



# The South Texan

VOLUME 103 NUMBER 9

MAY 2003

## MONTHLY MEETING • MAY 1, 2003

### “AWARDS NIGHT”



**Speaker:** Dr. Carter J. White, Associate  
Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP,  
Attorneys at Law, Houston, Texas

**Subject:** “I’m Here To Help, I’m A Patent  
Attorney”

Dr. Carter White will discuss the importance of a collaborative, team oriented approach of working with a patent attorney regarding patents and other intellectual property issues. He will address the

need of being proactive regarding obtaining patent protection while at the same time respecting others patents and the need for making a review of the intellectual property issues prior to finalizing a design. Included in the discussion will be practical advice on what an engineer can expect from a patent attorney and what the attorney expects of an engineer when working on intellectual property and patents.

Dr. Carter White, Ph.D., J.D. is an associate attorney, specializing in patent prosecution with the Houston office of Howrey Simon Arnold & White, LLP. For 6 years he has worked with engineers and scientists in preparing and prosecuting over 200 patent applications from a wide range of technologies before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Prior to becoming a patent attorney, Dr. White worked as a patent agent for Arnold White and Durkee and a patent liaison for Quantum Group Inc., San Diego CA. In 1994 he received a Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry from Iowa State University based on research involving the surface chemistry of the hydrodesulfurization of crude oil and in 1989 he received a B.S. in Chemistry from California State University, Long Beach.

### Workshop Announcements

Refer to pages 3-4 for detailed workshop topic and speaker information. Check room assignments in the Hotel Lobby to join the group that interests you.

#### Process Engineering / Plant Operations

**Topic:** “Vacuum System Selection and Operation”

**Speaker:** Mr. Allen Fris, Sales Engineer  
Graham Corporation, Houston, TX

#### Process Safety Management

**Topic:** “The State of PSM in Industry—A Consultant’s View”

**Speaker:** Mr. Jack Vernon, Manager, ABS  
Consulting, Clear Lake Office and the  
Houston Process Safety Group.

#### CAST

**Topic:** “Application of Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) in the Chemical Process Industry”

**Speaker:** Dr. Heshmat Massah, Senior Account  
Manager, Fluent, Inc.

## JUNE 5 STS-AICHE HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL TRIP

*See page 9 for details*

### How to Stay in Touch with South Texas Section

#### Website:

<http://www.sts-aiche.org>

#### Newsletter Access:

- 1) Snail Mail to all registered STS members - one week before meeting +/- one week.
- 2) Website at sts-aiche.org - click on Newsletter or Newsletter Archives - accessible mid-month, before meeting.
- 3) E-Mail - enroll at the Topica prompt at the bottom of the STS home page - includes URL to current Newsletter, accessible mid-month before meeting.

#### Workshops and Dinner Meeting Topics, Speakers, Synopses, and Bios:

About a week after meeting, speakers and topics appear on the website home page for the next month’s meeting. Navigation keys home on detailed synopses and bios for each workshop or dinner meeting presentations.

### Meeting Location

**RADISSON HOTEL ASTRODOME**

(Kirby at South Loop)

WORKSHOP(NO FEES - NO RSVP)	5:30-6:30 p.m.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	5:00-6:00 p.m.
SOCIAL PERIOD	6:00-7:00 p.m.
DINNER	7:00-7:45 p.m.
PRICE .. \$ 22.00 with reservation • 24.00 without reservation	
Students and Unemployed 1/2 price	
MEETING /SPEAKER	7:30-8:30 p.m.

AUTO - R.S.V.P. By 4:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 29, 2003  
Call (713) 295 -4847

Make reservation using the STS web site: [www.sts-aiche.org](http://www.sts-aiche.org)

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**DAVID MITCHELL, P.E.**  
GDS Engineers  
9009 West Loop South, Suite 800  
Houston, Texas 77096-1719  
Ph: (713) 295-4681  
Fax: (713) 667-9241  
E-mail: dave.mitchell@gdseng.com

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**MATTHEW KOLODNEY, P.E.**  
TCEQ  
5425 Polk Avenue, Suite H  
Houston, Texas 77023-1486  
Ph: (713) 767-3752  
Fax: (713) 767-3761  
mkolodne@tceq.state.tx.us

### SECRETARY

**PAUL TEMME**  
Valero Refining-Texas, L.P.  
P.O. Box 5038  
Houston, Texas 77262-5038  
Ph.: (713) 923-3440  
Fax: (713) 923-3561  
paul.temme@valero.com

### TREASURER

**ERNIE ALTHAUS**  
GDS Engineers  
9009 West Loop South, Suite 800  
Houston, Texas 77096-1719  
Ph: (713) 839-7463  
Fax: (713) 839-7463  
ernie.althaus@bigfoot.com

### PAST CHAIR

**AZIZ A. SIDDIQI, Ph.D.**  
Resochem Corporation  
16630 Imperial Valley Drive Ste 156  
Houston, Texas 77060  
Ph: (281) 999-6111  
Cell: (281) 723-4252  
Fax: (281) 999-6181  
resochem@flash.net

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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**JIM MORRIS, P.E.**  
3010 West Lake Crescent Drive  
Kingwood Texas 77339  
(281) 358-7986  
ejmorriss@vonl.com

#### POSITION 2, OUTREACH

**RICHARD WILLSON, Ph.D.**  
Department of Chemical Engineering  
University of Houston  
S222D Engineering Building 1  
Houston, TX 77204-4004  
Ph: (713) 743-4308  
Fax: (713) 743-4323  
willson@uh.edu

#### POSITION 3, COMMUNICATIONS

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Dixon Enterprises  
Ph: (713) 977-9755  
kimdixon@ev1.net

#### POSITION 4, HUMAN RESOURCES

**TIM MCMINN, Ph.D.**  
ExxonMobil Chemicals  
4500 Bayway Dr.  
Baytown, TX 77522  
Ph: (281) 834-2633  
tim402@hotmail.com

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**JERRY GRESHAM**  
Gresham & Gresham  
P. O. Box 820888  
Houston, Texas 77282  
(713) 780-1000  
Fax: (713) 781-3300  
gresham@pdq.net

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**HOLLY PRO GRAPHICS**  
P. O. Box 8868  
Houston, TX 77249-8868  
(713) 742-5732  
Fax: (713) 742-5820  
typeforu@aol.com

#### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

**JIM MORRIS**  
3010 West Lake Crescent Drive  
Kingwood Texas 77339  
(281) 358-7986  
ejmorriss@vonl.com

#### CHEMICAL / ENGINEERING OPPORTUNITIES

**Kellogg Brown & Root, Inc.**  
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#### ADDRESS CORRECTIONS

To expedite your request, all inquiries should be made through New York:  
xpress@aiche.org  
**1-800-AICHEM**  
**1-800-242-4363**  
AICHEXpress Service Center  
3 Park Ave, New York, NY 10016-5991

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## From the Chairman

Dave Mitchell



Do any of the production or technical managers who are reading this column ever wonder how you are going to fill future positions in your company? How are your current engineers going to develop the social skills to be able to manage other engineers much less manage operators? Or maintain technical skills as new technology evolves?

John Street was the technical manager for Diamond Shamrock when I met him nearly 30 years ago. He was a good poker player, a former chairman of the STS, and he encouraged his engineers to be active in the STS-AICHE.

The STS and National need more men of his stature. Who will fill his shoes?

It might be a very good idea to encourage young engineers to join and attend AICHE. To learn and develop. We will try to make them welcome. We will try to make you welcome as well. Most of them will ripen in less than 30 years.

PS You could start by coming this month to meet Carter White, a PhD chemist and a patent attorney.

PSS Thanks to Richard Willson's Student Night and Jim Morris's Spring Distillation Symposium, we had 60 college students at the dinner meeting and 170 attendees including students at the Distillation Symposium last month.

## From the Editor

Jim Morris

Dr. Dianne Dorland, 2003 National AIChE President, started her e-mail to the membership this past month "You may have recently heard about the erosion of AIChE's financial health; in fact, the possibility of insolvency within a year." As she correctly pointed out at the April dinner meeting, she was dealt the hand by others. She is asking for ideas from the membership to make the Institute a continuing vital force in our profession. For financial details and member comments, go to [www.aiche.org/changes](http://www.aiche.org/changes) on the internet. At the dinner meeting, we had a kind of "focus group" series of choices that included merging with another society, sharing backroom services, and eliminating the education function. It seemed that most every one wanted continued independence, especially when one considers that Chemical Engineers are the highest-paid engineering discipline.

Instead of this approach, we need a hard-nosed listing of the services provided by AIChE, with an assessment of which are critical member services needed to continue as an independent institute. Then a revenue-cost analysis of each of the other services and new directions that are non-essential should be made, to apply the tourniquet in the right places. Where did our contributions of the past century, and the \$9MM from the sale of our part of the United Engineering Center (across from the U. N.) disappear? High on the list of items to be cut should be the costly part of the website and designer e-mail blasts, and the highest rent digs in the United States, 3 Park Avenue in New York City. Breaking the lease based on the decline in real estate values after 9/11 should be a real consideration. Our

*Continued on page 5*

## Workshops Announcements – detailed information

### Process Safety Management

Speaker:

**Mr. Jack Vernon**

Manager, ABS Consulting  
Clear Lake Office and the  
Houston Process Safety Group

Subject:

***"The State of PSM in  
Industry—A Consultant's  
View"***

In 1992, the Process Safety Standard was issued; prior to that the American Petroleum Institute issued RP 750. Industry staffed up and put some of its best people into the fray. What has happened since then, what is the state of the industry. Are the best people still in process safety? What is the status of the consultants? Is compliance all that is necessary or is good practice and the prevention of catastrophic events necessary?

Jack Vernon is the manager of ABS Consulting's Clear Lake Office and the Houston Process Safety Group. Mr. Vernon

is a professional engineer in Texas. He has been involved in the prevention of catastrophic events since graduating from Texas A&M in 1976 in Industrial Engineering specializing in System Safety Engineering. Mr. Vernon began consulting in process safety in 1989.

Contact:

Jack Chosnek

(281) 538-0220

E-Mail: JC@knowledge1.net

### Process Engineering / Plant Operations

Speaker:

**Mr. Allen Fris**

Sales Engineer  
Graham Corporation  
Houston, TX

Subject:

***"Vacuum System Selection  
and Operation"***

The proper selection of vacuum equipment requires a general understanding of the different capabilities, operating principles, and performance characteristics of each type of unit. One must also understand how suction load composition, available utilities, maintenance plans, and water treatment concerns can impact the selection process. Ejectors, eductors, thermocompressors, liquid ring pumps, dry pumps, hybrid systems, and condensers can all be used to produce vacuum. This presentation will provide the specifying engineer with a good working knowledge of each type of vacuum producing equipment and an understanding of the basis for the technology selection.

Vacuum system design software will be briefly reviewed and supplied. The software produces equipment selections, data sheets, and drawings for steam jet ejectors, thermocompressors, liquid ring vacuum pumps, and hybrid systems. Other powerful calculation features are included in the software.

Allen Fris is a Sales Engineer for Graham Corporation (designers and manufacturers of

vacuum and heat transfer equipment for process industries throughout the world), and previously with The Trane Company in St. Louis, MO. Allen has specified, sold, and serviced vacuum and heat transfer equipment for more than eighteen years. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Houston and his graduate degree from Texas A&M University. Allen frequently works with E&C firms and end users to properly apply vacuum and heat transfer technology in their processes. He is also available to conduct free, in-house product or troubleshooting seminars at your plant or office.

Contacts: Jim Morris

281-358-7986

ejmorris@vonl.com

Steve Haynie

713-336-5221

Steve.Haynie@Equistarchem.com

David Karesh

832-351-6944

david.karesh@jacobs.com

## Texas Technology Showcase

March 2003



Alan Rossiter and Steve Jordan discuss STS-AICHE with a visitor at our booth. Photos from the Texas Technology Showcase at the Radisson Hotel Astrodome.



## Workshops Announcements – detailed information

### CAST Workshop

Speaker:

**Dr. Heshmat Massah,**  
Senior Account Manager,  
Fluent, Inc.

Subject:

***“Application of  
Computational Fluid  
Dynamics (CFD) in the  
Chemical Process Industry”***

CFD is playing an increasingly important role in today's industry. The increase in CFD usage in industry is fueled by both advances in CFD technology and advances in PC technology. CFD provides a virtual lab for trouble shooting, product design and development, improving efficiencies and reducing operating costs in a variety of processes that involve fluid flow, heat transfer and associated phenomena. The fundamentals of CFD will be discussed. Applications of CFD to a broad range of processes in the Chemical Process Industry includes:

- burners, heaters and heat exchangers (combustion, convective, conductive and radiation heat transfer)
- stirred tank reactors (mixing, blending, reactions, solid suspension, gas dispersion, crystallization, polymerization, scale up, scale down,...)
- other reactors including packed bed, fluidized bed and circulating
- fluidized bed reactors (flow distribution, dead spots and hot spots)
- safety and environmental issues (pollution dispersion, gas leak dispersion and clean room flow)
- flow control devices such as valves and flow meters (flow patterns and erosion)
- Polymer equipment (extrusion, die design,...)

A demo of recent advances in CFD technology will be presented. These advances allow you to apply CFD to some of your processes with virtually no learning curve and only a few minutes of engineering time. An open discussion of questions will follow.

Dr. Heshmat Massah graduated in 1993 with a PhD degree from University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign. His PhD thesis, under Professor Hanratty, was on the mechanism of drag reduction in turbulent flows through the addition of polymers. Dr. Massah spent 2-1/2 years as a post doctoral researcher at Carnegie Mellon University measuring particle-wall collision properties applied to gas-solid flows in FCC units. He has been with Fluent since 1996 as developer, support engineer, sales engineer and most recently as a senior account manager. At Fluent, Dr. Massah has focused on simulation of multiphase flows in various process units.

#### Contacts:

Shane Tierling  
713-753-3692  
shane.tierling@halliburton.com

John Cheng  
281-604-3294  
john.cheng@basell.com

## **University of Houston Department of Chemical Engineering Undergraduate Program 50th Anniversary & 2003 Seniors Dinner**

**Friday, May 2, 2003**

**Social 6:00 pm, Dinner 7:00 pm**

**University Hilton Hotel**

**Entrance One (off Spur 5/Calhoun)**

**Dinner Cost: \$25.00**

**R.S.V.P. by April 28 at 713-743-4300**

## Spring Distillation Symposium • April 3, 2003

Who says chemical engineers in the mainline chemical process industry won't come out to meetings when an excellent educational opportunity is presented at an affordable cost? We had a "barn-burner" of a Spring Distillation Symposium, with more than 170 in attendance, that required attendees to leave work early to attend! The meeting room was very professionally set-up by the Radisson Hotel Astrodome and our six exhibitors, ACS, AspenTech, Chemstations, Koch-Glitsch, Sulzer, and Tru-Tec Services. Scenes from the Distillation Symposium follow on pages 6 and 7. Page 8 shows our corporate sponsors' logos. One can get an idea of the magnitude of the Spring Distillation Symposium by viewing these pages.

Of course the main draw was Henry Kister of Fluor Daniel, but the other speakers were equally excellent and of national prominence – Drs. Kunesh, Cox, and Waldschafft. The symposium would not have been possible without the volunteer efforts of Steve Moseley, Shane Tierling, John Cheng, David Karesh, Steve Haynie, Dave Silarski, Jim Murphy, and Kim Dixon. Special thanks to Fluor Daniel and Kellogg Brown & Root – Halliburton for the loan of PC's and projectors and the services of their employees – Shane Tierling, Henry Kister and Steve Moseley.

As Dan Summers of Sulzer reflected, if he had only had the same audience at his paper presented in New Orleans the day before. The Distillation Session at the National meeting had between 60 and 75 in attendance, without the exhibits. There is a definite thirst for knowledge in Houston, bypassed from the National meetings through at least 2007.

Steve Haynie of Equistar made a few key observations:

- 1) By focusing on the major area employers and their process managers to forward the announcements to their personnel, additional credibility was given to the STS symposium.
- 2) The timing and duration of the symposium was just right in today's harried environment. Quality time was not lost in the course of receiving a good overview of the subject matter.
- 3) The symposium generated inquiries at Equistar about membership in AIChE, and what employer support was available.

We netted significant funds for the STS Educational Programs going forward. Special thanks to the membership who attended, in addition to the volunteers and sponsors. Maybe we can do this again next year!

*Jim Morris*

Position 1 - Education

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### From The Editor - Continued from page 2

employers, the chemical and petroleum operating companies and the major E&C firms, had a mass exodus from New York two to three decades ago. Why did our professional society remain in New York, and what ever happened to the idea of a United Engineering Center? A good "Lessons Learned" session is called for, from both academia and industry, to prevent "no fault-no blame" mistakes from happening again. Your input is sorely needed, so visit the National website and provide the necessary ideas to survive this very real crisis in your professional society, AIChE.

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## YOUNG MEMBERS REGIONAL MEETING 22 MAY 2003

Join us May 22 for the next Young Members Regional Meeting sponsored by Praxair! Get a FREE DINNER and learn how industrial gases are manufactured and their many uses in industrial facilities. Bring a business card to enter the door prize drawing. Please RSVP (281-228-4448 or [wcyoun@solutia.com](mailto:wcyoun@solutia.com)) by May 20 so we know how much food to order. See below for times and directions:

**5:30PM:** Social/networking & optional tour of the pipeline control center

**6:00PM:** Presentation on cryogenic air separation and industrial gas uses

**6:15PM:** Dinner

A site driving tour will be offered after dinner for those interested.

The street address is 622 Tidal Rd, Deer Park, 77536. From either the East or the West on Highway 225, take the Tidal Rd exit. There are signal lights on the service road at Tidal Rd. Turn onto Tidal Road and go North. (Tidal Rd ends at 225 so heading South is not an option). Praxair will be on the right, within a half mile of Highway 225. Park in the office lot, which is outside the fence, and come into the office building.

We hope to see you there!

**Wendy Young • Young Members Chair**  
AIChE - South Texas Section  
281-228-4448

**Chemstations, Inc.**, makers of the CHEMCAD Suite of Chemical Process Simulation software, offers free use of its products to unemployed members of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Qualified members will have full access to the software for a 30-day period in which to build or 'brush up' their skills with process simulation. An online discussion forum at Chemstations' website, [www.chemstations.net](http://www.chemstations.net), is available to help users learn the software and discuss applications.

The offer is made in conjunction with the **Career Services** department of the **AIChE** and is open to members who have registered as unemployed with the organization. Unemployed chemical engineers should contact Herb Scheftel, of the AIChE, at [herbs@aiiche.org](mailto:herbs@aiiche.org) to learn more about and sign up for the program. To join the AIChE, visit <http://www.aiiche.org> or call (800) 242-4636.



## Spring Distillation Symposium April 3, 2003



Packed house of 170 plus attendees assembling for the Spring Distillation Symposium.



Tom Ognisty, Mark Neuman, and Alisa Schoppe discuss ACS equipment equipment with an attendee.



Oliver Wahnschafft (speaker) and Ven Pinjala of AspenTech with Merrill Galloway of SABIC.



Koch-Glitsch Exhibit, including valve and VG-10 Fixed Valve and Nye trays, FLEXIGRID packing and Intalox IMPP packing.



Dan Summers and Kevin Bennett discuss Sulzer products



Izzy Perez of Codeware and Nathan Massey of Chemstations, with the TruTec exhibit in the background.



Henry Kister and his top ten list of distillation column malfunctions.



Henry Kister autographing textbooks with Ken Cox, speaker, in background talking to Will Walters of SABIC and an unidentified attendee.



Freeman Self, Daryl Hanson and John McLean.

# JOIN AICHE AND THE SOUTH TEXAS SECTION TODAY!



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# JUNE 5 STS-AICHE HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL TRIP

## SECURITY NOTICE

*Because of the increased security requirements at the Port of Houston, the annual STS-AICHE Houston Ship Channel Trip is subject to cancellation at the last minute by the Port of Houston Authority. If this happens, we will notify those with reservations and place a notice on our Web site, <http://www.sts-aiche.org/>. Your understanding of this situation is appreciated.*

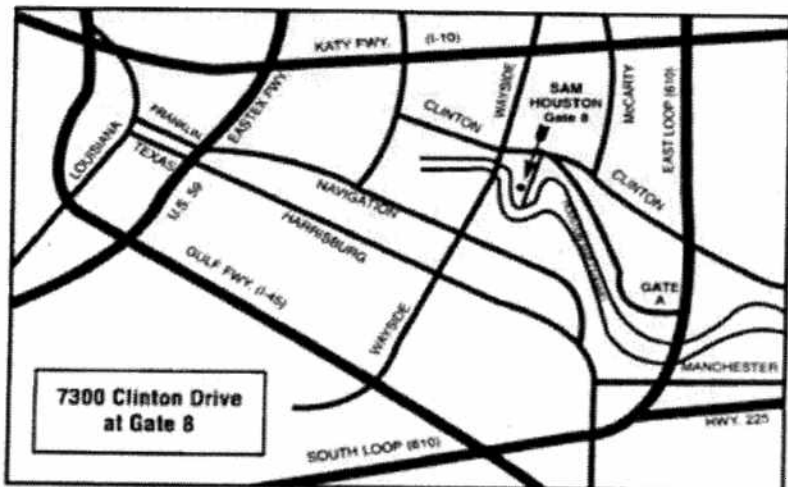
Once again, the South Texas Section will journey down the Houston Ship Channel in the fully air-conditioned M/V Sam Houston on the evening of Thursday, June 5. The M/V Sam Houston will leave the dock at 6:00 PM sharp and return to the dock at approximately 8:00 PM.

Barbecue and free beverages will be served on the trip which is intended to be enjoyed by one and all, so please bring your spouse or significant other. Lenox Barbecue will again be providing beef, chicken and rib barbecue dinners with all the fixings including beans, potato salad, cole slaw, pickles, and lots of jalapenos plus dessert for those who are still hungry. Sorry, but because the trip is intended for a technical organization, no children under the age of 16 are allowed. The cost of the trip, the barbecue, and the beverages (open bar) is only \$10.00. Because of the popularity of this annual trip, we regret that must impose a limit of only two (2) people per reservation.

The Houston Ship Channel is the "aorta" of the area's chemical industry with more than 50 chemical processing facilities located along either side "pumping" their products into commerce around the world. The ship channel has more than 50% of the nation's basic petrochemical manufacturing capacity and nearly 50% of the capacity of first stage derivatives - almost three times larger than its closest competitor. Each year, port activity has a three billion dollar impact on the Houston economy. The list of companies that are located along the Houston Ship Channel reads like a who's who of the chemical process and refining industries. The Port of Houston is the largest port in the nation for foreign tonnage and is directly responsible for more than 75,000 jobs plus another 130,000 related jobs in the Houston/Harris County area not including those who work in the refineries, chemical plants and petrochemical complexes that line the Houston Ship Channel.

Reservations are required for the trip since the M/V Sam Houston can take only 70 people. Please make your reservation by either calling the STS-AICHE reservations phone at 713-295-4847 or by logging onto the STS-AICHE Web site at <http://www.sts-aiche.org/> and following the links to the STS-AICHE Houston Ship Channel Trip to make your reservation at any time from the night of the May 1 STS-AICHE dinner meeting until 2:00 PM, Tuesday, June 3.

Reservations are limited two individuals per reservation, one of whom must be a members of the STS-AICHE. Please include the names and the telephone numbers or e-mail addresses for yourself and your guest, and your AICHE membership number with your reservation so we can confirm your reservation or notify you in the event security levels cause the trip to be cancelled (see the security notice above). Reservations are on a first come, first serve basis; however, we will maintain a standby list in case of cancellations. Remember: reservations will be accepted at the Thursday, May 1, STS-AICHE monthly dinner meeting before the website is opened for reservations. We hope to see you on board the M/V Sam Houston when we set sail..



## DIRECTIONS (See the map on the left.)

The parking lot access is through Gate 8 of the Port of Houston, 7300 Clinton Drive. Exit I-10 (Baytown East Freeway) at McCarty and proceed south on McCarty to Clinton Drive. Turn right on Clinton and proceed west to Gate 8, which has a signal light and is just before Wayside. Turn left and enter Gate 8, then proceed to the pavilion at the Turning Basin, staying to the right. Once there, park in the parking lot and join us on board the M/V Sam Houston.

**DO NOT EXIT WAYSIDE SOUTHBOUND, AS THERE IS NO CONNECTION TO CLINTON.**



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### DINNER MEETING

**June 5, 2003**

Port Authority Ship Channel Cruise

(Catered by Lennox Barbecue)

**September 4, 2003**

"Chem and Bio Weapons Detectors from 3D Tissue Culture"

Speaker: **Dr Adam Capitano**, University of Houston

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**May 5-8, 2003**

Offshore Technology Conference

Annual Technical Meeting to be Announced.

**May 22, 2003**

Young Members Regional Meeting, PraxAir

See announcement on page 3.

**September 20, 2003**

Annual Technical Meeting, University of Houston

See Website for updates.

**October 4, 2003**

Second Annual 2003 Fall Golf Tournament and  
Octobeerfest, Southwyck Golf Club, Pearland, Texas  
Tee Time 1:30 PM.



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### MEMBERSHIP FORM

#### AIChE's South Texas Section

What have you done today as a professional chemical engineer to aid your fellow citizen or yourself? Join us and you'll be working with topflight, dedicated people with an unprecedented opportunity to exchange ideas and information in one of the fastest-growing fields of engineering. **Can you afford not to participate?**

Fill out the form below and mail to:

**Jerry Gresham • Gresham & Gresham**

P. O. Box 820888 • Houston, Texas 77282

Ph.(713) 780-1000

I wish to join the South Texas Section of AIChE.

☐ My \$12.00 is enclosed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

National Member of AIChE? YES ☐ NO ☐

## GDS Engineers

*Petrochemical • Refining • Industrial*

GDS is a 500 person engineering and construction management firm, with offices in Houston, Baytown, and Texas City. We perform front end and detailed design on projects up to \$100 MM TIC for refineries, petrochemical, polymers, and gas processing units.

The Process engineering department consists of 50 engineers, with an average of 20 years experience with E&C and operating companies. Process engineering activities include:

- Heat and material balance
- PFD generation
- Major equipment specification
- Process simulation, including SimSci Provision, Hysys, and Aspen.
- Unit debottlenecking and optimization studies
- Tower and vessel design
- Heat exchanger design
- Process troubleshooting
- Flare/relief system analysis, including DIERS sizing
- System hydraulics
- Environmental consulting, including NOx reduction.
- Process hazards analysis (HAZOP, etc.)

For information, please contact

Mike Najarian, P.E., process engineering manager

ph: 713-667-9162 • fax: 713-667-9241

email: [mike.najarian@gdseng.com](mailto:mike.najarian@gdseng.com)

The GDS website is: [www.gdseng.com](http://www.gdseng.com)



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## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

### **2003 Offshore Technology Conference May 5, 6, 7, & 8, 2003**

The South Texas Section, A.I.Ch.E., has again been selected to staff one of the OTC "Conduct" Committees. We have been asked to provide personnel for the Proceedings Distribution Committee. Volunteers are also needed to help out with the Registration Committee and National AIChE's booth in the lobby.

For agreeing to serve as a member of the "Conduct" Committee by attending an orientation session on Friday, May 2, (time & location to be announced) and serving as either a Proceedings Distribution or Registration Conduct Committee member for one-half (1/2) day; each volunteer.

will receive:

1. A complimentary OTC Registration
2. A complimentary Parking Pass for the OTC
3. A Reserved Parking Place the day of your Conduct Committee assignment.

#### **For Additional Information; please contact:**

Tom Menn  
281-485-3719

or

Dave Pay  
(713) 321-4792  
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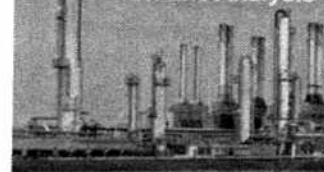


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**2003 South Texas Section, AIChE, Annual Technical Meeting  
Planning Is Happening NOW!**

***JOIN THE PLANNING TEAM***

**Conference Planning and Administration**

- Communications
- Facilities
- Sponsorships
- Vendor Expo
- Administration
- Programs
- Registration
- Proceedings
- Budgeting & Finance
- Conference Evaluation

**Conference Marketing**

- Conference Evaluation Planning
- Conference Evaluation Production of Materials

On-site volunteers during the ATM

**Be a part of the Conference Team and join your fellow Section members in making the 2003 Annual Technical Meeting a success!**

**Expand your Network! Exercise your skills!  
Gain new skills by volunteering in new areas!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO VOLUNTEER  
FOR ONE OF THE POSITIONS ABOVE CONTACT**

**Charles Waligura 713-560-3771 • Cwalil23@aol.com**