ASHRAE Arkansas Chapter

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Meetings is at **Cromwell** located at **1300 E 6th Street, Little Rock, AR 72202**

NEXT MEETING

AI in HVAC

Discover the future of data-driven smart buildings, where artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized the built environment, unlocking unparalleled performance and insight. This future entails indoor spaces that achieve new levels of performance, energy efficiency, and occupant comfort through intelligent building systems.

Presented By Erin Rau - January 6th , 2025

Erin Rau is the **North America Digital Service Commercialization Leader** for Trane Technologies. She is responsible for commercializing and supporting all of Trane's new and existing digital offerings throughout the North American sales channels. She also works closely with Product Management and development teams on new functionality needs from the voice of the customer and Trane Associates.

2025-2026 MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 9th

OCTOBER 7th

NOVEMBER 4th

DECEMBER 2nd

JANUARY 6th

FEBRUARY 10th

MARCH 3rd

APRIL 24-26th

REGISTER

FUTURE MEETINGS

DATE	SPEAKER
Feb 10th	Tony Woodard - Chief HVAC Inspector/Code Inspections
Mar 3rd	Panel Discussion with NAWIC
Apr 24-26	CRC Presentations

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REGION OFFICER VISIT

VANESSA FREIDBERG

Vanessa Freidberg's journey with ASHRAE began just after graduating with her mechanical engineering degree. She quickly became involved in chapter activities because of the fun culture and organized team dynamic. She held several leadership roles, including Student Activities, YEA (Young Engineers in ASHRAE), and served the rotational roles for 6 years including Chapter President as part of the Board of Governors (BOG). At the regional and society levels, Vanessa contributed as a YEA Region representative, YEA Ex Com, Certifications, and Planning. She is currently serving as Region 8 Treasurer, leading the Ad Hoc for Emerging Technologies as part of Planning Committee, as well as serves on the Training and Education Committee. In her spare time she loves family time playing outside with her three young kids and wonderful husband. Over her life she has been to 31 countries and truly enjoys finding new adventures anywhere she can.

Her ASHRAE involvement provided her with:

- **Connection:** Building a strong professional network, learning from peers, and opening doors for career growth.
- **Purpose:** Leading her chapter to win the Golden Gavel for the first time in 25 years, demonstrating the power of teamwork and shared goals.
- **Opportunity:** Gaining valuable experiences, from international travel to

Vanessa's ASHRAE story is one of leadership, growth, and making a meaningful impact—both personally and professionally.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Baptist Habitat for Humanity Project

Habitat for Humanity®

New Dates!
January 16th
February 13th
(Shifts from 8AM-12PM)

Location:
8801 Longacre Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205
Signup with following link: https://signup.com/go/prwvMpv

ASHRAE TRAP SHOOT

March 13th
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Contact Ron McCarty for Registration and Sponsorship
ron.mccarty@powers-hvac.com



At The Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation Shooting Sports Complex

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BIG ON LITTLE ROCK

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2026 ASHRAE REGION VIII CRC

Registration Now Open !!!

We're thrilled to announce that registration is officially open for the 2026 ASHRAE Region VIII Chapter Regional Conference (CRC) — hosted right here in Little Rock, Arkansas!

This exciting event will take place **April 23–25, 2026**, bringing together industry professionals, chapter leaders, and ASHRAE members from across the region for an unforgettable weekend of networking, technical sessions, and celebration.

You can **purchase a full weekend ticket** and join us for the entire conference experience here:
Full Weekend Ticket – CRC 2026

New this year, our **Central Arkansas Chapter** members have an exclusive option to attend all social events through a **Social Ticket** — perfect for those who want to enjoy the fellowship, receptions, and evening events without the full conference registration.
Purchase a Social Ticket Here

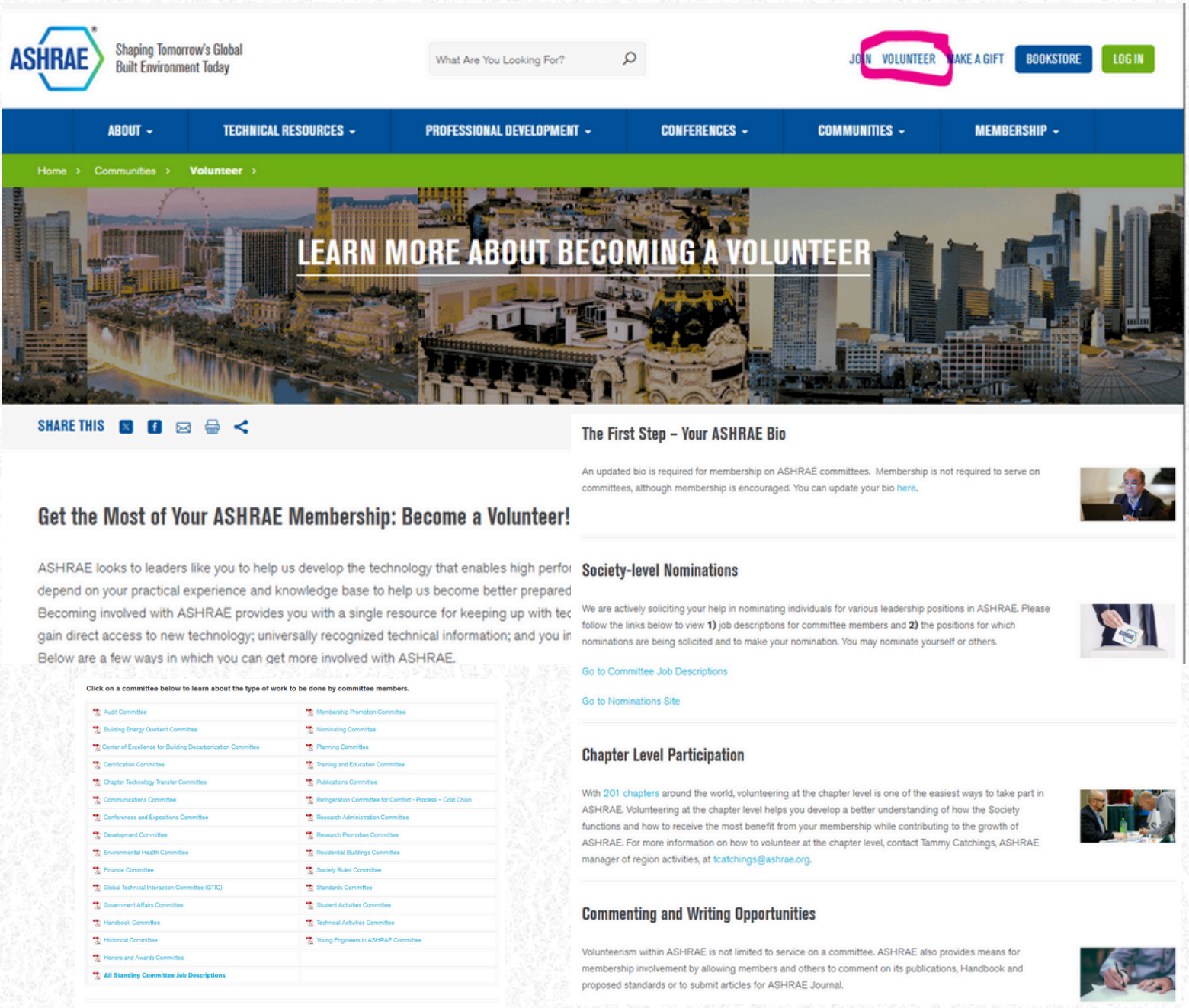
We look forward to showcasing our city and hosting a memorable CRC that's truly **Big on Little Rock!**

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DID YOU KNOW?

See all society level volunteer opportunities on the ASHRAE website under “volunteer”



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Government Affairs Update



n Washington, Sen. John Barrasso introduced legislation to roll back HUD and USDA minimum energy standards for federally financed new housing. Congress also continued FY26 energy and water funding work, and the House Energy and Commerce Committee advanced bills tied to weatherization, building codes, and mechanical insulation, with ASHRAE submitting support letters for the Federal Mechanical Insulation Act and the Weatherization Enhancement and Readiness Act. At DOE, the department announced a reorganization that eliminates EERE, and later moved to rescind its National Definition of a Zero Emissions Building. ASHRAE is also participating in a December 8 congressional briefing on the rapid growth of data centers, including discussion of energy efficiency and Standard 90.4; separately, senators introduced the Liquid Cooling for AI Act focused on evaluating and advancing efficient liquid cooling and heat reuse in data centers.

In state and local updates, Oregon issued an executive order advancing efficiency and electrification, including implementation of a Building Performance Standard program based on ASHRAE Standard 100. Washington, D.C. launched a refrigerant recovery and reclamation pilot, and 21 state and local governments urged EPA to withdraw proposed changes that would extend refrigerant transition timelines.

Have a local policy story or meeting to share? Send it to GovAffairs@ashrae.org.

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MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Bill Simpson



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Leadership Recall Interview

Bill Simpson, Arkansas ASHRAEChapter President 2011-2012

(Interview Timing: April 2016)

1. Provide a brief biographical sketch of your life (Place of birth, early schooling, higher education, and employment background)

a. I was born in Columbus, OH, but my family bought a small fish and ski resort on Lake Norfork near Mountain Home when I was five. I always loved Arkansasand growing up in Mountain Home had plenty of advantages, but when I graduated high school I was ready to experience a more urban setting. As such, I attended Georgia Tech in Atlanta where I would eventually graduate with a BSME. Since college, I have been fortunate to have worked these last 12 years at Harrison Energy Partners (or Trane Arkansas as it was called when I was originally hired).

2. Please describe what attracted you tothe engineering industry, as well as your first job in it.

a. There was a TV show in the late 80s and throughout the 90s called Beyond 2000 that showcased technological innovations. That was my impetus for pursuing an engineering degree. Reality strucksomewhere between my freshmanand senior years in college when I realized jobs designing sexy, “high-tech” machinery were not easy to come by. During my senior year I tookan HVAC class that resonated with me and met several people in the HVAC industry. I interviewed for several consulting positions as well as my current position in technical sales and ultimately made my decision because of the Trane Graduate Training Program and the investment Trane and HEP made in developing their new associates.

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3. How and when did you becomeinvolved in ASHRAE?

a. I became a student member of ASHRAE during my senior year of college but, aside from attending our student branch meetings, was not active until I started working. Because Bill Harrison was active at the highest levels of ASHRAE and many of the leaders of Harrison Energy Partners had served as chapter officers, the benefitsof ASHRAE were understood and thus there was (and still is) a strong culture of support for ASHRAE within our company. I started attending chapter meetings including the Board of Governor's meetings with Chris Ahne almost immediately after starting at HEP. As anyone knows who has been involved with ASHRAE, it doesn't take long to get askedto serve if you show a little interest and enthusiasm. While attending my first CRC in San Antonio in 2005, then President-Elect Chance Hollingsworth askedme to serve as chapterwebmaster and the rest is history.

4. What people stand out as influences on you?

a. This list is longer than I can type or you want to read. In particular, I've been blessed to have a strong, close family and I credit my parents for most of my success (as well as my good looks and witty sense of humor). They sacrificed significantly for me to be involved in many extra-curricular activities and attend college out of state. I also creditmy high school cross countrycoach for instilling work ethic and personal accountability. (Some may think he fell short on the former.) Professionally, whether they want the credit or not, Bill Harrison, Mike McClellan, Jim Bradford and Greg Blair with their unique personalities and skills have taught me invaluable lessons in business and life. Given the nature of my job, I am also fortunate to learn every day from a diverse group of customers.

5. Please describe any humorous and/orsignificant historical events that you recall from your ASHRAE experiences

a. Most conversations with Don Hugginsor Dennis Stankehave been either humorous or significant historical events in my mind—sometimes both.