

# LEHA Perspectives

*JUNE, 2000*

*Linda Gipson & Marian Aguillard, Editors*

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Michael Vince, President

It seems as though we just met in Lafayette for our 2000 Annual Educational Conference, but here we are in mid June already! My wishes for a safe summer season for all our members and their families!

As I write this, the 2000 NEHA conference is just days away. Our own James Balsamo is running for the position of Second Vice-President on the NEHA Board, and I am sure that you all join with me in a show of support for him (of course by the time you read this, Jim may well be victorious in the election).

As you know, plans are underway for our 2001 Conference that will be held in New Orleans. Ed Flynn and the members of his committee have been working very hard on the conference, and we have an impressive agenda taking shape. This conference may bring LEHA to the higher plane of recognition among health and environmental professionals that we have been trying to achieve for some time now. Stay tuned to the web site for more conference information as it develops.

Along the same line, please take an opportunity to go visit our web site at LEHA.net. There is a place on the site for you to register as a member. We hope to use our mailing list to send newsletters electronically in the future, so it would be very helpful if you would add your email information to the list. Any comments on

the site should go to the webmaster. If you have pictures associated with LEHA that might be of interest, I know that Sharon Parker would love to get some to place on the page.

I know that many of our governmental membership are anxiously awaiting word on the state budget, as we brace ourselves for the possible cuts to many of our programs. As we face these hurdles, let's continue to work together and support each other to maintain and enhance the quality of public health and our environment.





**MONEY MATTERS  
FROM THE  
TREASURER –**  
By George P. Gullett

A breakdown of the income and expenditures as of May 18, 2000 is as follows:

|                                    |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Balance as of July 1, 1999         | \$4,317         |
| Income                             |                 |
| 2000 Conference                    | \$9,400         |
| 2001 Conference                    | \$3,750         |
| 2000 Workshop                      | \$300           |
| Membership                         | \$2,000         |
| Miscellaneous                      | <u>\$18</u>     |
| Total Income                       | \$15,468        |
| Expenditures                       |                 |
| 2000 Conference                    | \$8,704         |
| 2001 Conference                    | \$10            |
| 2000 Workshop                      | \$286           |
| Paint Swap (HW Day)                | \$78            |
| NEHA Conference                    | \$920           |
| Network                            | \$795           |
| Miscellaneous                      | <u>\$309</u>    |
| Total Expenses                     | \$11,102        |
| Cash Balance                       | \$8,683         |
| Frank L. Dautriel Scholarship Fund |                 |
| Interest                           | \$3,421         |
| Donations/Transfer                 | \$1,600         |
| 2 Scholarships@ \$800              | -\$1,600        |
| Federal Mortgage                   | <u>\$23,164</u> |
| Total                              | \$26,585        |



**OUTREACH UPDATE**  
by Jay Pecot

LEHA again provided the refreshments for the volunteers who worked the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day in Baton Rouge.

Please let Jay Pecot know of any upcoming opportunities to spread the word about LEHA.



**Louisiana Environmental Leadership  
Program  
Governor's 2000 Environmental  
Leadership Awards  
by Jodi G. Miller, Liaison**

Each year, the Louisiana Environmental Leadership (LaELP) Program accepts applications for the Governor's Environmental Leadership Awards.

This program recognizes activities undertaken by Louisiana companies, municipalities, and government facilities that demonstrate environmental leadership through innovative and voluntary projects which improve environmental performance and reach out to communities where these facilities are located.

In June 2000, Governor Mike Foster will present fifteen awards to Louisiana companies for the following:

**Pollution Prevention Achievement  
Community Outreach Achievement**



**IN SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE**

Linda Gipson, Marian U. Aguiard and Brenda Coon, Education Committee

We hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter. Anyone interested in assisting, participating or otherwise helping the Education Committee is welcome. Please contact Brenda Coon to volunteer or offer suggestions at 765-0126.



# THE SUGARCANE BURNING ISSUE:

BY  
ROBERT FREEMAN

In Louisiana this past year 480,000 acres of sugarcane were grown with 450,000 acres being harvested for grinding, having 30,000 acres used for seed cane. The harvest period runs from late September to early January.

The majority of the cane in Louisiana is still being harvested by the conventional whole stalk method. This method cuts the top and bottom of the cane stalk and then it is laid across the row. The cane is then burned which creates a lot of smoke and ash near the burn site.

In the last five years new technology has created the billet harvesting method. This method was supposed to eliminate the need for burning. The billet harvesting machine cuts the cane into six to eight inch billets, and a large fan blows the leaves off the billets. The residue is blown out the rear of the cutter and deposited on top of the row. The clean billet cane, by way of conveyor belt, is loaded into carts following the cutter. Residue in the field from the leaves are later burned, creating smoke problems long after the harvest is over. This entire residue, if left in the field, causes several problems for the farmers. This residue retains moisture leading to poor germination and rotting of the sugarcane stubble. It also contributes to poor drainage in the field and problems with cultivation.

A new cane variety (384) that produces high yields has created a dilemma for the billet harvester. This variety has leaves that are more securely attached than the older less productive varieties. The farmers were being penalized for transporting leaves to the mill. They solved the problem by burning the cane standing up. This method created huge problems. When the cane was burned standing, the fire was much hotter and faster burning than the conventional method, creating high rising plumes of smoke and ash. The ash would ascend high into the atmosphere and drop out miles away from the source. This created problems in areas that were never before affected by sugarcane burning. The

public outcry was so great that the La Department of Agriculture decided to conduct Certified Prescribe Burn Classes for the farmers. These classes will have guidelines to help farmers mitigate the nuisance of cane burning.

Even though the Agricultural Industry has developed improved methods of harvesting and more productive varieties of sugarcane, environmental challenges still face the farming community.



**BATTING 2000**



**CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**



**VISIT US AT LEHA.NET**

**“LEHA 2001: AN  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
ODYSSEY”**

**LEHA CONFERENCE SET FOR  
NEW ORLEANS  
JAN 30 – FEB 1, 2001**

The Professional Development Committee has hit the ground running for the 2001 LEHA Conference. The hotel has been selected, keynote speakers have been confirmed and we even have sponsors helping us out with their donations. We will be meeting at the Doubletree Hotel on Canal Street near the casino and the French Quarter. Keynote speakers will be **Jeff Wheelwright and Dorothy Bowers**. Jeff will be showing us environmental issues from journalists’ perspective. Jeff is the author of “Degrees of Disaster,” about Prince William Sound and the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Dorothy is commissioner of the Pew Environmental Health Commission and will be updating us on that groups activities. Dorothy is a founding member of Global Environmental Management Initiative and is chairman of the ISO sub-committee on Environmental Performance Evaluation. Planning is underway for at least one and perhaps 2 pre-conference workshops.

Other speakers will be looking at cancer and childhood health, water quality, health/sanitation and air quality issues. We also hope to have a session on using the Internet to promote environmental health.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW to attend the states’ premier environmental health conference.



**NOTICES**

The next board meeting will be Thursday, September 21, 2000 at 9:00 a.m. at the DEQ Headquarters Building, 6th Floor Conference Room, on Bluebonnet in Baton Rouge. Any one from the general membership may attend the board meeting so mark your calendars.

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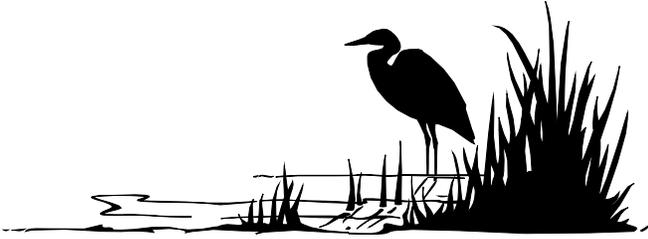
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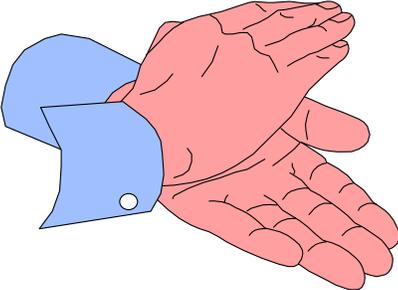
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**MEMBER APPLICATION**

**"Batting 2000" conference photos**



The door to environmental information is  
just a click away at LEHA.net.

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

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