

September 2, 2010 (The Woodlands, TX)

Ken Cox, Chair-Elect for the section, joined South Texas AIChE's newly formed North Houston group on September 2 in The Woodlands for the first ever remote meeting. Group members in North Houston socialized amongst themselves eating a light, catered dinner until joining the larger STS-AIChE group remotely via webcast. The technical broadcast titled, "All You Ever Wanted to Know about Oil Well Blowouts but Were Afraid to Ask," went well except for a substandard audio feed. Meeting organizers have identified the problems and will have them resolved before the next meeting in October.

The Woodlands residents Dave Keyes and Connie Carroll initialized the effort to set up the North Houston/Woodlands group with an inquiry into alternate ways to meet the South Texas Section's large geographical challenges. Initial momentum and directional-focus was generated by a mid-May meeting of North Houston area residents with Alan Rossiter, current STS-AIChE Chair, and Carol Schmidt, our Secretary. Alan Rossiter, Dave Keyes, Connie Carroll and Chris Tagoe (past chair and also a resident of The Woodlands) performed webcast testing and meeting organization. Steve Arendt graciously offered the offices of his company, ABS Consulting, as a potential venue for the first meeting. The September meeting, however, was held at The Lone Star College campus in The Woodlands due to full year venue availability and a location that was more central for the group as a whole. Seventeen members, in addition to the organizers, attended this first meeting in The Woodlands. Attendees represented the cities of Spring, Kingwood, Conroe and The Woodlands development.

Members from North Houston and The Woodlands have spearheaded the development of the webcast/satellite meeting concept. However, we were also glad to welcome a group of eight Texas A&M students who also had their own meeting and joined the webcast on September 2. AIChE's National organization also offered valuable assistance and critical support. Thanks to all who worked to test out this novel concept and to a very understanding first audience. We look forward to adding more venues for satellite meetings in the months ahead.