

The Newsletter of

The Mid-Michigan Section of AIChE

American Institute of Chemical Engineers

Mission: To provide opportunities to continuously develop our members professionally – while working with the community to improve the understanding of science and engineering and their impact on society.

Published by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers
Mid-Michigan Section
P.O. Box 2496
Midland, MI 48641-2496
Volume 17, Issue 1 (March, 2014)
Website: <http://www.mmaiche.org>

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A tour of Tri-City Brewery was held in January. See page 5 for more photos.

Words from the Chair...

As we enter into the last days of winter and prepare to pack up the skis, snowmobiles, and de-icers, we are looking forward to a busy springtime of activity within the Section. Our vibrant seminar series and Young Professionals programming have helped immensely to add warmth and interest to this long winter for me. Our second field trip of the season was on March 12th, to tour custom processing equipment fabricator B&P Process Equipment's fabrication and testing facility in Saginaw, and our last seminar of the season will be on Wednesday April 16th where Bob Brentin will give a talk about what works in new product and new market development at Grand Traverse Pie Company.

Also in April, on the 11th and 12th, is the 2014 North Central Student Regional AIChE Conference at Michigan State University. This conference features the annual Regional Chem-E-Car competition, Research Paper competition and Chem-E Jeopardy competition. Practicing and retired chemical engineers, along with the general public, are welcome to attend, along with the more than 200 students who are expected to attend from throughout the region. If you are interested in helping, or have any questions about that event, you can find what you need at <http://www.egr.msu.edu/aiche/regional.html>

Mark your calendars for May 21, 2014 so that you can join us at our Spring Banquet with keynote speaker Ron Yocum from Michigan Molecular Institute. This banquet is a wonderful opportunity to network with Section members, to celebrate outstanding chemical engineers and their involvement with the Section, and to learn something from our esteemed speaker. I'm looking forward to it.

I am so grateful to the people who have been putting in their time for the benefit of the Section, as we pursue our charter to educate Section members as well as non-members in chemical engineering principles and practices, to provide career guidance to students in the study of science and engineering, and to encourage research and development for the advancement of the science and practice of chemical engineering for the benefit of society. I hope you are able to take the time when a young person (or a person of any age for that matter) asks you about what chemical engineering is all about – to tell them what we do and what we can accomplish. Each of these conversations is an opportunity to build understanding and to share your passion for this discipline that has only our imaginations, patience, and the laws of nature (as we understand them) as its limits.

Part of our springtime activities include the election of officers for the coming year. An announcement with more details will be sent out at the end of March, so please be thinking about whether you are interested in being of service to the Mid-Michigan AIChE Section either by filling one of our officer roles or by participating or chairing one of our committees. Perhaps you have a friend or colleague who might be a perfect fit for this. Talk about it with him or her.

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Speaking of service to and support of this organization, we are excited to announce that the president-elect of national AIChE, Dr. Cheryl Teich, will be visiting Midland in April. We are having an informal get-together on April 10th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Diamond Jim's at 101 E. Main Street (at Ashman) in Midland. Please come on by to say hello!

Maxine Cottrell

Chair, Mid-Michigan AIChE



The Mid-Michigan Section Thanks our Sponsors for Their Support!



Volunteers Needed for Regional AIChE Conference at MSU

Michigan State University will be hosting the annual North Central Student Regional AIChE Conference on Friday and Saturday, April 11th and 12th. The conference will host over 200 students from around the Midwest to compete in various competitions and learn about opportunities in industry.

In order to make this conference successful, they need qualified Judges for our poster, paper, and Chem-E-Car competitions. The poster and paper competitions will consist of design and research presentations. The Chem-E-Car is a small car that is designed to run on a chemical reaction.

Competitions will start at 8:30 am and end around 3:00pm. If you would like to volunteer to be a Judge or have any questions please email Carson Laurenz at laurenzc@msu.edu. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Recent and Upcoming Events

By Vishesh Shah with Photos by Rich Helling

As we approach the homestretch of our 2013-14 calendar of events, we would like to recap some of the past highlights and remind you about our exciting upcoming programs. Our calendar year was kicked off in September 2013 at Oscar's Cornerstone Pub in downtown Midland. This event has been an annual tradition of late, and allows chemical engineers to network in a casual setting with live music, drinks and sandwiches.



Kick-off meeting at Oscar's held at the start of the Season in September.

In the winter months that followed, we saw *robots* built by local high school students for the FIRST® Robotics Competition, and we also learned about *automotive catalysis* and *chemicals from biomass* through technical seminars. These seminars were possible thanks to Professors Galen Fisher and David Hodge who volunteered their time to share their expertise with us. We also visited the Tri-City Brewing Company in Bay City where Kevin Peil (owner and chemical engineer!) gave a wonderful technical tour.



Tour of Tri-City Brewing Company. Kevin Peil (lower left) explains how it's done.

On March 12, we hosted another unique tour at B&P Process Equipment in Saginaw where attendees saw demonstrations of Podbielniak® liquid-liquid contactors and a newly developed continuous compounder. This will be followed by a talk in April by Bob Brentin on strategies for successful *new product development* in the chemical industry.

May will bring us to the conclusion of our 2013-14 programs with our annual Spring Banquet, where attendees will hear from Ron Yocum, Chairman of the Board at Michigan Molecular Institute. Please visit our website to obtain more information about these events (<http://www.mmaiche.org/events.html>).

Folks interested in PE licensure can obtain certificates by attending our events since most of our seminars and tours qualify for 1 professional development hour.

Young Professionals Euchre Tournament Held in Midland

By Anshul Agarwal

Collaborating with the American Chemical Society's Younger Chemists Committee (YCC) and Dow Corning's Early Career Network (ECN), the Mid-Michigan Section of AIChE (MMAICHe) organized a Euchre Tournament on October 11th, 2013 for young professionals in and around Midland. The event was entirely funded by the YCC, while the event logistics and organization were primarily managed by the MMAICHe. The tournament was held at the Midland Brewing Company in Midland. The objective of the event was to provide a platform in a fun casual setting for young professionals to interact, network, and mingle with other professionals outside of their organizations.

Euchre is a popular card game where two teams (2 players in each team) compete to win points. The teams win points by taking at least three out of five "tricks" from a hand of five cards. Usually the winning team is the first to reach 10 points. In contrast, the MMAICHe Euchre tournament employed a "round robin/blitz" format rather than the traditional hierarchical one. Instead of playing first to 10 points, rounds consisted of 10 minutes of play time followed by 5 minute breaks. The pairs played new opponents each round and their score was the cumulative number of points won over the whole tournament. This format maximized networking opportunities while minimizing scheduling issues.

Most participants signed up with their partners, while the rest were assigned to one randomly at the beginning of the event. After each 10 minute round, the play stopped and each team updated their points tally on a large poster. The teams were then given five minutes to mingle and find their next opponents. They were asked to find new opponents each round, which thus provided them ample opportunity to meet and network with other tournament participants.

The event was quite successful and well attended. A total of 14 teams competed with each other, bringing together people from Dow Chemical, Dow Corning, and Hemlock Semiconductor. Many of the participants were new hires at Dow Corning who started in August and were seeking opportunities to meet other chemical professionals in the area. The Midland Brewing Company reserved a portion of the bar with 8-10 tables for the event. The deck of cards for all tables, score

sheets, scoreboard (poster), and stop-clock were arranged by the MMAICChE. While pizza dinner was included as a part of the event, participants were asked to buy their own drinks. At the beginning of the event, rules were explained to all participants and they were allowed to play a free practice round for amateurs to understand the rules of euchre. The tournament ran for about three hours with several ten minute games. At the conclusion of the tournament, ``ugly'' trophies were awarded to the best (highest scoring) and the worst (lowest scoring) teams. As a part of the joke, the worst team received a better trophy than the best team. A well mixed exuberance and professionalism of the participants together with a fun-filled atmosphere characterized the evening of the tournament. Highly favorable and positive informal feedback was obtained from the participants. We plan to continue the momentum gained via this event in 2014 and organize similar future events for young professionals.

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