

## Auto-Correct, Please! I'd Rather Do It Myself!

By Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/Executive Director



Barbara C. Higgins

Is it me? Or do other people have the same issues that I do with “help” from automatic spell check?

At best, the tool is really not much help at all. At worst, the auto correct feature wreaks havoc on correspondence, sometimes changing the meaning of the message to horrific results.

Take for example the incident involving a fan letter I sent early in my PMI career to the U.S. Department of Commerce’s **Gary Stanley**. Most of you know Gary, a frequent and popular speaker at PMI conferences. Today, I consider him a very good friend indeed, especially after his coaching of me through my first trip to China several years ago, as part of a Department of Commerce trade mission.

From the start, Gary (or Mr. Stanley as I called him), struck me as an impressive representative of our government and a heckuva fine speaker. I told him so in an email that I sent after meeting him for the first time. Gary wrote back immediately, saying: “Well, I’ve been with the Department a long time but I’ve never before been accused of that. Signed -- Hot Pants.”

Gulp... what does that mean? What did I say?

With my heart thumping, I frantically re-read my email. Auto correct “helped” me by substituting an alternate word. Instead of “I really enjoyed your presentation,” the corrected version read “I really enjoyed your prostitution.” Perfect. Yes. That’s what I meant. I use that word all the time, so yes, let’s go with that.

Fortunately, Gary has a sense of humor and the faux pas actually led to the beginning of a nearly 20-year friendship.

That rather embarrassing episode reminds me of a 1960s vintage commercial for the pain reliever Anacin. Several vignettes show crabby headache victims snapping at their loved ones. The one that stays with me features a unappreciated daughter

snapping at her well-meaning parent: “Mother! Pull-eeze! I’d rather do it myself.” The hurt in the mother’s eyes is palpable. (If you have some time to kill, Google the series of commercials. They are classics.)

So in the spirit of my equal frustration and fascination with autocorrect, I’ve started keeping a log of these helpful suggested substitutes: “Thanks” becomes “thabvis.” “Visiting” for some reason becomes “Birute” and the list goes on...

Turn it off you say? What?! Where’s the fun in that?

The bottom line for me is that nothing replaces human intervention. Proofreading can’t and shouldn’t be replaced. Technology is meant to assist but doesn’t replace the human touch. And, that is ok by me. Years ago there was a lot of talk about virtual trade shows replacing traditional ones. While the dynamics of the shows have changed and there has been consolidation in the marketplace, traditional trade shows are still around. People want to touch and feel and mingle and network. That is great news for industry trade associations, too. There is no question that the way PMI communicates with you today is very different from the way we communicated with you a decade ago. The fax machine has been replaced by e-mail. Bulky 3-ring, vinyl binders have been replaced by the practices of making conference materials available on the PMI website to be downloaded – or not. But what has not been replaced is the penchant for human interface. We saw record turnout at the October 2016 conference, selling out the hotel block. Technical folks and the press flocked to suburban Chicago for workshops in August.

PMI is in the people business. Our success is rooted in our ability to build and leverage relationships. Our value to you, as members, increases exponentially the more you are engaged. I encourage you to take a look at PMI Technical Director **Matt Sigler’s** article on the next page of this issue of *Ripple Effect*. While we may use technology to enhance the way we deliver information to you, technology will not replace the value of our conferences, conference calls and workshops.

# The Importance of Member Participation to PMI's Success

By Matt Sigler, PMI Technical Director



Matt Sigler

In 2016, PMI achieved many successes in the technical arena. We published a Product Category Rule (PCR) Guidance Document for Kitchen and

Bath Vessel Fixtures to be used by program operators. We successfully guided the removal of American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) product standard marking requirements from showerheads, faucets, water closets and urinals. We achieved an 87 percent success rate at code hearings and began two research projects — one with **Dr. Paul Sturman** (Montana State University) to determine the impact of low flow rates on pathogen growth, and a second with the Alliance of Water Efficiency (AWE) to determine the number of non-efficient water closets (greater than 1.6 gpf) remaining within residential dwellings in five key states. PMI achieved these successes and more because of member participation.

No one understands better than our members the impact of codes and regulations on their products. Therefore, member participation is critical to PMI's success. There are many different ways in which members can participate in 2017.

## Technical Committee

The chairs of this committee are **John Finch**, Masco, and **C.J. Lagan**, American Standard Brands. This committee oversees everything PMI does in regard to laws, regulations, codes and standards that impact plumbing products. Some ways members of this committee assist staff are: reviewing code proposals for a new version of the IPC or UPC, providing feedback in regards to a comment letter that pertains to a new regulation, and participating in-person at code hear-

ings and standard meetings. The issues that impact this committee are reported by staff and discussed during the bi-weekly Tech Talk conference calls.

## California-Focused Task Group

This task group is under the jurisdiction of the Technical Committee. This task group's purpose is to establish a plan of strategy in regards to California-specific issues for consideration by the Technical Committee. For example, from this task group PMI formed its strategy in regards to the California Energy Commission's appliance efficiency regulations for residential lavatory faucets and showerheads that took effect on July 1, 2016. This group meets on an as-needed basis.

## Water Efficiency and Sustainability Committee

The chairs of this committee are **Danny Gleiberman**, Sloan Valve Company, and **Jeff Zeman**, Kohler Company. This committee focuses on issues related to the sustainability and water efficiency of plumbing products. Currently,

this committee is focused, through the efforts of the Sustainability Task Group, on the development of guidance documents to be used by program operators to apply consistent rules and calculations when developing PCRs that impact plumbing products. This group is actively working on developing a PCR Guidance Document for Bathroom and Kitchen Plumbing Fittings and meets every other Thursday.

For those of you who actively participate on such committees and task groups, thank you. Without you, PMI could not be successful in the technical arena. For those of you not yet plugged in, I encourage you to get involved to receive the full benefits of your PMI membership.

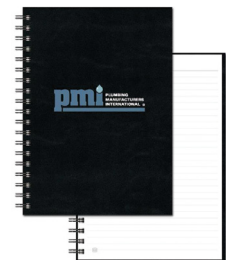
For more information on PMI committees, go to [safep plumbing.org/pmi/about/committees](http://safep plumbing.org/pmi/about/committees) or contact **Matt Sigler** at 847-217-7212 or [msigler@safep plumbing.org](mailto:msigler@safep plumbing.org).

## The PMI Logo Makes Virtually Anything Look Better

Are you in the market for a new jacket or shirt? Or maybe a travel tumbler or journal book? Or perhaps a golf umbrella is in order for this spring?



You can buy all these things and more at PMI's Logo Store – giveaways and office supplies, as well as ladies and men's apparel. The prices are right – and think about how good they will make you look. Shop at [orders.corp-imaging.com/pmi/#](http://orders.corp-imaging.com/pmi/#)



# Pete Jahrling: Taking Small Steps for Big Wins at PMI

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.



*Pete Jahrling*

**Pete Jahrling** appreciates the little things. He's a big believer in scoring small successes that eventually build up to huge results. "It's not just swinging at

the fence every time. Anyone can execute to a certain degree, but it takes time and thought to prepare and then take something to a successful finish," he said.

That's essentially Pete's philosophy in life – whether working as director of product engineering and intellectual property at Sloan Valve Company, serving on PMI's Board of Directors as the 2017 president, or enjoying his hobbies of barbecuing and woodworking.

As he starts 2017 as PMI's board president, Pete says he's most excited about PMI's expanded advocacy and outreach efforts. "We've had many base hits and doubles and we've certainly bolstered PMI's image," he said. "As an industry, our best opportunities are yet to come as we continue creating coalitions and bridge building with states and municipalities to promote WaterSense® products and legislation to support water efficiency. This also is a hallmark year

for PMI, as our very successful tenured Executive Director and CEO **Barbara C. Higgins** opens a new chapter in her life and leaves at years' end."

Pete says his experience working on various PMI and Sloan teams has helped hone his consensus-building skills, which come in handy when working with so many audiences. "We all have the same demands from competitors, project deadlines and customer needs but need to find common ground to work together," he said. "Working behind the scenes on PMI's board the past couple years has been very rewarding. We've pulled together all these different opinions and ideas into a unified, expanded strategic plan."

He's also learned the value of taking a "slow and steady" approach sometimes. For more than 10 years, Pete has enjoyed smoking and barbecuing meat and fish, a hobby that has taught him patience and the benefit of taking a long view of a situation. "I'll spend 12 to 14 hours smoking a brisket that just falls apart it's so tender," he said. "You can't rush that process." He has shared the fruits of his labor with some of his Sloan team.

Pete says he enjoys the excitement of pursuing patents, one of his responsibilities at Sloan. "An inventor can create a promising patent, cycle it through the examiner and still get a decision of 'all

claims denied.' It's devastating to the inventor. But it's particularly rewarding when you and your team can go back, identify strong technical observations, argue your case and prevail with the examiner," he said.



*PMI Board President Pete Jahrling with Michael Miller, PMI board member and director of product partnerships, LSP Products.*

While he can't imagine doing anything else, Pete originally considered earning a business degree. After high school, Pete met his mentor, an engineer working on specialty plumbing equipment. He was both impressed and hooked. Pete's mentor introduced him to several people at Sloan, who encouraged him to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees in engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago.

His 30-year career at Sloan has focused mostly on commercial product engineering. Currently, Pete's responsibilities also include determining how products technically affect the customer experience and working with the company's patent council on intellectual property matters.

Pete said he's especially proud of working on the talented team that helped revolutionize Optima Plus flushometers powered by batteries. The retrofit product converts manual flushometers to automatic, improving restroom hygiene using an infrared sensor to detect a user and activate a flushing cycle.



*For more than 10 years, Pete has enjoyed smoking and barbecuing meat and fish, a hobby that has taught him patience and the benefit of taking a long view of a situation.*

# Register for 2017 Flint Water Infrastructure Summit

Co-sponsored by the city of Flint and the state of Michigan, the 2017 Flint Water Infrastructure Summit will take place on March 7–9 at the Riverfront Banquet Center, 1 Riverfront West, in Flint. The event will be co-chaired by Flint Mayor **Karen Weaver** and Michigan Governor **Rick Snyder**.

The Flint water crisis has prompted local, state and national conversations about the urgent need for reinvestment in critical water infrastructure. To address this need, the summit will address topics such as right-sized and flexible water infrastructure to meet the changing needs of communities, particularly cities that have experienced a decline in population, as well as incorporating innovative and emerging technologies to solve complex infrastructure issues nationally.

The summit will help to identify infrastructure solutions that may be applied in Flint and similar communities. The event will also address the broader initia-

tives of Governor Rick Snyder's 21st Century Infrastructure Commission, particularly by identifying sustainable, strategic, and affordable approaches to addressing statewide infrastructure needs.

The goal of the summit is to highlight water infrastructure issues in cities where populations have declined, share lessons learned from the city of Flint, and propose solutions with a focus on new technologies. The summit has been designed to provide relevant and timely information to municipal and local officials, city councils and elected officials, community leaders, utility directors, water system superintendents, municipal planners and engineers, drinking water operators, consultants and service providers.

Register at [bit.ly/2j6cTet](http://bit.ly/2j6cTet)



*PMI members generously responded to the Flint, Michigan crisis by donating much-needed products.*

## PMI Initiates Search for New CEO/Executive Director

*Editors' Note: On September 19, PMI CEO/Executive Director Barbara C. Higgins announced her plans to retire from PMI after 18 years of service. Here's an update from the PMI Board of Directors. [goo.gl/u5RZGT](http://goo.gl/u5RZGT)*

The Board of Directors for Plumbing Manufacturers International (PMI) announced that Kittleman & Associates, LLC, a Chicago-based national search firm focused exclusively on CEO search in the non-profit sector, has been engaged to conduct a retained search for the association's new executive director. The current CEO/executive director, **Barbara C. Higgins**, continues to lead PMI until the transition to the new leader is completed.

"Barb has assembled a dedicated professional staff with a well-connected team of consultants committed to building trusted global industry relationships. With a strong financial footing to support the organization's strategic plan, this team continues to add membership value year after year" said PMI Board of Directors President **Peter Jahrling**. "Our network of building industry coalitions expands, with strong and focused industry influence, and our member value is at an all-time high. It is on that solid foundation that PMI continues to build and grow."

**Paul Patton**, PMI immediate past board president and head of the PMI board's search committee for the new CEO/executive director, said the board is confident that Kittleman & Associates will find the right individual with the experience and skills to lead PMI into the future.

"In the meantime, it's business as usual for PMI. We will ensure the transition is smooth and transparent," Patton said. "We have achieved a lot over the past years as an organization, and we have great momentum to keep moving forward – an active Board of Directors and engaged member company CEOs, outstanding committee chairs and the willingness of association participants to step up to industry leadership roles, with member value ever increasing."

Prospective candidates are encouraged to contact Kittleman's **Megan Monaco**, by email: [mmonaco@kittlemansearch.com](mailto:mmonaco@kittlemansearch.com).

# Congratulatory Letters Sent to New President, Congress

As is customary, PMI sent congratulatory letters to President **Donald Trump** and new members of Congress. The letters introduce PMI and its members while providing an overview of the work they do to assure safe plumbing and promote water efficiency throughout the nation.

The letters also ask for their support regarding public policy issues under consideration. Among the concerns mentioned in the letters include:

- Restoring the nation's water infrastructure
- Safeguarding the WaterSense program
- Implementing tax reform

- Supporting a pro-manufacturing trade agenda and pro-growth business policies
- Restoring balance to the regulatory process
- Using a deliberative, science-based approach when setting new standards

Both letters have been posted to the members-only section of [safeplumbing.org](http://safeplumbing.org).

View letters here: [goo.gl/8ER5Ro](https://goo.gl/8ER5Ro)

## Looking to Reach PMI's Members, Allies & More? Be A Sponsor!

PMI's SafePlumbing.org website and the *Ripple Effect* and *Inside MY PMI* newsletters reach PMI's members and allies, as well as other organizations and individuals interested in issues relating to the plumbing manufacturing industry.

If you're a PMI member looking to reach this audience with your advertising message in a cost-efficient way, become a Gold or Silver Sponsor today!

### Gold Sponsorship: \$10,000 one-time annual fee

The benefits of Gold Sponsorship include PMI Conference registration fees for up to two attendees, plus four months of advertising within your 12 months of sponsorship in any of these electronic PMI communication options:

- SafePlumbing.org (32,000 visits, 50,000 page views, over four months. Audience: PMI members, allies and general public). Digital ads will run for 30 days during each of four months on five high-visibility web pages (not including home page) selected by PMI.
- *Ripple Effect* (Direct delivery to 1,500+ PMI members, allies and subscribers, plus access via [safeplumbing.org](http://safeplumbing.org)). Full-page ads will run in the next four available electronic issues after artwork submission.
- *Inside My PMI* (Direct delivery to 500+ PMI members, plus access via [safeplumbing.org](http://safeplumbing.org)). Digital ads will run in the next eight consecutive issues after artwork submission.

Contact PMI Association Manager **Jodi Stuhrberg**, [jstuhrberg@safeplumbing.org](mailto:jstuhrberg@safeplumbing.org), for *Ripple Effect* and *Inside My PMI* deadlines.

### Silver Sponsorship: \$2,500 one-time annual fee

The benefits of Silver Sponsorship include one month of exposure within your 12 months of sponsorship in any of these electronic PMI communication options:

- SafePlumbing.org (8,000 visits, 12,500 page views per month. Audience: PMI members, allies and general public). Digital ads will run for 30 days on five high-visibility web pages (not including home page) selected by PMI.
- *Ripple Effect* (Direct email delivery to 1,500+ PMI members, allies and subscribers, plus access via [safeplumbing.org](http://safeplumbing.org)). Full-page ad will run in the next available electronic issue after artwork submission.
- *Inside My PMI* (Direct delivery to 500+ PMI members, plus access via [safeplumbing.org](http://safeplumbing.org)). Digital ads will run in the next two consecutive issues after artwork submission.

For details:

[safeplumbing.org/index/pmi-publications/pmi-advertising](http://safeplumbing.org/index/pmi-publications/pmi-advertising)

# 2017 PMI Conference: Sonoma Wine Country, Nov. 13-16

Stay tuned for forthcoming details about the 2017 PMI Conference, November 13-16, in Sonoma Wine Country, Calif. Having the opportunity to spend time in a gentle climate with a glass of wine is always a plus! You'll also learn about the latest issues and trends relating to the plumbing manufacturing industry. As always, PMI will find compelling speakers, organize networking events, and give you access to the contacts and knowledge you need to succeed.



## Executive Forum and Fly-In Save-the-Dates for 2017!

The two invitation-only executive forum and fly-in events provide PMI member organizations the opportunity to educate policymakers while raising the visibility of PMI and the plumbing manufacturing industry. PMI member CEOs and other senior executives generally participate.

**April 4-5, 2017**

Executive Forum and Fly-In, Washington D.C.

**June 13-14, 2017**

Executive Forum and Fly-In, Sacramento, Calif.

## PMI and ICC Sign MOU



*PMI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the International Code Council (ICC) at the 2017 K/BIS-IBS show. Shown here (L to R): Nate Kogler, Bradley, and 2017 PMI board secretary/treasurer; Barbara C. Higgins, PMI; Misty Guard, ICC; Dominic Sims, ICC; and Dwayne Garriss, ICC, and Georgia State Fire Marshall.*

## Congratulations to Erin Shencopp: PMI's Legal Rep Makes Partner



*Erin Shencopp*

Erin says she's both honored by and excited about her new role at Jones Day, where she works in the Antitrust and

Our congratulations go to **Erin Shencopp**, PMI's legal representative, for recently making partner at Jones Day. Erin has worked with PMI for three years, providing counseling on antitrust, governance, and other legal matters of the association.

Competition Law Group. She's also looking forward to continuing consulting with PMI, following on the great counsel that **Michael Sennett** of Jones Day has provided the association over the years. "This association provides tremendous value to the plumbing industry and I really enjoy helping to support its good work," she said.

As PMI's legal safeguard and troubleshooter, Erin works to ensure that PMI complies with the antitrust laws in its association activities on behalf of the industry. To that end, Erin participates in PMI's Board of Directors meetings and attends PMI's annual conference, and provides guidance on appropriate com-

munication and information exchanges among the association and its members. Erin also consults on association governance matters, various regulatory issues, PMI contracts, and research efforts. Most recently, Erin has worked with PMI on a potential research project to examine the relationship between low flow rates and opportunistic waterborne pathogens in plumbing systems and the PMI and Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) saturation study.

Erin started her career at Jones Day in 2008 and has a juris doctor degree from the University of Michigan Law School.

# World Vision Presents 2017 Crystal Vision Awards

World Vision hosted the 17th Annual Crystal Vision Awards Breakfast at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida, during the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show (KBIS). For the past 16 years, the Crystal Vision Awards have given World Vision a chance to honor companies and individuals who support its Storehouse of World Vision, which distributes excess building materials inventory donated by manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers to low-income families to improve housing and community facilities for low-income families. **Barbara C. Higgins**, PMI CEO/ Executive Director, was the master of ceremonies at the awards breakfast.

## 2017 Award Winners

**Jim Gretina**, director of retail field sales for Kohler Company, was honored with this year's Lifetime Achievement Award, given to an individual who shows exceptional support for the Crystal Vision Event and participates annually in the Storehouse. Gretina actively promotes the program to those in the industry and helps engage new companies. He consistently helps open doors to product donations and participation by key industry leaders.

**David Kohler**, president and CEO of Kohler Company, was this year's keynote speaker. He began at Kohler working on the front lines in every



*Just under 200 guests attended this year's Crystal Vision Awards ceremony.*



*World Vision has set the 18th Annual 2018 Crystal Vision Awards Breakfast for January 10 in Orlando. Save the date!*

manufacturing division, and rejoined the company in 1993 – after working at Dayton Hudson Corporation – as director of fixtures marketing. Since then and leading up to his present position, Kohler has served in several progressive roles such as vice president of sales; sector president, K&B Group; and executive vice president.

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender. For more information, visit [WorldVision.org](http://WorldVision.org) or follow on Twitter @WorldVisionUSA.



*Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/executive director, with Kohler Co. CEO and President David Kohler at the Crystal Vision Awards Breakfast. Barb was the master of ceremonies and David the keynote speaker. Photo courtesy of Bob Miodonski/BNP Media.*



*Mary Garcia, Storehouse (left) and Bob Atkins (right, former Grohe CEO and for whom the award is named) congratulate Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Jim Gretina, Kohler Company.*



*Master of Ceremonies Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/executive director.*



*Welcoming attendees to the Crystal Vision Awards breakfast are, from World Vision team: (left to right) - Bernadette Martin and Lily Nunez, together with Amy Eaton, Human Resources Manager of Globe Union Group, Inc.*



*Kohler Co. CEO and President David Kohler.*

## On the Road With PMI Staff



Barb Higgins begins 2017 traveling to New Castle, DE to meet with PMI Member Speakman Company: Imants Stiebris, vice president of compliance and safety, Bryan Schlack, chief executive officer, Kristin Barclay, vice president of product and marketing, Ken Wood, plant manager, Amy Scherer, director of product management, Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/executive director, Russ Waters, director of operations, Robert Knoll, president and CEO, and Chris Miedzius, lead technology officer. Barb also met with Past PMI President (2008) Rod Ward, who is not shown.



PMI meets and presents Jing Mei Industrial USA, Inc. with a New Member plaque. Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/executive director, Steve Edwards, Jing Mei vice president and general manager, and Jodi Stuhrberg, PMI association manager. Not pictured Kenny Simon, business development director.



Tonya W. Muse, executive director, Council of Manufacturing Associations (CMA), National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and Jodi Stuhrberg, PMI association manager at the 2017 Winter Leadership Conference.



The Crystal Vision Executive Committee gathered at the 2017 Awards Breakfast. Row 1: Jacqueline Schaffer, Schaffer Associates; Cheri Ford-DuBay, indesign; Mary Wisman, Mary Wisman Designs; Barbara C. Higgins, PMI; Amy Eaton, Gerber/Danzel/Globe Union. Row 2: Randy Krebs, Cascadia Pacific Marketing; Bob Atkins, Grobe (president, Retired); Mary Garcia, World Vision; Carol Wylie, World Vision; Lyle Hunnicutt, RainTree Associates. Row 3: Paul Hylbert, Kodiak Building Partners; Jim Inglis, Inglis Foundation; Kendrick Reaves, SharkBite Worldwide; Jack Laverty, World Vision; Jim Gretina, Kohler Co.; Jacob Puckett, SharkBite Worldwide.

## 2017 PMI LEADERSHIP

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Peter Jahrling, Sloan Valve Company**  
President

**Scott McDonald, Fluidmaster**  
Vice-President

**Nate Kogler, Bradley Corporation**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Paul Patton, Delta Faucet Company**  
Immediate Past President

**Michael Miller, LSP Products**  
(1/16-12/17)

**Todd Teter, Moen, Inc.**  
(1/16-12/17)

**Joel Smith, Kohler Company**  
(1/17-12/18)

**Chip Way, Lavelle Industries**  
(1/17-12/18)

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