

# Newsletter

January 2026



## January Lunch Meeting:

**\*\*YEA Special Meeting\*\***

### Date:

Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup> 2026

### Location:

Double Tree by Hilton, Ft. Myers at  
the Bell Tower Shops

### Time:

11:30 – 12:15 Networking

12:15-1:30 pm Lunch & Main  
Program

### Presenter:



Kirby Lee

Regional Sales Manager – Southeast

Nortek Air

[kirby.lee@nortek.com](mailto:kirby.lee@nortek.com)

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

**Greetings SWFL ASHRAE!**

**GOODBYE 2025, HELLO 2026!!** Another year in the books and it sure was a whirlwind. I'm excited to ring in the new year with you all and share what all we have in store for this January. Here's a rundown of the events we've got on the docket for you this month:

### **3rd Annual YEA Cornhole Tournament:**

Coming up on January 24th at Fort Myers Brewing we'll be hosting our third annual cornhole tournament! Whether you're a seasoned pro, or just tossing some bags for the fun of it, you're sure to have a good time. Join us for a cold beer, some friendly competition, and some good ol' fashioned industry networking! We've already got teams clamoring to get on the roster, so please reach out to Trevor Citek to secure your team's spot soon.

### **Monthly Technical Presentation:**

We've got a big one for you on January 7th!! Kirby Lee is coming to town to present on Leadership Skills for Engineers. This will be a lunch meeting, so please be prepared to join us at the Double Tree by Hilton at Belltower Shops starting at 11:30am till 1pm. We'll provide the lunch and entertainment, so come prepared to learn! Leadership in engineering is more vital now than ever, shaping not only our careers but also the success and direction of our industry. Don't miss this opportunity to gain invaluable skills and insight—make it a priority to attend!

### **Acknowledging Our Sponsors:**

Before I wrap up, I want to extend heartfelt appreciation to the organizations and individuals who support our chapter year after year—especially our Diamond Sponsor for 2025-26, Tom Barrow. Your support fuels our mission and empowers us to make a real impact for our members and the community. If your company is interested in joining our circle of supporters, please connect with Gary Devore, our RP Chair, to explore sponsorship for the coming year. By partnering with SWFL ASHRAE, you help us create dynamic events, provide scholarships, and elevate your company's visibility among fellow professionals.

As always, I encourage you to take part in these events, invite colleagues, and share your ideas with our chapter. Let's keep the momentum going—January promises fantastic learning, networking, and good times together! Thanks for all you do, and for or being such an important part of SWFL ASHRAE

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# *January Lunch Meeting Announcement*

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**DATE: Wednesday, January 7th, 2026**

**LOCATION: Double Tree by Hilton, Ft. Myers at Bell Tower Shops**

**11:30 – 12:15 am Networking**

**12:15 – 1:30 pm Lunch and Main Program**

**In-Person Cost: \$35.00 Per Attendee – RESERVATIONS VIA RSVP LINK BELOW ARE  
REQUIRED No Cost for College Students with a Valid I.D.**

**- Card Payments will be Accepted at the Door**

**- Pre-Pay via [www.paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com) to [swfl.ashrae@gmail.com](mailto:swfl.ashrae@gmail.com)**

**- RSVP by September 9th, 2025 via the following link: <https://forms.gle/xUakLg6umHjTG65v8>**

**For Last-Minute RSVPs, please email [casey.hazen@trane.com](mailto:casey.hazen@trane.com) We will try to accommodate on a  
case-by-case basis.**

**Presenter:**

**Kirby Lee**

- **#1 Best Selling Author: The Lion Attitude**
- **President & Founder: Lion Attitude Coaching, Panthera LEO Consulting & Lion Attitude**
- **Leadership Consulting**
- **Regional Sales Manager at Nortek Air Solutions**
- **Registered Professional Engineer in the State of North Carolina**
- **LEED Accredited Professional in Building Design + Construction, Certified Energy**
- **Manager, Certified Energy Auditor, and Green Building Engineer**
- **Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from North Carolina State University**
- **ASHRAE Triangle Chapter Past President**

**Main Program:**

**Inner Leadership Skills for Engineers - Reinventing Yourself & Purpose Development**

**This session introduces The Lion Attitude, a leadership approach built specifically for AEC professionals. Phase 1 focuses on personal reinvention and purpose development, providing practical tools to move beyond technical expertise and build purpose-driven leadership that improves engagement, performance, and long-term impact within teams and organizations.**

# Kirby Lee

Regional Sales Manager - Southeast  
Nortek Air  
[kirby.lee@nortek.com](mailto:kirby.lee@nortek.com)



Kirby's pioneering efforts in leadership development are set to transform the AEC industry, making him a key figure in its ongoing evolution and success. This effort has led him to the crossroads of looking for a new opportunities and projects to make a measurable needle creating I+M+P+A+C=T on the AEC industry.

**Intention + Motivation + Purpose + Action + Connection =Triumph (I+M+P+A+C=T)**

Driven by his passion for the industry and a commitment to fostering effective leadership, Kirby's innovative system integrates emotional intelligence and practical strategies, providing a trackable framework for success. His work ensures that current and future AEC leaders are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving industry.

Through his extensive hands-on experience, Kirby identified a critical gap in current leadership development programs within the AEC industry. Recognizing the need for a fresh approach to cultivate the next generation of AEC leaders, he dedicated himself to reinventing these programs. This dedication led to the creation of a specialized leadership development system tailored specifically to the unique challenges and demands of the AEC field.

Holding a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, Kirby Lee brings over 23 years of direct experience across every facet of the Architecture, Engineering, and Construction (AEC) industry. As a third-generation HVAC construction business professional, Kirby's roots in the industry run deep, shaping his career and leadership philosophy.

Kirby is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of North Carolina, with an impressive array of certifications including LEED Accredited Professional in Building Design + Construction, Certified Energy Manager, Certified Energy Auditor, and Green Building Engineer. His diverse roles have spanned consulting engineering, owner's representation, and HVAC equipment sales, equipping him with a comprehensive understanding of the AEC sector.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Kirby has held significant leadership positions within several engineering firms, consistently driving success and innovation. His commitment to the industry extends beyond his professional roles; he is an active volunteer and leader within the Triangle Chapter of ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers). Notably, he has served as President for two terms and as the Region IV Chapter Regional Conference Chair for 2023, leading teams to achieve record metrics at both chapter and conference levels.

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## *Upcoming Events*

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3rd ANNUAL SWFL ASHRAE  
**CORNHOLE**  
TOURNAMENT

January 24th, 2026

PREREGISTER BY EMAILING:  
[JHARDMAN@TOMBARROW.COM](mailto:JHARDMAN@TOMBARROW.COM)



BAR AND FOOD TRUCK WILL BE AVAILABLE  
FOR FOOD AND DRINK PURCHASE

TOURNAMENT FEE INCLUDES ONE FREE DRINK



**BAGS FLY AT 11AM**

ENTRY \$30 - REGISTRATION 10:00 AM

Fort Myers Brewery Co | 12811 Commerce Lakes Dr #28 Fort Myers, FL 33913

TOURNAMENT RULES:

BLIND DRAW, DOUBLE ELIMINATION, PAYOUT BASED ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS WILL GO TOWARDS THE SWFL ASHRAE YEA FUND



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# *ASHRAE Refrigeration Tour*

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# *Membership Promotion*

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## Welcome members and possible new members to our ASHRAE SWF Chapter!

I personally want to welcome the returning members, as well as extend a hand of camaraderie to the prospective members. Members and perspective members will include many like-minded professionals, ranging from engineers to construction management teams, sales professionals, building automation and estimation specialists. All gambits of HVAC professional are present during our meetings, with a wealth of information at your disposal. Just extend an introduction, expand on friendships developed with members. We welcome back our seasoned members, as well as our new members.

We would like to remind our present members of the plethora of benefits, grade advancement, such as a Handbook PDF, an e-learning course, or a certification study guide. Advancement to a higher membership grade, with our help through the process.

To our potential members, what can ASHRAE do for you? Look no further for networking opportunities, technical resources, or career development. Testimonials from long-time members expressing the value of ASHRAE membership, and how ASHRAE has helped them grow professionally. Local events are monthly, with opportunities to chat, ask questions, furthering your knowledge of our expressed fields.

For our students and young professionals, there are scholarship opportunities, design competitions and grant aids. ASHRAE is here to assist you on your path to becoming a proficient asset to your future employer.

Monthly meetings will include either a "lunch and learn" atmosphere or evening meeting including dinner with the accompaniment of a visiting speaker. Many opportunities to learn and expand your knowledge base of our ever-growing industry. So just show up! Show up, feel at ease, and know you're in the company of like-minded folks that are eager to learn from each other and develop closer relationships.

To wrap things up, we need you! We need your presence and help! The only way we continue to make our local chapter thrive is with all of us being involved. Let's all set a goal of supporting ASHRAE, supporting each other, and making our local ASHRAE chapter something to see and be proud of this new year. Looking forward to seeing all of you at our next meeting or activity. Check out the newsletter for upcoming events. SEE YOU THERE!

Jeff Brooks, Membership Promotion Chair

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# 2025-2026 Sponsorship Opportunities

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## **DIAMOND SPONSORSHIP: Tom Barrow Company**

I would like to thank those of you who have already committed to sponsorships for the 25-26 society year.

We would encourage anyone who values their membership in SWFL ASHRAE to review the many benefits of sponsorship detailed in the annual sponsorship letter attached at the end of this newsletter.

If you have agreed to be a 25-26 sponsor and do not see your name listed below, please reach out.

[gdevore@bandiflorida.com](mailto:gdevore@bandiflorida.com) / (239) 671-6448

Thank you, we appreciate your continued support.

## **QUICK READS**

### **WASHINGTON, D.C. LAUNCHES REFRIGERANT RECOVERY PILOT PROGRAM**

The DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCEU), part of the Washington, D.C. Department of Energy and Environment, recently announced a new Refrigerant Recovery and Reclamation Pilot Program to work with HVAC&R companies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from refrigeration. The pilot program is the first of its kind in the U.S. Unlike existing utility incentives and rebate programs for improving energy efficiency or renewable energy adoption, this new pilot is focused specifically on incentivizing the recovery of refrigerants during servicing and reducing the amount of refrigerant gases vented into the atmosphere. DCEU is partnering with the refrigerant reclamation company Hudson Technologies and local HVAC&R companies.

[Link to Article](#)

### **SENATOR INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO OVERTURN HOUSING MINIMUM ENERGY STANDARDS**

On November 18, Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) introduced legislation requiring the Secretaries of the Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Agriculture (USDA) to withdraw the final determination on “Adoption of Energy Efficiency Standards for New Construction of HUD- and USDA-Financed Housing.” Finalized in April 2024 under President Biden, this determination updated minimum energy standards for newly built homes financed through covered HUD and USDA programs to the most recent 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for single family/low rise buildings and ASHRAE 90.1-2019, Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings for multifamily buildings with four or more stories. The legislation would also require HUD and USDA to revert to the 2009 standards already in effect and prohibit the agencies from adopting new efficiency standards unless at least 26 states have already adopted similar standards. HUD and USDA are currently reviewing the analysis used to justify this final determination, which ASHRAE commented on earlier this year.

[Link to Article](#)   [Link to Bill](#)

### **REFRIGERATION AIR COOLER RATING METHODS**

Refrigeration air coolers are commonly used in cold storage and food processing facilities, but their published capacity ratings can vary widely depending on how they are calculated. This article explains the key differences between rating methods such as DT1 (initial temperature difference) and DTM (mean room temperature difference), as well as sensible-only versus total cooling capacities that include latent load. It shows how misapplying these ratings—particularly DTM or high-humidity ratings in conditions where they do not apply—can result in air coolers that appear adequate on paper but perform poorly in operation, leading to higher energy use and reduced refrigeration capacity. By understanding airflow, temperature gradients, sensible heat ratio, and humidity effects, designers can select air coolers that more accurately match real operating conditions and deliver reliable, efficient performance.

[Link to Article](#)

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# Student Activities

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The **Southwest Florida Chapter of ASHRAE** is excited to offer **two \$500 scholarships** to graduating high school seniors in our region who plan to pursue higher education in **Science, Technology, or Engineering** fields.

## Eligibility Criteria

To be considered, students must:

1. **Be accepted into an accredited college or university** and intend to major in a **Science, Technology, or Engineering** discipline.
2. **Maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA** (on a 4.0 scale) or demonstrate strong academic achievement.
3. **Submit a one-page essay** (maximum 500 words) addressing the prompt:

*“How will your chosen field of study in Science, Technology, or Engineering help create a more sustainable world?”*

## Application Requirements

Please have interested students submit the following **in a single email or mailed packet**:

- **Current résumé** highlighting academic honors, STEM-related coursework, extracurricular activities, and any relevant projects or leadership roles.
- **One-page essay** (PDF format preferred; 12-pt font, 1-inch margins).
- **Proof of college acceptance** (letter or email confirmation) and **unofficial transcript showing GPA**.

## Submission Instructions

- **Email (preferred):**
- **Send to:** [pmiller@bandiflorida.com](mailto:pmiller@bandiflorida.com)
- **Subject line:** “ASHRAE HS Scholarship – [Student Full Name] – [High School Name]”
- **Mail:** Patrick Miller, Project Engineer B&I Contractors, Inc. [Insert Chapter Mailing Address]  
**Attn:** ASHRAE High School Scholarship
- **Deadline:** 5:00 PM EST, Thursday, December 25, 2025

## Selection Process

A committee of ASHRAE professionals will review all submissions based on academic merits and essay quality and demonstrate interest in sustainable engineering and technology. Winners will be notified by **January 15, 2026**, with awards presented at the **February 2026 Chapter Meeting** (students and a guest are invited).

We encourage your counseling and STEM departments to promote this opportunity to qualified seniors. This scholarship not only provides financial support but also connects recipients with mentors in the HVAC&R and building science industry.

For questions, please contact me directly at the email above.

Thank you for helping us invest in the next generation of sustainable innovators.



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## *Thank you to our Sponsors*

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### **2025-2026 Gold Sponsors**



### **2025-2026 Silver Sponsors**



### **2025-2026 Bronze Sponsors**



## YEAR-ROUND MOBILE ENGAGEMENT – ASHRAE 365

**Download ASHRAE 365 using the buttons below from your mobile device or search on the App Store or Google Play.**

Welcome to ASHRAE 365 – a free app providing year-round updates on all things ASHRAE. This 2-minute video provides a quick overview of what ASHRAE 365 has to offer including information about events and the ability to connect with other members, find resources, and support ASHRAE.

