



Interview with Chapter Past President, Mr. Chris Dolan

Q: Thank you for taking the time to allow us learn more about you and your experience as ASHRAE President. So, where did you grow up and what led you into the HVAC industry, and equipment sales in particular?

My father was in the military so I grew up in many different places, from Oklahoma to Hawaii... My Dad retired in Leavenworth Kansas and that is where I graduated high school. I decided to go to OSU where I got my Mechanical Engineering degree. My plan was to go to law school after undergrad and become a patent lawyer, but I ended up finding a job in technical sales that really interested me. I was hired out of school by Trane and worked there for 8 years until leaving to go to EEI.

Q: When you started as president in July of 2020, the pandemic was dragging on and many events and activities were still being cancelled and venues closed. What were your thoughts as you planned for the upcoming society year and what expectations did you have?

My plan was to have as many in-person events as possible. Unfortunately, I did not expect the resurgence of Covid cases that happened right after our first meeting. The Board made the decision to conduct our future meetings virtually. I was disappointed in this but I was proud of the way the membership embraced our new reality.

Q: As the year progressed, in what ways did things turn out the way you expected and in what ways were they different?

The start and end of my year were somewhat how I expected. The golf tournament at the beginning of the year was one of the best attended we have had. I think people were tired of being "socially distanced" from other people. Then at the end of the year we had a great turnout for both our Spouses night and our sporting clays event.

However, from November until March nothing seemed to go the way we wanted. Everything was virtual and we were having a hard time getting participation because people were already burned out on Zoom meetings!

Q: Looking back now, what accomplishments, would you say, were most meaningful to you? What was the most challenging?

The most meaningful accomplishment has to be the efforts of all of the chairs. Although we were all dealing with the pandemic, there was nothing stopping them from achieving their goals. I am very appreciative of the hard work everyone put into making my year a successful one!

I think the answer to the most challenging is obvious... Covid

Q: What advice would you give to future ASHRAE chapter leaders?

The strength of the Central Oklahoma Chapter is the volunteers. Reach out to new people and get them involved early. Also, make it a fun society to be a part of. If people don't feel they are getting something out of ASHRAE, they won't stay. This can't just include technical and professional benefits, it has to include social benefits also.