

## **News from the NC Ellis Cannady Chapter, IAEI**

### **Presidential Views**

First let me say thanks to all our members, officers, executive board, and partners for all their devotion to our Chapter's and Industry's betterment. The progress that continues in our endeavors inspires me to see if we can do more.

In the past few years it seems we've embarked on a new age in attitudes, strategies, methodologies and expectations, and they require ever quickening responses that tend to pressurize our days without limit. Maybe each generation has felt this as time has gone on (yes I'm getting older, seven grandchildren older). The comfort for me is, those who blazed the trails before us succeeded, and I (you, we) don't have to do it alone. In fact we can't succeed alone, and I know of no better place to spend my professional energy and talent than in this association with our industry partners.

We continue to increase our membership and our participation in educational opportunities, and contribute to the code and legislation that affect us and our friends in our day to day businesses and living. Isn't it amazing how we all can be affected by a small group focused on their/our issues!

They, you and I bear the responsibility to work things out for the good of all. Let's always remember our actions will have an effect, either good or bad, on the others around us. Let us make sure we expend ourselves on those for the good of all.

Again,  
Thanks to all,  
*Gary Mullis, Chapter President*

### **Industry Events**

#### **NCAEC Annual Tradeshow & Convention**

July 19-22  
Atlantic Beach, NC

#### **IAEI Southern Section Meeting**

October 6-11, 2007  
Florence, AL

#### **Annual NC IAEI Chapter Meeting**

November 4-6, 2007  
University Hilton, Charlotte, NC

### **New Faces and Places**

John West, formerly of Mecklenburg County electrical inspections, is now working in the Plans Review Department for Mecklenburg County. Our friends in the Mecklenburg County plans review office welcome John!

## Behind the Scenes

Our Awards Committee is chaired by Mitchell Bryant, and the committee members are James Kennedy Jr., Curtis Kennedy, Mickey Shuskey, Archie Case Jr. and Gerald Harvell. This committee has a difficult job, because every year we have many chapter members that deserve awards. Our chapter awards include: Inspector of the year, Associate of the year, and the Richard B. Boyd, Jr. Award. In some years, the chapter also presents the Distinguished Service Award. The North Carolina Electrical Inspector of the year award is presented to an outstanding electrical inspector, based on submittals to this committee and confirmation by the NC Ellis Cannady Chapter IAEI Board of Directors. The Richard B. Boyd, Jr. Award is to be presented on a yearly basis to the electrical inspector who is or has been an inspector of the International Association of Electrical Inspectors for a minimum of ten years, and has performed all tasks assigned in an outstanding and distinguished manner. Further, the recipient must have contributed materially to the success and growth of the North Carolina Ellis Cannady Chapter, IAEI, and displayed qualities of leadership, dedication, strength, energy, vitality, and knowledge. The Chapter Associate Member of the Year Award is presented on a yearly basis to an associate member that has outstandingly contributed materially to the success and growth of the NC IAEI.

If you have any candidates you would like to recommend for these awards, please contact our committee chairman Mitchell Bryant. Visit our website [www.nciaei.org](http://www.nciaei.org) and go to the "Committees" page for Mitchell's e-mail address, or use our form on the "Contact Us" page. If you don't have access to e-mail or the internet, contact any chapter member on the Awards Committee, or have another chapter member get in touch with them. Thanks to the Awards Committee for all you hard work!

## Product Safety

**"Listing and Labeling" is Not the Issue.** Having equipment / machinery inspected and Labeled by a test laboratory is only one of three options available to an AHJ. The real issue is hidden hazards that non-approved equipment represents. While the testing laboratory option is the most widely used, the other options are also acceptable. This is the text from the NCBCC's Emergency Ruling for industrial machinery:

10.10 Approval. The Authority Having Jurisdiction shall approve industrial equipment or industrial machinery by one of the following methods chosen by the owner or owner's agent:

- (1) Approval by a Licensed Professional Engineer registered in the State of North Carolina.
- (2) Listing or Labeling by a Third Party Testing Agency approved by the NC Building Code Council.
- (3) Approval by the local Code Enforcement Official.

**Industrial Machinery – More than just an Electrical Hazard.** Industrial machinery installations affect all inspection disciplines and all building trades. For example, an industrial machinery system (Left un-inspected) could represent a fire hazard when product / system fire suppression systems are not in place or not properly designed for the machinery system. There could be toxic fumes present or poorly designed ventilation systems. Also, the machinery system could contain gas connections and components well beyond the primary connection that would be inspected by a mechanical inspector. The industrial machinery could be of a design that would require an area to be classed for hazardous location.

## **Sick, Shut-in and Bereaved**

**Mark Tighe**, Winston-Salem/ Forsyth County Senior Electrical Inspector has been out of work for the past 16 weeks. After having surgeries to repair his gastro-intestinal tract, he was left with a open hole in his stomach the size of a football. There is a long recovery period before his next required surgery in October. This next required surgery is just as serious as the first, with a long recovery period. Mark is doing much better every day, even though he still has a long, long way to go. He has lost a lot of weight, he lacks stamina, and he is often nauseated and weak, but has a good outlook. July will mark the half way point of his initial recovery period. We will continue to try and find ways to support Mark, both as a friend and as a fellow inspector. He knows that his friends are trying to help him all they can, and he knows that God is showing him just how important his life is. Let us Pray for his quick recovery.

**Gerald Keathley** from Charlotte has lost his battle with cancer. He passed away May 26, 2007. Gerald's career in the electrical field lasted for more than 40 years. He worked for a number of electrical contractors before taking a job as electrical inspector for the city of Charlotte. Gerald was dedicated to improving the trade. He taught many of the apprenticeship classes over the years that help prepare students for their rolls in the electrical trade. In 1985 he was promoted to Assistant Chief Electrical Inspector and held that position until he was promoted to Chief Electrical Inspector in 1990. Gerald retired in 1994; his career with Mecklenburg County lasted for 30 years.

Gerald served the Ellis Cannady Chapter working on many committees and was Chapter Chairman in 1991-92.

He served his country in the US Navy for 4 years, and then continued to serve us for over 20 years in the Navy Reserve.

Please keep the Keathley family in your thoughts and prayers.

## **Safety Reminder**

As Inspectors and safety professionals, we have an obligation to protect the public. It's easy to forget that most people are not aware of the potential dangers that are present in the workplace - hiding inside equipment and machinery, behind doors to mechanical and electrical rooms, on construction sites.

OSHA relies on us to help enforce all the workplace safety laws that apply to keeping our citizens safe. If a business owner has non-certified / non-approved equipment in the workplace, it may be a hazard to them and their employees. If an inspector is prevented from asking questions about this equipment / machinery, NC OSHA wants to know about it. Kevin Beauregard, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for the NC Department of Labor, has stated that the NCDL Division of Occupational Safety and Health will cite employers for having non-approved equipment / machinery in the workplace, per 20CFR 1910.303(a). If you have any questions about this, he is available to answer your questions – you can e-mail him: [Kevin.beauregard@nclabor.com](mailto:Kevin.beauregard@nclabor.com).

To report any potentially unsafe conditions in the workplace, there are some options.

1). Go to [www.nclabor.com](http://www.nclabor.com), under “Quick Clicks” on the right-hand side, click on “Safety and Health Complaints”. On this page, you will see the statement: “Anyone who knows about a workplace safety or health hazard may file a complaint, and OSHNC will investigate the concerns reported”. You can file a complaint online.

2). On the left-hand side of the page, are the phone numbers for the Eastern and Western Bureau Chiefs. Tim Childers is the Western Bureau Chief, his number is 336-776-4420. Tom Hayes is the Eastern Bureau Chief, his number is 919-779-8512. Also, you can call the OSH Complaint Desk at 919-807-2796, 919-662-4309, or 800-NC-LABOR (800-625-2267).

If you file a complaint, and do not get a satisfactory result, or do not get information on the results of the compliant / OSHA Inspection, contact us at the NC Ellis Cannady Chapter IA EI. Go to [www.nciaei.org](http://www.nciaei.org) and click on “Contact”, and fill out the form. We will assist you in getting an answer.

Thank you for helping to keep NC workplaces safe!

## **Accidents / Incidents**

**None to Report. Why?** In the previous issues of our newsletter, we’ve been reporting incidents involving workplace injuries and fatalities. Most of these incidents have been directly caused by deficiencies in Industrial Machinery systems. These incidents occur even though our Inspectors are vigilant and our other electrical safety professionals are on the job. For this issue, we have no incidents to report that we’re aware of. This is a testament to the success of our Inspectors in enforcing workplace safety laws and protecting our citizens.

**Fire, Explosions will increase** if the NC Legislature passes Senate Bill 490 through both houses. This tragic legislation is a result of the “Electrically unlearned” in our Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development departments pressuring our Legislators, who chose to listen to lobbyists instead of our electrical and safety experts. Incidents of fire, shock, electrocution and explosion will increase if this legislation becomes law. We will continue to track and report these incidents. In the meantime, those in the safety community will keep trying to educate the public and our legislators, and continue to work together to stop this kind of legislation. If we are not successful in stopping this Bill from becoming law, it will be noted in every newsletter issue when these incidents are a result of this legislation and all those who helped make it law. Let’s try to make sure that is not necessary.

## **Legislative Actions**

### **Senate Bill 490**

#### **Dear Industry Friends and Partners,**

We now have lobbyists undermining our National and State Standards, Codes and Regulations with regards to electrical systems and equipment in North Carolina. They have convinced the Senate that all manufacturers of equipment put safety first, and that they are even acceptable when based on foreign standards and procedures that conflict with our systems.

As electrical professionals we know the entire electrical system must be built to safely handle an imposed fault, short circuit, or overload and that is what our current standards assure. The approval of equipment is currently required by OSHA and State statutes and NCDOL has stated they do not make proactive inspections. A quick trip to the NCECC, IA EI website ([www.nciaei.org](http://www.nciaei.org)) shows us many failures that contradict this current movement to lessen standards.

I’m sure that the efforts of the electrical industry since the late 1800’s have given us the best possible scenario for appropriate safety. The stated goal within our electrical code, “the practical safeguarding of persons and property from the hazards arising from the use of electricity”, and our accompanying standards are the result of intensive study and test by the entire electrical industry. I also find it interesting to note that no recognized electrical expert has spoken on behalf of those in favor of lowering our standards and that in North Carolina these regulations have been in force since the 1930’s. All our current codes and standards are open to every facet of the industry allowing for all to participate and arrive at a consensus for minimum safety regulations. The second largest category of code making participants is the business sector (20%). It is puzzling to me that anyone would wish to accept equipment that is manufactured without sufficient regard to the current standards as evidenced by a recent field evaluation survey showing a non-conformance rate of

78% for unapproved equipment. Most people do not recognize that one small mistake in application can be fatal. Simply crossing two wires within the untested equipment can put voltage on all the metal parts of the equipment and building. If we complete the ground path by touching the equipment and an adjacent grounded surface we become a conductor. As little as 8/1000 of an amp of current can stop the human heart, how can we afford to be less than diligent with our standards and their inherent regard for worker safety?

A statement from a recent newspaper article states that “our inspectors need not be so vigilant” reflects a disregard for the only independent safety officer that can assure the public safety. The inspector has nothing to gain personally and should act, by sworn oath, only to protect our citizens by enforcing current necessary minimum safety regulations. I am of the opinion that our State Motto, “To be rather than to seem”, is of necessity in performing the daily tasks of the inspectors. Having been a contractor before being an inspector I know that we always felt that the inspector was one more confirmation that our work had been done safely and we appreciated sharing the responsibility with the design professionals and the inspectors.

Further I firmly believe that we should balance our economic ventures with reliable standards, not letting the risk of loss of dollars rewrite our safety standards, or cause unnecessary injury to one worker. To suggest higher insurance rates will offset personnel loss, as some have, seems to reflect a disregard for the value we should all put on our quality of life and even life itself. The bottom line of resolution and responsibility seems to be displaced at this time. Why not hold the manufacturers of this equipment responsible to meet the standards instead of the current buyer beware scenario? Would it not seem that those who wish to do business in our State should conform to our standards, or would we like to outsource this responsibility overseas as many of our previously successful endeavors have been. The reality is this is an economic consideration, in a state that has an exceptional recruitment level (top ten in one recent industry recruitment publication). Reports have shown a cost of as little as 1% of the equipment value for testing of un-approved equipment if manufactured to good electrical principals. This to me seems small in relationship to the public good, or even one injury or fatality (there have been several reported in our state where standards were not met).

Many manufacturers can and do make equipment safe for U.S. use through current standards, but many won't (especially imported equipment), because our businesses are buying the equipment, without making conformance a prerequisite, and this allows for unfair competition with those in our state who consistently do the right thing and provide jobs for our friends and families. Let's not jeopardize our good business people by accepting a less than responsible standard for our work places.

I share a concern with many of our state's contractors as to where the legal liability may be placed as this unapproved equipment is connected to our systems. I know of three contractors who have refused to wire any unapproved equipment and I applaud their ethics and responsibility. How could any of us explain to the court, or a widower, that we accepted a known danger in our electrical installation; or even worse that we looked the other way because of financial concerns.

Please join in the fight to defeat Senate Bill 490 in the House. Contact the House Committee on Commerce, your Representative and the entire House to voice your concern and objection.

Sincerely,  
Gary P Mullis,  
President,  
North Carolina Ellis Cannady Chapter,  
International Association of Electrical Inspectors

## **FYI**

**2008 NEC Code books** . 2008 Code books will be available soon. Check our website for updates on the status of the NC adoption of the 2008 NEC. Make sure everybody you know that uses the Code has an

opportunity to have their own copy. Check our website [www.nciaei.org](http://www.nciaei.org) for Code books available, as well as other educational materials and IAEE NC Chapter promotional items.

**NEC Continuing Education Classes for 2007.** Our continuing education classes for 2006-2007 were a great success! Thanks to all those who attended, and a special thanks to our instructors, Danny Thomas, Terry Cromer, Julian Burns, Don Hursey and Gerald Harvell. Thanks also to the Education Committee Chairman Mitchell Bryant, NCBEEC Continuing Education manager Al Parris and Jerry Burch for their help and contributions to the seminar sessions. Visit our chapter website for updates on continuing education. Our next meeting that includes Continuing Education is our annual Chapter meeting in Charlotte, November 4-6.