

Letter from the Chairman – July 2009

Dear Members:

June was another relatively quiet month for the Tallahassee Section, which is normal at this time of the year, but it closed another successful fiscal year for the section. The events can be read about in our earlier newsletters, which are available on the section website, <http://sections.asme.org/tallahassee>.

June 11: The final Executive Committee Meeting of the 2009 fiscal year. The 2010 fiscal year will begin on July 1, for which the Executive Committee will be unchanged.

June 26: Tallahassee Section hosted a Lunch & Learn program, attended by an audience of over 30. The topic was electric vehicles. Our guest speaker was Andre Smith, of Tallahassee Area Electric Vehicle Association (TAEVA). Four locally constructed electric vehicles were displayed for the attendees to examine (see article in this newsletter).

The Executive Committee again thanks those who have participated in the programs we have organized. Your participation is our reward.

Siddhartha Kamath, PE, FY 2010 Chair
Email: kamaths2@asme.org

Visit the Section Web Page for timely updates and notices: <http://sections.asme.org/tallahassee>.

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2009 CALENDAR

July – TBA
August – TBA
September – Students Welcome Back Meeting
October – TBA^x
November – TBA^x
December – TBA^x

^x “Lunch and Learn” locations TBA

TALLAHASSEE SENIOR SECTION

Lunch and Learn – Fri., June 26, 2009

American Society of Mechanical Engineers – Tallahassee Section hosts Tallahassee Area Electric Vehicle Association

By David Byrne

Tallahassee – June 26, 2009 – As if an all-you-can-eat lunch at the Ole Times Country Buffet wasn't enough reason to attend, the three-dozen attendees at the ASME monthly "lunch-and-learn" meeting had the opportunity to hear a technical discussion from TAEVA chapter president Andre Smith and also see a half-dozen or so electric cars, trucks, motorcycles, scooters, and hybrids on display.

Even a couple of the wives showed up.

A mostly technical group of ASME members and Electric car enthusiasts came to learn about the benefits of EVs, learn about converting cars to electric, and express their own opinions – and they definitely had their own opinions of what types of vehicles are best suited for travel, economics, and environmental impacts.

As is typical, the owners of the EVs were happy to show off their handiwork – many had done all the work on their own to convert a standard gasoline car into an efficient, quiet EV. After the lunch, the group went out to the parking lot where the weather was hot (100 deg), but no one seemed to mind – because the cars were too! Some of the notable vehicles were:

- Ford Ranger pickup EV conversion, which was unveiled by City of Tallahassee Fleet Management on {date}, with a nice vinyl logo wrap.
- S-10 pickup, which was also recently converted by the City
- Dodge Caravan – converted by TAEVA president Smith.
- Motorcycle – converted by Bill Desautel, who did all his own welding and machining
- Scooter – shown by Andy Reich, owner of Falcon EV, which is perfectly suitable for rides around town, and the only vehicle at the site that utilized high capacity Lithium-Ion batteries.

Conversation on the hot lot did focus on issues with batteries. All the car-owners recognized the range limitations of the lead-acid batteries they are using. But the current cost of lithium-ions makes building an EV with them far too expensive. Some reports have projected that the cost will be half, or even a third, as much a year from now, and EV owners are looking forward to the opportunity to extend vehicle range. For example, Desautel's motorcycle can run about 20 miles. With lithium-ion batteries, he could make the entire ride from his home in northeast Tallahassee to his job in St. Marks, recharge it there, and ride back home.

EV conversions may be a way to create green jobs while protecting the environment. Smith talked about the possibility of starting local businesses that "recycle" old cars with worn engines and convert them to electric. Sponsorship from local businesses is one way to assist with the cost of battery upgrades. Also, Smith recommended membership in the local chapter as a way to keep up on the latest technology and business ideas. Check TAEVA at www.taeva.org or the Tallahassee ASME at <http://sections.asme.org/tallahassee/>.

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ASME International Tallahassee Section publishes this newsletter six to eight times a year. Members are requested to e-mail newsworthy articles to Doug Jones, Newsletter Editor, jonesd2@asme.org or to Siddhartha Kamath, Chair, kamaths2@asme.org