John Forster  
Winner, 2008 CHES Hans Burgers Award  

CHES was very pleased to announce that John Forster was awarded the Hans Burgers Award for outstanding achievement in healthcare engineering at their meeting September 16, 2008 in Toronto. John is the President of John Forster Enterprises in Victoria BC and he has been a member of CHES for many years.

After a number of years as an engineer in educational facilities, John moved to the Engineering Division of Foothills hospital in Calgary in 1979, a facility of close to 2 million square feet (186,000 square meters) with a steam plant of first class power engineering registration housing 10 megawatts of co-generation capacity. Within that first year, John’s positive attitude and willingness to excel had moved him to the Chief Engineers position. While at Foothills from 1979-1985, John continued to impress and moved to the role of Assistant Director of Mechanical Services, as well as Energy Manager for the campus. He also left his mark as the Project Manager for the Tom Baker Cancer Center on that site. After enjoying his accomplishments in healthcare for 6 years, John longed to go back to education, and became a Power Engineering instructor at SAIT from 1985-1988. In 1988 he moved from Calgary and relocated to Victoria BC to work as the Plant Manager for two sites at Victoria General Hospital, a campus of 1.5 million square feet (140,000 square meters). Over time, John also became the Energy Manager for the site, and stayed there until he retired in 1999.

John embraced healthcare engineering while in Alberta, and from 1979-1985 held numerous executive positions on the Hospital Engineers of Alberta. In 1989 after moving to Victoria John became a member of the BC Chapter of CHES. Since that time, John has been elected to every executive position there; Secretary, Vice Chair, Chair, past Chair, and was elected to Treasurer for two separate terms. He has also accepted appointments to various portfolios and currently sits as the Membership Director, a position he has held for the last 6 years! He is the voice of experience that we all turn to when our current executive has dilemmas we cannot solve. John was also instrumental in setting up the $50,000 in bursaries that CHES BC has pledged to the six colleges across our province.

John has also served at the National Board level during his term as provincial chair, and worked very closely with Hans Burgers in 1998 when he traveled as BC Chapter Chair to Alberta to assist Hans and Dan Rozac develop the Alberta Chapter of CHES. John has served as a volunteer on many if not all of the conference planning teams that have developed stellar conferences, both provincially and nationally.