

LIVING LEGENDS: ABIT MASSEY, CAE

A Tireless Advocate

BY MARY LOU JAY

A CHANCE ENCOUNTER led **Abit Massey, CAE**, to association work and to GSAE.

"I was Director of the Georgia Commerce Department (now Economic Development) and had gone to Gainesville to speak when I ran into a friend, **W. L. Norton, Jr.** He told me the Georgia Poultry Federation was looking for a staff person. I gave him the name of several people I knew, and half jokingly told him, 'Put my name in the hat, too.' The Federation's search committee came to the Capitol the next week and offered me the job," Massey recalled.

That was in 1960, and Massey has worked tirelessly on behalf of Georgia's poultry industry ever since. He served as chief executive of the Federation until 2009, when he became president emeritus.

"I enjoyed my previous role, but it was time for a change," Massey said. "I didn't want the Federation to lose **Mike Giles**, the current president, who had been with us for 10 years. Although the textbooks say that flipping positions won't work, we had been moving in tandem, and the relationship continues to work well. But he's on the front of the tiger now."

Massey joined GSAE shortly after beginning work at the Federation, and has made numerous and significant contributions during his years of membership. One of his strengths was recruitment; at last count, made several years ago, he had encouraged more than 100 association executives to join GSAE.

"I think it's important for the people in association management to increase their knowledge and sharpen their skills and have the opportunity for connections and networking," he said. "It shows that we really believe in the work that we're doing. I've said sometimes that if a person finds out that their association executive is not a member of the Society of Association Executives it's like finding out that your lifeguard can't swim, or your preacher is an atheist or your driving instructor does not have a license."

"Being with peers encourages and challenges us all to do a better job. I think we stimulate and inspire

each other," he added. Massey has also been an advocate of recognizing excellence; it was during his term as president in 1969-1970 that GSAE established its annual awards programs.

When Massey became ASAE chairman in 1977-78, GSAE found a unique way to pay him tribute.

"I was surprised and highly honored at GSAE's September 1978 meeting when they presented me with a resolution establishing the annual Abit Massey Lecture Series," Massey said. He helps choose the program speaker for each lecture, someone who will both inspire and inform GSAE members. He and his wife **Kayanne** are always in attendance.

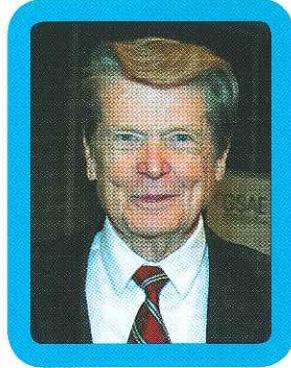
Massey is proud that both of his children have been asked to be speakers for the lecture series. Son **Lewis**, former Georgia Secretary of State and the youngest person ever to hold that office, is now a partner in the public affairs firm of Massey, Watson, Bowers & Hembree in Atlanta. Daughter **Camille**, who lives in New York City, is an attorney and vice president, Global Strategy and Programs, of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Promoting poultry and associations

Public and legislative affairs have always been one of Massey's great interests, and he has represented both the poultry industry and association management at state and national levels.

"Legislation impacts everything," he said. "We feel it's important that we be there every day as part of the legislative and regulatory process, promoting and pushing for proposals that are beneficial to the industry but also on alert for any proposals that might be harmful to the industry."

Massey spearheaded GSAE's successful effort to pass legislation providing officers and directors of nonprofits immunity from liability for good-faith actions. It was one of the strongest—if not the strongest—laws of its type in the country, he said.





Abbit Massey, CAE, with his wife **Kayanne** and their son **Lewis** and daughter **Camille** at the 2010 Abit Massey Lecture Series Luncheon.

During his term as ASAE president, he led efforts to successfully lobby the U.S. Congress for passage of national legislation to stop the taxation of nonprofit organization trade show income as unrelated income.

Today, as president-emeritus of the Georgia Poultry Federation Massey remains a forceful advocate for the industry. "We have constantly worked to improve the competitive position of Georgia's poultry growers and companies," he said. During his years as chief executive, Massey helped win passage of various tax savings and fee eliminations that now provide annual savings of about \$17 million to the industry. "I'm very proud of that and the benefits that it brings to the industry. If the industry is expanding, we'd like it to be in Georgia."

"We've also worked closely with the University of Georgia in strengthening the research, teaching and extension programs in the state, and have seen some progress in those areas," he added. "We're proud of the fact that about 40 years ago we started a poultry research project at Georgia Tech that has grown into a major research and technical assistance program for the industry. Georgia is the only state that has a poultry program at an engineering school in addition to a poultry program at the land grant institution.

"We also have an outstanding poultry diagnostic network that we think is the best in the country. That has been expanded over the years, and Mike and I worked hard on funding for a new poultry diagnostic lab in Gainesville. That's a \$13.5 million project that

"We have constantly worked to improve the competitive position of Georgia's poultry growers and companies."

will go out to bid sometime soon. We're excited about that development.

"I'm grateful for the staff here at the Georgia Poultry Federation and our industry leaders and volunteers, and also appreciative that we've had such strong support from state officials and legislators over the years. It takes a good team to accomplish all this."

No slowing down

Massey appears tireless. In addition to his full time work at the Federation, he currently serves as secretary and member of the Board for the University of Georgia Real Estate Foundation and as a director of the Georgia Research Foundation. He's active in the First Baptist Church in Gainesville, just ending a term as chairman of the deacons. He has served as president of the University of Georgia Alumni Association, and as a member and vice-chair of the Gainesville school board. He is vice president of Georgia Women of Achievement, chairman of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Little White House Memorial Advisory Committee, and a director of the Georgia Council on Economic Education.

During his limited free time, Massey enjoys what he calls his hobby—his four grandchildren. **Lewis** and his wife **Amy**, a speech pathologist, are parents of three children. **Chandler** studies international business at UCLA and recently received a daytime Emmy award for his work on *Days of Our Lives* on NBC and has the male lead in a new movie, *16 Love*. **Mary Cameryn** is a sophomore at the University of Georgia majoring in international affairs, and **Christian** is a middle school student. **Camille** has a daughter, **Lucia**, adopted from China, who is now in 6th grade.

Massey plans to pursue his many interests as long as he's able. "I want to keep working with the Georgia Poultry Federation; it's a good industry that provides numerous jobs and farm opportunities and good products that are shipped all over the country and the world. It's fun to be involved with that."

"I also want to continue enjoying the volunteer work, and the opportunities to associate with positive people," he said. "We all need to give back when we can." <



Living Legends: Gene Dyson, CAE

As Atlanta grew and changed with the times,
so did GSAE

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

WHEN GENE DYSON, CAE, retired president of the Georgia Business and Industry Association and president of GSAE from 1970 to 1971, first joined GSAE, lunch, Bloody Marys and politics were regular items on the agenda for GSAE meetings.

Well, this isn't entirely accurate, Dyson said, because there really were no agendas, minutes or formal records at all. "When I joined the association, all of the members were men, and we were all lobbyists," he said. "We'd meet for lunch, have a Bloody Mary or two and talk about politicians, our lobbying efforts and what was happening throughout the legislature."

Dyson joined GSAE because his boss (Clifford Clarke, CAE, GSAE president from 1960 to 1962) told him to in order to learn more about his job. At the time, Dyson was 25 years old and had no association experience. "At first it was more of a social club," Dyson said, "but as we broadened membership to include women and association executives who were responsible for more than lobbying, we saw the need to address other issues."

Dyson served on a variety of committees throughout the years. "I can't remember all of the committees [I served on], but it was expected that you get involved," he said. "You have to get involved to get something out of an association."

Dyson's involvement ultimately led to his nomination as GSAE president. "I wasn't the youngest president of GSAE – my boss held that title – but when the nominating committee asked me to serve as president, the members told me that I was the first non-CEO to hold the position," said Dyson.

After desegregation, Atlanta's hotel inventory grew tremendously. Dyson started moving the monthly GSAE meetings to a different Atlanta hotel each month. "It was a good opportunity for our members to see what Atlanta hotels, especially the new ones, had to offer. This gave them the opportunity to promote Atlanta as a site for national and regional conferences." Dyson added, "For the next 10 to 15 years, Atlanta was the hottest spot for conferences in the country."

Dyson also took GSAE members on the road. "Most of our members were from Atlanta and had not considered conferences for their associations outside Atlanta," he said. GSAE held FAM (familiarization) trips at the Cloister on Sea Island and the Bahamas. "These trips were helpful to the meeting planners in our member associations," Dyson said. Not only did meeting planners get to see a variety of new locations, but they also had a chance to meet with representatives from the hotels and resorts to get information on activities, expenses and options for meetings.

"One of the first requests for a new service that we received was for a salary study," Dyson said. "The volunteer board members of an association didn't know how to place a value on an association executive, and so it was hard to set salaries." While the association executive could always say, "Pay me more," there were no data to support requests for salary increases or to set salaries at the start of a new position.

The success of salary surveys led to other membership surveys that asked for information on benefits packages offered to association staff members. "There was a [lot] of information that people were reluctant to share one-on-one," said Dyson. GSAE surveys gathered the needed information in a manner that kept everything confidential yet accurate.

While GSAE was Dyson's big commitment in Georgia, he was also involved in the American Red Cross. He served on the boards of the Atlanta Chapter and the national organization, and he was appointed to a one-year term as president of the American Red Cross when Elizabeth Dole took a leave of absence in 1996.

His accomplishments at GSAE, the Georgia Business and Industry Association and the American Red Cross add up to a successful career of which Dyson is proud. He said, "If I had to rate my career, I'd give it a 9 on a 10-point scale."

LIVING LEGENDS: JOHN D. PRIEN JR., CAE, J.D.

Unlikely path leads to GSAE and presidency

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON



ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT WAS not a career **John D. Prien, Jr., CAE, J.D.**, chose when he first entered the workplace. In fact, he has not followed a traditional pathway throughout his career.

"I'm both an engineer and an attorney," says Prien. His business experience includes starting a new department at IBM, handling contract management for Pan Am for several years, and serving as an attorney for the space program at Cape Canaveral, FL until he came to Atlanta in 1967 to take the position as executive director of the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers. "The association had high aspirations, and they believed I could make the changes needed," he adds.

Prien's rise to president of the Georgia Society of Association Executives did not follow the normal route either. "I joined GSAE to find other people who could give me ideas and support as I learned how to run an association," he explains. Within two years of joining the organization, Prien was president.

One of the highlights of his year as president was the effort to offer membership to companies that provided services to associations. "Organizations such as hotels or exhibition companies provide valuable services to associations, and I believed they deserved a place in the organization," Prien explains. Not only could these "affiliate" members bring additional expertise and knowledge to share with members, but their membership dues could help support the organization.

"I saw the additional fees as a way to fund formal education for association management and to give credence to the profession," he says. "I even met with people at Georgia State University to see if we could establish a chair in association management," he adds.

"Unfortunately, we had two board members at the time who believed the additional membership category would 'dilute' the professional membership of the organization, so it did not pass during my year," he says. "The issue came up again the following year and did pass, with a limit on the percentage of total memberships that the affiliate memberships could represent."

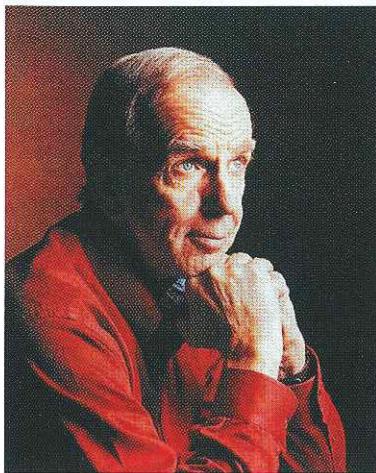
"The most important accomplishment of my year as president was the publication of the first real history of the Georgia Society of Association Executives," says Prien. Although the association was formed in 1917, there was no official history of the organization until the publication was developed during his year as president. "The book was distributed as I stepped down as president in 1973."

A fond memory of his early years at GSAE was the one-hour period before the regular meeting that was called "Nuts and Bolts." "This was an informal discussion among members to talk about how we handled different issues such as promotion of an event," Prien explains. "It was a great way to bring up problems you were facing and get input from a roomful of experts."

Although the informal get together prior to meetings no longer exists, Prien points out that the networking and opportunity to meet with other association executives is invaluable. "Involvement in GSAE is probably more important than ever. There are so many changes in the way we do business today with new technology and new ways of communicating with members, that an individual can't be aware of everything," he says. "GSAE gives you a way to get involved with leaders in association management and talk with others who face the same issues you face." 

GSAE Legends

As a continuation of GSAE's 90th anniversary celebration, we want to share some of the "lessons learned" from the volunteers who contributed to GSAE's great success. Through this year-long series, we will spotlight, in their own words, the past leaders of GSAE – our legends.



Legends: Phil Harrison, CAE

GSAE president worked to clearly define bylaws and membership categories

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

PHIL HARRISON WASN'T known for taking the easy path. During 1973 to 1974, when he served as president of the Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE), he also served as president of another large organization, the Atlanta chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

"That was a busy year," Harrison admitted. "Luckily, only half of my term coincided with my term as president of PRSA, but that was a tough six months," he laughed. "Not only was I juggling two major offices, but GSAE had no staff so it was completely up to the volunteers to accomplish everything."

No one who knew Harrison was surprised at his involvement, he said. "I'm not one of those people who sit idly by and watch other people run organizations that I join. I believe that if you join an organization, you need to participate."

Even with the two presidential hats that he wore that year, Harrison's administration made some major changes in membership rules. "At that time, suppliers or professionals who were not affiliated with an association could only come to meetings as a guest of a member," he explained. "I realized that these potential corporate members could be a valuable addition to our organization."

During his term, the "affiliates" membership category was developed to enable

vendors or professionals who offered services to the association industry to join. "Not only did this help increase our membership, but these members were able to provide financial support for meetings and other activities that our association members could not afford," Harrison said. "Affiliates" are now known as "Corporate Supplier" members and are a vital part of GSAE's continued success.

Harrison's involvement in other community organizations had given him an appreciation for a well-defined organizational structure. "During my year as president, we took a close look at bylaws and committee structure to make sure we were organized the way we should be." Reviewing and rewriting bylaws, policies and committee structure is tedious and boring for most people, he admitted. "In fact, most organizations just turn the task over to a lawyer who knows how to make the document legal, but doesn't understand how a volunteer organization works."

His administration's efforts paid off with revised bylaws and clearly-defined committee responsibilities. "It was important to define committee responsibilities because volunteers need to know what they will be doing," he said. "Putting everything in writing made it easier to recruit committee chairs

and members and to know who would be doing what."

Because Harrison was a member of GSAE since 1966, he saw a lot of changes. "When I joined GSAE, many associations referred to their chief executive officer as an executive secretary," he said. "Now, the titles are president, executive director or something similar. I believe this is a reflection of the growth of professionalism in our industry."

As GSAE grew, meetings became larger and Harrison believed that they didn't always allow people to interact. "We started breaking into smaller discussion groups with different tables addressing specific issues," he said. Today, shared interest discussion groups, forums and listservs meet the needs of members with specific issues to discuss.

Harrison joined GSAE when he was with a multi-association management firm. Ironically, just five years after he created the affiliate membership category, he left association management and went into the insurance field. "Because I provide insurance for associations, I switched my membership to an affiliate membership," he laughed. "It gave me an opportunity to start a new career and stay in touch with old friends."

Phil Harrison passed away in October 2008.



Living Legends: Jim Parkman, CAE

Camaraderie and networking opportunities started association career on right foot

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

RED JACKETS, TIN cups and a potent Chatham Artillery Punch made for a lively reception hosted by GSAE at the American Society of Association Executives' (now ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership) national conference in Atlanta during Jim Parkman's, CAE, tenure as GSAE president from 1975 to 1976.

The fire-engine red polyester jackets worn by GSAE members made it easy for conference attendees to find volunteers and ask them questions about meeting locations or other issues related to the conference or to Atlanta, explained Parkman. Though the red-jacketed members were helpful to conference attendees, Parkman believes that the most memorable event of the conference was the opening night reception that featured Chatham Artillery Punch. "The punch was the favorite drink of Chatham County Confederate soldiers returning to camp," he said. "The effects of the alcohol snuck up on everyone, but it was a good way to kick off the conference."

Although conferences and receptions are fun, there is more to them than this, Parkman said. His involvement in GSAE's committees and leadership positions was an important part of his success in association management. He started his association career on the staff of the Georgia Business and Industry Association in 1968. All of his work experience prior to this job had been in the industry sector, so when he joined the association, Parkman said, "I had no concept about association management."

He learned quickly through his involvement in the membership and other GSAE committees. "People say I gave a lot to GSAE, but I believe that GSAE and ASAE did more for me than I did for them," he said.

Members were always willing to offer advice to new leaders, said Parkman. "When I became president-elect, several members told me to start preparing for my year as president early," he said. "There was no staff, so the president had to make sure that newsletters were produced, members were billed and meetings were scheduled."

The best advice he received as president-elect was to start setting up his support systems during his year as president-elect. "I met with past presidents, and they all told me that a year as president-elect may seem long, but it goes by fast. I was told to start early in my year as president-elect to set up committees," Parkman said.

Even after his year as president, Parkman continued to stay involved in GSAE. "I served on the nominating committee, so it was important that I stayed alert to and aware of emerging leaders in the association," he explained. "I always enjoyed meetings because you learned so much in one-on-one conversations with people sitting at your table. I always got ideas for my own association at these meetings."

His involvement and satisfaction with his membership in GSAE led Parkman to join ASAE

early in his career. One of the ASAE responsibilities he enjoyed was serving on a committee that offered an evaluation service to other associations. "I would get to review an association's materials, board minutes, bylaws and budgets and spend some time evaluating the association," he said. A team of three ASAE members would spend two to three days on the evaluation and would develop a blueprint for improvement for the association. "It was a great experience that gave me the opportunity to gain insight into how other associations are run and to identify what makes an association successful."

Parkman's involvement in GSAE and ASAE has resulted in a number of plaques, recognitions and awards that praise his efforts in various areas. "I've used one wall in my home office to hang all my plaques and certificates," he said. "I don't know if I should call it a 'memory wall' or an 'ego wall,' but I do know that it reminds me that GSAE is more than an association – it is a great group of friends that is like a family to me."

[Editor's note: A number of recipes for Chatham Artillery Punch can be found on the Internet. Just search for "Chatham Artillery Punch." Tin cups and aged cedar barrels are mentioned in some recipes, and ingredients may vary slightly, but almost all include a warning about the strength of the punch!]

LIVING LEGENDS: Stewart Huey, CAE

Leadership opportunities are a GSAE benefit

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

VOLUNTEERISM IS AN important part of life for **Stewart Huey, CAE**, president of GSAE in 1976-77. Although he retired in 2002 and moved to the North Carolina mountains, he continued to use his skills and experience as a volunteer for the local Rotary Club.

"I live in a small, unincorporated community that relies upon volunteer organizations to support services, such as a children's dental clinic, health clinic, community center and food bank," Huey says. "The Rotary Club is a very active organization in the community, and I served as secretary, who acts much like a staff position for the group, for seven years."

Getting involved helped him learn more about his new community and neighbors, and he recommends continuing to volunteer, even after retirement.

Huey started his 30-year career in association management with a part-time position as director of an association. "I had been writing and editing a magazine for an engineering association when I was offered the position," he says. "I couldn't believe someone wanted to pay me to do a job I was doing as a volunteer in other associations."

Even though his position was only part time, the association told him he could use their office if he needed space to handle other work. "I found a second client and I formed my association management company in 1970," Huey explains.

At the same time, his involvement in GSAE grew.

"I was happy to find a group of people to whom I did not have to explain what association management was," he says. "GSAE was small at the time, but we were growing quickly."

The most significant achievement during his year as president, he says, was the transition from a 100 percent volunteer organization to a volunteer-led organization with staff support.

"As we grew, it became more difficult for members who were in small, one- or two-person-staffed associations to take on leadership responsibilities," he

explains. "They just did not have the time or resources to handle all parts of the job."

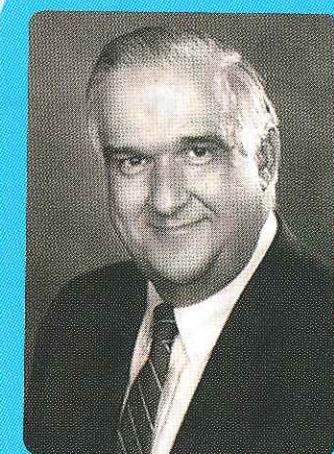
At the time, the volunteer who handled the newsletter not only wrote the publication, but also handled printing, mailing and maintenance of the mailing list. The amount of time required to provide the staff support of each volunteer position kept many members from taking on leadership positions, he says.

"We needed to find a way to open up leadership opportunities to all members, so we did decide to hire a management association company to provide staff support," Huey recalls.

It was Huey's firm that got the contract to support GSAE and Huey handled it for the first two years to make sure the transition went smoothly. "This was an important step for GSAE to take to make sure a wide range of members were able to take on leadership positions," he says.

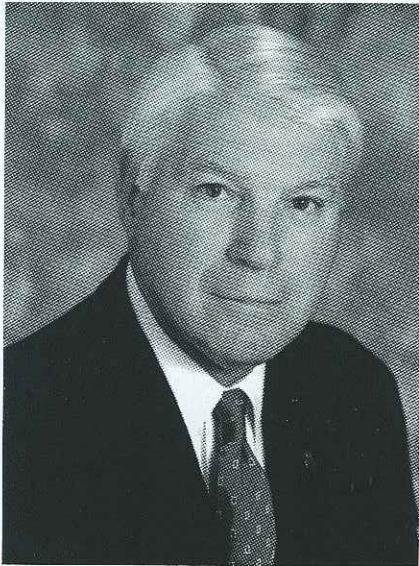
One of the biggest challenges Huey remembers was the search for ways to keep experienced leaders involved in GSAE after they served as president. "I knew we struggled to keep more experienced people involved, but they drifted off after serving as president," he says. Some people move aside to let new leaders take charge, others need a break, and still others don't know what they can do, he says.

Huey is living proof that simply getting involved in an association—regardless of the capacity—can lead to bigger and better things, and those interested in finding professional success would be wise to follow his lead. <



In the year 2009, we will continue our "Living Legends" series, which shares some of the "lessons learned" from the volunteers who contributed to GSAE's great success. Through this year-long series, we will spotlight, in their own words, the past leaders of GSAE - our legends.

Living Legends:



William E. Morie

Network helps association executive learn his way around the Georgia Capitol

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

THE BEST WAY to learn your way around a new city and a new job is to get involved in an organization that gives you a network. This is the main reason that Bill Morie, president of the Georgia Automobile Dealers Association, joined the Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) in 1970.

"I had just moved to Georgia from Missouri to become chief executive officer of the Georgia Automobile Dealers Association and I needed to become familiar with the area and the people working at the Capitol," explained Morie. "I had received an invitation to a GSAE meeting from Abit Massey before I even moved to Atlanta, so I went to the meeting. I knew immediately that this was an important organization for me to join."

It did not take long for members in the 1970s to get involved in leadership positions because the group was not large, pointed out Morie. "When I joined, the association was a small group of mostly CEOs of associations whose primary responsibility was lobbying for our industries and members," he said. "We'd meet for lunch and talk about what was being discussed by different legislators

and what each of us had heard so that we'd all stay up to date."

Even with the small group, there was a realization that GSAE would not remain small, so Morie was part of a committee that took a close look at the structure of the association and the roles that leaders would play in the future. This was good experience for his term as president-elect and president (1978-1979) because it helped him look forward and plan for changes, Morie said.

One of the big changes that Morie evaluated during his year as president-elect was the role of sponsors in the GSAE organization. "Atlanta was really growing during these years and there were many more hotels at which we wanted to have our luncheons to give members a chance to see different locations for conferences," he explained. To make these luncheons affordable to members, sponsors were asked to underwrite some of the costs, he said. "We'd have some meetings that were open to everyone, including businesses that joined the sponsor category of membership, and other meetings that were association members only," he said. "We tried to find a balance between the benefits of

sponsors' financial resources and expertise, and our association's identity."

During his year as president, Morie focused on improved involvement in the legislative process for all members. "This was before most associations began hiring contract lobbyists and we were all responsible for lobbying for our associations," he pointed out. "GSAE hosted a legislative luncheon while lawmakers were in session to enable members to talk with legislators in an informal setting," he said. "We also printed a yearbook with pictures of all of our members to distribute to secretaries throughout the Capitol building. This made it easy for legislators and their staff members to identify us."

GSAE has changed a great deal since Morie joined, with the most significant difference being the membership itself, he said. There are more staff members of associations involved in GSAE, as opposed to a small group of CEOs. "This means that the educational meetings are varied and offer information for people who are in many different positions," he said. "Today, GSAE offers everything that can be imagined to help members successfully lead their associations."