

2009 Meritorious Service Awards Luncheon - Held March 16, 2010

The API - Delta Chapter congratulates Mr. Art Johnson, President and Chief of Exploration for Hydrate Energy International and Mr. Charlie Speed, an independent materials and corrosion engineering consultant, this year's API Meritorious Service Award recipients.

On March 16, 2010, nineteen local petroleum industry societies honored the two recipients at a luncheon held at the La Pavillon Hotel in New Orleans. The event was attended by colleagues, friends, family and associates of the honorees. Art and Charlie have selflessly served our local petroleum industry and community for years. Both have earned numerous professional awards and are highly regarded in their fields.

Louisiana Department of Nature Resources Secretary, Scott Angelle was the key note speaker. Angelle, who began serving as Secretary in 2004, told the audience the Louisiana's oil and natural gas industry is still a vital and a growing part of the state and national economy and is setting the pace for the nation. "Our great state has always been a leader in energy production," he said. "That industry has been an economic mainstay for our state as our nation has dealt with an economic downturn in the past 18 months."

Angelle went on to say that Louisiana's current rig count is 27 percent higher than it was at the same time last year, up 56 rigs to a total of 207. The state's rig count on Louisiana land and water is 170 – a level of activity not seen since early 1986.

Art Johnson is a petroleum geologist with 31 years of diverse industry experience in exploration and development. He is President and Chief of Exploration for Hydrate Energy International and is engaged in exploration efforts throughout the world. Prior to forming HEI in 2002, Art was with Chevron for 25 years. Among his positions were Division Geologist and New Trends Team Leader. Art is co-chair of the AAPG/EMD Gas Hydrate Committee and recently finished a term as President of the New Orleans Geological Society. He chaired the Methane Hydrate Advisory Committee from 2001 to 2006 and has advised Congress and the White House on energy issues since 1997. He continues his role coordinating the research efforts of industry, universities, and government agencies. Art is also an AAPG Visiting Geoscientist and Vice President of Technology for Gulf States BioFuels. Among his many recent publications are two books, "Economic Geology of Natural Gas Hydrates" published by Springer, and "Alternative Energy and Fuels Technology", published by the Catalyst Group.

Charlie Speed is currently an independent materials and corrosion engineering consultant working for various major oil companies in the New Orleans area. He has been certified in radiography, ultrasonics, magnetic particle and penetrant testing, he performed inspection services at fabricators and construction projects including Churchill Falls Labrador Hydro Project, Atomic Energy Canada Limited (AECL) Heavy Water Plants and CANDU nuclear reactor components. For the last 29 years, Charlie has provided materials, corrosion, chemical and inspection engineering support for both surface and subsurface operations of major oil companies (Exxon, Mobil, Chevron and Shell). Charlie is an active member of API, ASM, ASNT, SPE, NACE and the Gideons International serving in various officer capacities.

He has initiated a number of career development opportunities for members and the community through programs such as the annual NACE/ASM Materials Science Teachers Camp at UNO; the Annual ASNT Hands-On Nondestructive Evaluation (NDE) Workshop at LSU and the NACE Basic Education week.