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## Save the date

### December

No Chapter meeting

### January 28

10:00 a.m.

Chapter meeting  
Windermere Clubhouse  
Pflugerville

### February 20

6 p.m. – National Instruments  
Joint Chapter 15/IEEE meeting  
Evolution of Timekeeping and  
Synchronized Time Over the last  
150 years

### February 25

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
Open house  
Bea Copeland's, San Antonio

## Current Board Members

President – Ken Reindel

[President@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:President@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Vice-President – Bob Rasmussen

[VicePresident@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:VicePresident@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Treasurer – Tom Tarp

[Treasurer@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Treasurer@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Secretary – Pat Holloway

[Secretary@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Secretary@nawcc-chapter15.org)

Director of Programs – Gary  
Sertich

[Programs@nawcc-chapter15.org](mailto:Programs@nawcc-chapter15.org)

## President's Message

Winter is here, and the holiday season is upon us! It's really great to see the rain we've been experiencing recently, as well as the cooler temperatures. While we are a long way from catching up with our annual rainfall totals, every little bit helps.

With this time of year comes the music, lights, decorations, celebrations and all the other signs that the holidays are upon us. I was really surprised to hear radio stations playing Christmas songs 2 weeks before Thanksgiving! Perhaps it is a way to inspire folks to get out and start shopping. It's not all bad since frankly it is good for the economy, local merchants, and for the recipients of gifts ☺. It just seems strange to hear it so soon.

With the holidays brings vacations and with that comes more time in the shop for me. It is almost a tradition. I'm quite passionate about clock restoration and it is a pleasure for me to spend a little more time doing it...and catching up with the work load. I've had the great fortune as late to have two great apprentices to work with which adds to the enjoyment, much more so than working alone all the time.

We had an awesome little pot luck over at Bob and Karen Rasmussen's house Saturday November 12. Although we always hope to see more folks, we did have a really good turn out and everything was great. Plenty of food, desserts, company. Bob and Karen's clock collection was a delight to tour. We were also impressed with numerous examples of Karen's artistic talent which were on display in their home. Very memorable day. Thanks very much to Bob and Karen for hosting the program, and everyone who worked to plan the event, prepare delicious dishes and attended to provide for a fun time.

It is with great disappointment that I must announce the news (just received) that Bob and Karen will be moving out of the Austin area. They need to follow their hearts and careers to family and opportunity in the Lynchburg, Virginia area. They are moving quickly even now to get ready and will be there by December 19. We have sincerely enjoyed having them here with us and will miss them greatly. Best of luck to you Bob and Karen, and keep in touch!

Although I personally could not make the Capitol clock tour due to conflicts, I am hearing awesome feedback from the folks that attended on Wednesday, November 30. Carolyn Spillers did a very nice summary of the event that is included later in this Newsletter. Thanks so much Carolyn!

Despite the holiday schedule, the Directors and I continue to meet in order to keep momentum going on our initiatives for the new year. We've made progress on shaping some of the training programs, as well as some of the other things we want to do. We already know that the Joint Chapter 15 and IEEE presentation on the **Evolution of Timekeeping and Synchronized Time over the last 150 years** will be held February 20, 2012 at 6 pm. There will be more communication as this and other events grow closer.

We want to wish all of you a great holiday season and all the best for the New Year!

## The Capitol of Texas Clock Tour

By Carolyn Spillers

(Note from the editor: additional pictures will be included in the January edition.)

We see the Capitol building on the skyline of Austin whenever we drive through town. We know it's there but don't take the time to consider what a treasure it is to our city and our state. It's been a part of the Austin landscape since 1888 when the building was completed.

On November 30, 2011, a group of 19 NAWCC Chapter 15 members and Capitol Area Guild members had the rare opportunity to take a tour of the Texas Capitol building to see the clocks hanging there.

I say rare because surely, this was not the ordinary "visitor's tour" that is offered. It was much more detailed and we were able to learn the background of the clocks as well as of the building and furnishings – where they came from and whether they were original to the building or not. So much has been lost over time and yet, an amazing amount of the original has survived or been recovered.

Our guide was Richard Eisenhour, with the State Preservation Board, who has been there for eleven years. Bob Larson also provided insight into some of the clocks. The first clock was right there in the rotunda (where we met) surrounded by beautiful woodwork. While not the original clock, it is of the correct era.



We followed Richard all over three floors and the "ground floor" which really is the basement. We were able to see the clocks placed where they hung way back then. Well, we saw most of the clocks except the one in the Governor's office. To quote our guide, "He's a little bit busy right now." There was another clock of the same style and vintage which was pointed out to us in the Lieutenant Governor's office.

Every Tuesday morning, Richard winds the wall clocks. "Tuesday," because Monday and Friday can get caught up in a holiday and Richard wanted to be sure all those old clocks were running. Well, most of the clocks are wound. Some have been converted to quartz movements like the Seth Thomas gallery clocks in the Senate and House chambers because

they are mounted on the front of the balconies. (The original movements are housed with the clocks.) They are the same model, however, only the one in the Senate chamber is original.



Clocks of the same age and style as the originals (as determined from photos of rooms from the era) are once more in place. Richard's office is always looking for more clocks and furnishings that were original to the building or duplicates so that the building can appear as it did in the 1890's-1910. Where they have remodeled or rearranged spaces, they have gone out of their way to preserve the original details.

A Seth Thomas #2 hangs in the Lt. Governor's office. The area once housed the Lt. Governor's apartment but since a fire in 1983, the rest of the apartment has been used for receptions and serves as a place for senators to come and relax, have a cup of coffee or a bite to eat. There are kitchens both here and at the opposite side of the Capitol where the Speaker of the House has an apartment, which is the only residence inside a capitol building in the country.

A beautiful Ansonia Capitol model clock in a break room off the House chamber hangs silent. It had been stopped because the occupants didn't like the tic-tock noise. Someone commented that the icemaker and TVs in the room would have drowned out the clock anyway. It was found that the clock was wound so an unmentioned member of our group set the pendulum swinging to help the main spring unwind. Now, wasn't that helpful?

I know...this tour was about clocks. However, it became so much more as we learned where the custom-built furnishings came from and that when something wears out, it is replaced with a piece that duplicates the original right down to the upholstery, the tacks or the wood. The fire in '83 shattered the etched glass panels that fill every door and inside window.

Speaking of windows, there are numerous inside panes of etched glass that pivot in the middle to let breezes flow through the building. That and the 20 foot tall ceilings kept the capitol building cooler in the days before air conditioning.

Upkeep is a constant job that keeps numerous crews on their toes. One thing was very evident, those crews keep the building clean...that really should be in all caps. The brass railing around the chairs and desks in the House Chamber were stunning. We were told that it was polished every night. When asked, he offered to find out what polish they used as the railings had a shine like new.

We were able to see one of the original vaults with elaborate designs both inside and out. Not sure who climbs up to wind the Ansonia clock above the entry to the vault area, but it was on time, too. Fortunately, the beautiful paintings on the vault doors were discovered under numerous layers of paint before all of them were sandblasted. There are about 20 such vaults in the building and half of them had been sandblasted before a worker noticed a faint design on a door.

### Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Dulen Lee** who was the only member to correctly identify the location of the clocks in last month's issue. Dulen will receive one year's Chapter 15 membership. In case you didn't recognize them, both of the clocks are located at the NAWCC headquarters in Pennsylvania. The tower clock is in the parking lot and the other clock is mounted on the corner of the building. Even if you haven't had an opportunity to visit the library or museum in person, you may have recognized the tower clock from a similar picture on the NAWCC website home page.

### October meeting

On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Carolyn Spillers presented a great program called "Once Upon a TIME." During the



program, she shared pictures, as well as examples of a few of the clocks in their collection. Many of us identified with a slide called "The Collection Begins" that told how a cuckoo clock was joined by an electric Sessions clock from Rogers parents and a wall clock that had belonged to his grandmother. "Three of a kind and we had the start of a collection." Many thanks to Carolyn for sharing their collecting (both clocks and cars) story!

### Member news

We were saddened to hear that long-time Chapter 15 member Harold E. "Doc" Secor passed away on Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup>. Harold and Shirley have touched many of our lives and have both had a tremendous impact on the Texas Chapters for *many* years. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Secor family.

### Chapter membership renewal

#### Chapter membership

If you've not yet renewed for 2012, please take a few minutes to complete and return the form below, or use the PayPal option found on the [Chapter 15 website](#).

Chapter 15 Membership Application  
New Application / Renewal (circle one)

Membership Dues are \$10

*You must be a current, paid NAWCC member to join a Chapter. You may be a member of more than one Chapter.*

**Please Print or Type**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAWCC Member # \_\_\_\_\_

HOROLOGICAL INTERESTS: \_\_\_\_\_

       *Please send my Chapter newsletter by email.*

Make Check Payable To: Chapter 15, NAWCC  
Enclose this application and check and send to:  
Pat Holloway  
1105 Lafayette Lane  
Pflugerville, TX 78660

#### Treasurer's Report

<b>Chapter Account</b>	<b>\$7,492.48</b>
<b>Inc:</b> Membership renewals	138.96
<b>Exp:</b> Nov. Newsletter and 2012 room rental	(305.46)
	<b>\$7,325.98</b>
<b>Regional Account</b>	<b>\$4,163.60</b>

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## Spot a clock with a holiday theme

~ Pat Holloway

This beautifully restored E. Howard tower clock was spotted across the street from the state capitol building in Concord, New Hampshire. The tower bears a brass inscription with a brief history of the clock and bell. The clock was purchased in 1872 by public subscription, and the bell was given to the city of Concord by George Pillsbury in 1873. After many years of neglect, the clock was restored and installed in its present location in 1998.



Shortly after spotting the clock, I discovered a Christmas ornament that commemorates this date and is inscribed 1998 in the arch at the top, *Clock Tower* on the second arch, and *Concord New Hampshire* below the clock. What a great way to remember this wonderful achievement!

