the principal's office

1974: Screw the system  
2004: Upgrade the system

1974: Disco  
2004: Costco

1974: Parents begging you to get your hair cut  
2004: Children begging you to get their heads shaved

1974: Passing the drivers' test  
2004: Passing the vision test

1974: Whatever  
2004: Depends

Just in case you weren't feeling too old today, this will certainly change things. Each year the staff at Beloit College in Wisconsin puts together a list to try to give the faculty a sense of the mindset of this year's incoming freshmen.

Here's this year's list:

The people who are starting college this fall across the nation were born in 1985!

They are too young to remember the space shuttle blowing up.

Their lifetime has always included AIDS.

Bottle caps have always been screw off and plastic.

The CD was introduced the year they were born.

They have always had an answering machine.

They have always had cable.

They cannot fathom not having a remote control.

Jay Leno has always been on the Tonight Show.

Popcorn has always been cooked in the microwave.

They can't imagine what hard contact lenses are.

They don't know who Mork was or where he was from.

They never heard: "Where's the Beef?", "I'd walk a mile for a Camel" or "de plane Boss, de plane."

They do not care who shot J. R. and have no idea who J. R. even is.

McDonald's never came in Styrofoam containers.

They don't have a clue how to use a typewriter.

Do you feel old yet? Pass this on to the other old fogies on your list. Notice the larger type? That's for those of you who have trouble reading the smaller print!



## Local Section Outreach Programs

Ron Ondechek, recently appointed Education Outreach Chair and Michael Waguespack the current section Treasurer and Awards Chair are both working on different aspects of section outreach programs.

Ron has been working on how the section can reach out to local colleges, universities and high schools. Part of being a professional is to help promote and attract others to join the profession. To this end Ron arranged a meeting with the Tulane Chemical Engineering Department Chairman (See the Chair's Corner on Page 1). This is going to be a very exciting opportunity for our members to "give something back" to the profession. The section hopes the members will "step up" and become active in this new program. You may contact Ron at: [rondechek@cox.net](mailto:rondechek@cox.net)

Another approach to section outreach, is that being undertaken by Michael Waguespack. Michael has been working for several months now on an outreach/corporate sponsors program. The corporate sponsorship program can take on many forms including, but not limited to, allowing plant tours, providing speakers, or hosting dinner meetings to name a few.

Again, Michael is looking for support from the membership on developing this excellent program. Michael may be contacted at: [mwaguespack@midrid.com](mailto:mwaguespack@midrid.com).

## 2005 AIChE Southern Regional Student Conference Future's Fair

**Recruiting opportunities for companies interested  
in hiring highly talented Chemical Engineering students**



- **Sponsor:** *The American Institute of Chemical Engineers*
- **Date:** *March 10-12, 2005*
- **Location:** *New Orleans, LA*
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  - » **Seeing your logo prominently displayed during your event**

*For more information, please contact ...*

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*Conferences jointly organized by the AIChE student chapters at Tulane and LSU*



## Announcements

### **Biography—Mike D. McDaniel, Ph.D.** **Secretary, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality**

Dr. McDaniel is an environmental scientist with over 35 years of experience in environmental investigations and regulatory compliance matters. Prior to his appointment by Governor Kathleen Blanco, Dr. McDaniel provided environmental consulting services to the Capital Region Planning Commission and the Baton Rouge/East Baton Rouge Parish Department of Public Works on transportation/air quality and ozone non-attainment issues. He has served as Facilitator for the Baton Rouge Ozone Task Force and assisted the Shreveport-Bossier City MSA with early action initiatives for the 1-hour and 8-hour ozone standards. Dr. McDaniel has also served as an appointed member of the Governor's Task Force on Environmental Protection and Preservation, the Governor's Mississippi River Corridor Task Force, and the Amite River Basin Commission.

Prior to opening the firm of Mike D. McDaniel & Associates in January 1999, Dr. McDaniel served for over five years as Vice President for Woodward-Clyde Consultants, an environmental and engineering consulting firm. From 1988 to 1992, Dr. McDaniel served as Assistant Secretary, Office of Air Quality and Radiation Protection in the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

In addition to the above responsibilities, Dr. McDaniel has served roles of manager and technical director for several environmental consulting firms. He is the author of a number of scientific publications and has prepared numerous technical reports and presentations for projects he has been involved.



Section Ads



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**New Members Are Always Welcome**

*If you would like to become a member of the section, please contact the Membership Chairman listed on Page 2.*

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1/2 page	\$ 80	\$ 500
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TO:



Quote of the  
Month

"When I hear somebody sigh, "Life is hard," I'm always tempted to ask, "Compared to what?"

– Sydney J. Harris

**Meeting Notice!**

**Date:** January 20, 2005  
**Time:** 6:00 P.M.  
**Place:** Bull's Corner  
1036 West Airline Hwy  
LaPlace, LA

*New Orleans Section, Winner of:  
1995 "Randall D. Sheeline Award", for excellence in public relations activities.  
1999 "Catalyst Grassroots Award", for support of the grassroots advocacy program.  
2001 "Marx Isaac's Award", for excellence of a small local section newsletter.*