



NEWS

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The Newsletter for PMI Members — by PMI Members

January/February 2005

Why PMI? -- Because It's The Right Thing To Do!

By: John Lauer, PMI's President and Sloan Valve Company's Director of International Business Development

As I begin my term as 2005 President of the Plumbing Manufacturers Institute, I would like to welcome all of you back from the holiday break. I am sure that, like me, you are ready and eager to get year 2005 started! Ready, that is, once we have sifted through the backlog of emails that have accumulated in our in-boxes since being away from the office!

Or were you keeping on top of your messages from home over the holidays? Thanks to the Internet and the impact of "the global marketplace", we are now virtually always "Open for Business." Cell phones, wireless laptops, Palm Pilots and Blackberries put us on-call 24/7, ready to meet — better yet EXCEED — the needs of our customers who expect nearly instant responses from us. It's not news that business has gone global and that we can no longer operate in a 9 to 5, Monday through Friday work environment - assuming that we ever really could.

It is important that as the world around us changes, so does our trade association. It is not acceptable to ignore these changes and continue on "business as usual." Both the PMI Board of Directors and our Executive Director are well aware of this. One example of PMI's efforts to adapt and grow is the adjustment to our by-laws

which enables us to reach out to "non-US based" enterprises with business interests in the NAFTA countries. Another example of our growing global-mindedness is the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with our counterpart association in the United Kingdom. The MOU facilitates an information exchange between PMI and the Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA). Each of our organizations will now actively exchange technical, economic and regulatory information (for additional details, see last month's issue of *PMI News*). Our continued involvement with the CEIR (European Valve Association), as well as the U.S. Department of Commerce, provides additional resources to help us stay abreast of world trade issues.

As we move through PMI's 30th anniversary year, I encourage each of us to adopt a progressive outlook for our organization. While years ago it may have been acceptable for PMI to serve as a social club, that profile is no longer appropriate. Business today is demanding and PMI must help our companies meet these demands. PMI must continue to deliver on the value proposition in meaningful and obvious ways. We must think globally and ensure that the make up of our organization is a reflection of the real

business world.

It is also my firm belief that membership in PMI goes beyond dollars and cents. Being a member of the Plumbing Manufacturers Institute is part of being a good corporate citizen. Our industry needs PMI. The consumer needs PMI. That need, in view of all of the work PMI does, cannot be easily quantified (though we often attempt to do so). We can not underestimate the importance of PMI in terms of its role as an industry watchdog and as an insurance policy against detrimental regulatory initiatives, be they environmental or legislative.

For many of our members (and a countless number of non-member companies), the cost implications of an issue such as the Jeffords bill, which if passed would result in the need to make significant changes to many of our products and manufacturing processes (with little or no benefit to the consumer), far exceeds the cost of PMI membership.

The value of PMI's work in preventing, facilitating, informing,

continued on p. 11



John Lauer
Sloan Valve Company

In This Issue . . .

Stamping Out The Random Good Idea 2	Looking Forward To Spring in Savannah 6
Avoiding/Resolving The Dreaded Red Tag 3	PMI 2005 Spring Meeting Schedule. 7
Junk Fax Prevention Rule Update 4	2005 Outlook From The Hill Part II 8
Hello, VitrA! Goodbye, Ralph! 5	Bill Axline In the Spotlight 9
	Crabbiness Revisited 10

Stamping Out The Random Good Idea

By: Barbara C. Higgins, Executive Director



Barb Higgins

Much of the success that PMI and its members have enjoyed since the new organization emerged in 1998 is due to our efforts to remain focused on the business

at hand and to not allow ourselves to be distracted. PMI staff follows the guidelines of our strategic plan to organize, prioritize and concentrate on the various tasks which you, our members, have deemed as "key." Working off of comprehensive "to-do" lists, we break projects down into manageable tasks, and review the progress at our weekly staff meetings. We regularly touch base with our membership through semi-annual meetings, one-on-one interviews, and satisfaction surveys to ensure that we are still rowing in the right direction. And, from time to time, we propose enhancements to our marching orders in view of changes in the world around us and/or potential new initiatives and opportunities.

But the primary and most important source of our various projects is contained in our Strategic Plan. Much care and thought has been given to the topics, wording, and priority of our goals. Our TOP priority is to promote the interests of our members. YOU are the primary focus and beneficiary of the efforts of PMI as we address the issues of most importance to you. (You will find the strategic plan, listing the key Focus Five issues in your PMI Membership Directory. Call a staff member if you do not have one.) Supporting each of our objectives is a list of specific action items which are pursued to accomplish each goal. In this way, we stay focused and effectively stamp out the often glamorous and tempting but deadly "random good idea."

The "random good idea" you ask? I

addressed this topic back in a 1999 issue of *PMI News*, but perhaps it's time for a review. While innovation, re-invention, and creativity are keys to the survival of an organization, the random good idea is the rascal which can derail even the most focused among us. It's the enticing offer which pulls us away from the core of our work.

"Hey gang! I just got a call from a promoter offering to help PMI start up its own industry trade show complete with our own magazine... And we can advertise our new direction on the "Letterman Show" at a special half price advertising rate starting Thursday! Whadda ya say? Let's do it!"

And with that, projects are dropped, or re-prioritized, budgets are blown and the train is off the track. The random good idea is the business equivalent of those legendary, annoying phone solicitations we all get at home (though less frequently these days!). Has such a call actually persuaded you to make a major purchase that you really hadn't already been considering? "Say! I DO need aluminum siding. Thanks for calling!" Having been a personnel director for a company with phone sales as a big part of the business, (it's a long story—don't get me started) I can say that the success of such calls is simply hitting the prospect at the right time. That is, the plan was already in the works and the call just moved the decision forward, as opposed to actually selling the person on the idea.

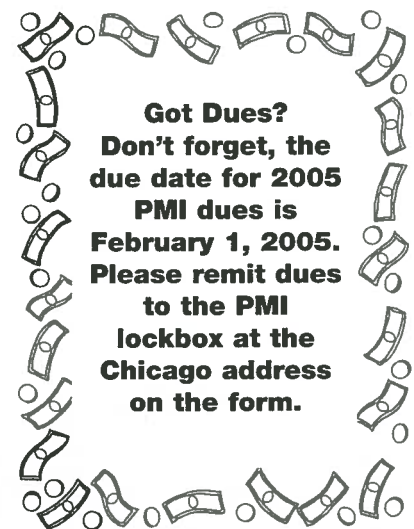
Our approach to business planning at PMI operates this way: When presented with an opportunity, we bounce it against our well thought-out strategic plan. Is the proposed opportunity already a part of the plan... and the budget? If it is... GREAT! Let's do it! If not, is the opportunity compelling enough to have us *change* our strategy and re-allocate our dollars? If it is, then let's re-think

the plan and include the proposed opportunity. If not, let's abandon the idea and get back to the original plan!

As with all businesses, the PMI office is barraged on a daily basis with solicitations to: change our phone system, subscribe to a new trade journal, advertise in a new directory, travel to a convention, exhibit in a trade show. We keep our sanity (while keeping our budget in-line) by evaluating these random good ideas in the context of our strategic plan, and making decisions accordingly. That is not to suggest that we are inflexible or adverse to new ideas. (Just about everything about PMI has been revised or at least re-evaluated over the past six years, and certainly we have made some significant changes.) It's a matter of reducing the distractions and avoiding the temptation to try to be a "jack of all trades, master of none."

So that's what we're up to these days. We are chipping away at the Focus Five and enhancing our value to you, while raising our visibility in the industry. If you have any questions about the plan or would like more details on the tactics, please call a Board member or me.

Until next time... we'll stay focused and be on the look out for the insidious random good idea.



Avoiding / Resolving The Dreaded Red Tag: PMI Can Help!

By: David Viola, PMI Technical Director

Several times a week, PMI staff receives a call from members seeking assistance in understanding and resolving a code violation involving one of their products. At one time or another, all plumbing product manufacturers fall victim to the dreaded 'red tag', a term used to describe a notice or order from a code official to remove a code violation identified during an inspection of a building under construction, alteration or repair. When a red tag is issued, all further plumbing work must be stopped on the project until the inspection is passed. The only time a manufacturer finds out about the issuance of a red tag is when their product was determined to be a contributing factor in the violation. Word usually comes back from the customer, but the code official has been known to contact the manufacturer directly.

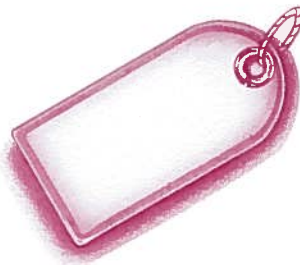
The impact of a red tag can range from a minor inconvenience that is quickly resolved to a major problem that brings a construction project to a screeching halt. Delaying any construction project is a costly proposition and can cost thousands if not millions of dollars in fines, material and labor costs to correct the problem, and lost incentives. There have been many occasions where costly corrective measures were covered by a manufacturer to preserve a customer relationship when their product was an attributing factor. Ironically, this has frequently meant paying for the replacement of their products with those of their competitors. I can't think of a more painful scenario for a manufacturer.

An even more troublesome outcome of a red tag is the realization that a product has been deemed illegal and cannot be installed in a particular market until the problems have been corrected. This can be devastating if the market is significant and it involves changes in design, material,

manufacturing, or distribution.

The following are a few tips to help address a red tag and avoid them in the future.

Train field, sales and customer service to direct all compliance questions to company code specialists. Whether it's an individual or department, the code specialists need to be the focal point on these matters to develop and deliver a consistent message. These folks are in a position to notice trends in the field, and have access to resources to help resolve the problem.



Obtain the actual requirement that prompted the red tag. You might think this is stating the obvious, but one of the biggest problems we run into is manufacturers reacting to someone's interpretation of the requirement. This helps avoid having to react to an incorrect interpretation and usually a helpful tool in determining a course of action to resolve the problem.

Be diplomatic. Showing tact and skill in dealing with code officials is very important, no matter how dire the circumstances. Only bad things can happen after a confrontational exchange with an individual possessing the ability to influence the acceptance of your product in large markets. More times than not, the code official belongs to local, regional and/or national association of peers where they regularly get together to discuss difficulties they've had in the field and identify potential solutions. I think you get the picture.

Use the resources of PMI, your

trade association! Let PMI know about the problems your company is having in the field. More than likely, other manufacturers are having similar



David Viola

difficulties. After all, PMI is the forum for industry problem-solving and the repository for technical information. PMI is a respected representative of industry interests and is actively engaged with model code groups and significant agencies involved in developing plumbing requirements. Whether you need the actual requirement, the history of its development, or the contact information of the agency enforcing it, PMI should be able to get you what you need to take the red tag head on and get it resolved. Most importantly, active involvement in PMI allows your company to stay abreast of legislative and regulatory developments that result in red tags, be part of the problem-solving process, and possess the best tool in addressing and avoiding future red tags.

PMI In The News

PMI Technical Director **Dave Viola** was quoted in a November 28th Detroit Free Press article about the World Toilet Organization's (WTO) fourth annual conference held in Beijing, China in November. The article, by Ron Dzwonkowski, editor of the Free Press editorial page, titled 'Flush with Efficiency: Toilet talk at summit aims for important improvements worldwide' discussed the changing view of toilets particularly in Asia.

Contact PMI to receive a copy of the article.

Junk Fax Prevention Rule Update

By: Maria Bazan, Association Manager



Maria Bazan

In recent issues of PMI News we relayed that in July the House had passed H.R. 4600, Junk Fax Prevention Act of

2004, and that the Federal

Communications Commission (FCC) will probably delay the effective date on the ban of unsolicited commercial

faxes until June 30, 2005.

The good news: We have recently received updated information that in December the U.S. Senate passed S.2603 legislation to allow faxes if there is an 'established business relationship' (ERB). The latest update on the Junk Fax Rule indicates, as previously suspected, that the FCC has delayed the effective date on the ban of unsolicited commercial faxes.

The not so good news: It seems the process of getting this legislation (ERB) passed must start all over again when the new 109th Congress begins the 2005 session, as S.2603 legislation

includes an amendment that is objectionable to key members of the House with jurisdiction over this matter. The objectionable amendment establishes a Federal Commission on Boxing, which will most likely leave the House and Senate unable to agree and therefore, the legislation will die in conference committee. However, there are good indications that legislation can get passed again - sooner rather than later.

Updates on this important issue will continue to be included in future issues of PMI News.

PMI Member Companies In The News

From Supply House Times: **Elkay** awarded the 2003 Elkay President's Safety Award to its Savanna, IL manufacturing facility for the large plant category. The Elkay Division plant in Ogden, UT was given the President's Best Small Plant Award. The Savanna plant improved its injury incident rate by 41% from the previous year and, at the end of 2003, the Ogden plant had gone more than five years without a lost-time injury.

Whirlpool Corp. announced **Jeff M. Fettig** is its new chairman and CEO following the retirement June 30 of **David R. Whitman**, who held the position since 1987. Fettig had been the company's president and chief operation officer and was elected to the board in 1999. He joined the company in 1981 and held positions including vice president of marketing of the Philips Whirlpool Appliance Group and of the KitchenAid Appliance Group, and vice president, group marketing and sales of the North American Appliance Group.

American Standard Co. Named **James E. Dwyer** president of its global Bath and Kitchen business, reporting to Chairman and CEO **Fred Poses**. Dwyer has spent the past 10

years in senior executive roles with major consumer enterprises, including PepsiCo and Kraft General Foods. Poses had sought someone with both operational and marketing expertise, as well as experience in brand building and strengthening distribution systems, because plumbing products have become so consumer and market driven.



From **American Standard's** website: American Standard hosted a "Singing in the Shower" contest to support the introduction of its VertiSpa home shower system. The contest kicked off in Chicago and moved through Los Angeles, Dallas, Miami and concluded in New York City. The regional winners competed in the national contest in New York October 5th, with a native New Yorker winning a VertiSpa hydro-massage system, and the chance to sing the National Anthem at a professional sports event. Contestants belted out tunes on a midtown Manhattan street corner, while holed up in a faux shower.

continued on p. 11

Readers Write

Dave,

Thank you for the well stated position letter appearing in the December issue of PM Engineer.

My best to you for the holidays,
Bill O'Keeffe
CEO
Symmons Industries, Inc.

Dave,

Just read your letter in the December issue of PM Engineer. Very well written and very well presented. I don't recall if I thanked you at the Annual Meeting for all of the work you put into getting the issues with 1016 and 1069 ready for resolution, thanks for all your help. I and ASSE appreciate it very much. Have a safe and Happy Holiday Season.

Rich Prospal

Chairman of ASSE Products and Standards Committee

Nice work Dave... It's good to be on your team... thanks.

Tim Kilbane
National Sales Manager
Symmons Industries, Inc.

PMI Welcomes New Member Vitra

By: Michelle Frenette, Member Services Manager



The history of Vitra can be traced back to 1942 and the origins of the Eczacıbaşı Group, the international

health-based industrial group of Turkey, when Dr. Nejat Eczacıbaşı founded a small workshop for making ceramic coffee cups.

In 1958 Eczacıbaşı opened Turkey's first ceramic sanitaryware plant in Istanbul. From 1970 onward, Vitra became a well known brand name in sanitaryware. In response to the demands of a booming construction industry, in 1979 Eczacıbaşı opened a new production facility at Bozüyük, Bilecik, not far from Istanbul. In 1996, the opening of a second plant in Bozüyük, Bilecik equipped with the most advanced technology, ensured further expansion.

Vitra, with its strong brand image and wide distribution network, has been the market leader in Turkey since the 1950s. Its production capacity is the largest in Turkey with top quality production resulting in high market shares internationally. Vitra also supports good relationships with industry leaders and is well developed to expand its production capacity to meet customer requirements. Five sales

companies and the export department of Vitra produce worldwide sales.

Vitra products are marketed in Turkey by Intema, in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and BENELUX by Ekom GmbH, in the UK and Ireland by Vitra UK., in Canada and the United States by Vitra USA and in



Akgun Seckiner
Vitra's Vice President,
Plumbing Fixtures.

the Russian Federation by EBM. The Export Department takes responsibility for the rest of Europe, the Middle East and the Far East.

Vitra manufactures over 1000 different models with complementary products, to meet the changing needs of consumers on five continents. Vitra leads the sector in product variety as well as capacity.

Continued investments in advanced technology have ensured Vitra's international competitive edge through higher productivity, greater flexibility and improved quality. Since its establishment, Vitra has led the sector in introducing new technology; being the first to adopt electrostatic glazing, to set up a fully-automatic fettling and

glazing line, and to fully mechanize casting lines.

Vitra has one of the largest production facilities on one site in the world. The Kartal, Istanbul plant covers an area of 52,000 square meters and the one at Bozüyük, Bilecik covers an area of 182,000 square meters.

Anchored in Suwanee, Georgia, **Mert Karasu**, Technical Supervisor at Vitra, and a familiar face at recent PMI functions, said Vitra decided to join PMI in order to have the opportunity to network with other plumbing manufacturers and suppliers. He says PMI offers Vitra up-to-date information on the industry along with knowledge of the industry standards, codes and state regulations. He adds that Vitra has made many valuable contacts through PMI and is pleased to be a part of an organization that promotes openness in the industry.



Mert Karasu at PMI's
Fall 2004 Meeting.

Thank you for the endorsement, Mert and welcome, Vitra! We look forward to meeting **Akgun Seckiner** at future PMI functions. We are glad you are part of PMI!

Farewell To Ralph Herrbach

A fond farewell and best wishes to **Ralph Herrbach**, 2004 immediate past president of PMI and former president of Cifial USA in Atlanta. Ralph has resigned his Cifial post to return to his roots in the greater Chicago area with his wife Nancy. Both Ralph and Nancy grew up in northwest Indiana.

Ralph has accepted a position with Nikles Inter AG, a Swiss-based company which supplies showerheads,

hand showers and related products to OEMs. He will work to provide enhanced services to Nikles customers. Ralph joined Cifial seven years ago having previously been with Raytheon Company, Kohler Co., and Delta Faucet Company.

Good luck, Ralph! We'll miss ya at PMI! (At least until we sign up Nikles Inter AG as a PMI member!)



Nancy and Ralph Herrbach at the PMI 2004
Spring Meeting in Sonoma California.

Looking Forward To Spring In Savannah, Georgia

By: Michelle Frenette, Member Services Manager

Getting a bit weary of the snow and cold? Slogging through the denouement of the holiday season? How about a little something to get your mind onto lighter, brighter topics: PMI's 2005 Spring Meeting is rapidly approaching. Kicking off April 10th and ending April 13th, we'll be a little early for peaches, but right on time for warm, southern breezes and golf at the Westin Savannah Harbor Resort in Savannah, Georgia. PMI's Sunday golfers will be one of the last groups to play The Club course at the Westin Savannah Harbor prior to the PGA Champions "Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf" Tour.

Spouses enjoying spring break can spend their days taking in the azaleas, Spanish moss and historic mansions along cobblestone paved streets. Savannah specialties include pecan praline candies and key lime cooler cookies, wonderful refreshments after a day of sightseeing.

Be sure to book early – the hotel deadline is March 16th – you can contact the hotel directly by calling



912-201-2000 or book online by visiting the following website: <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=0501185990&key=30DBC> The special PMI room rate is \$194.00.

New for 2005: the Spring Meeting promotion will be sent out via E-mail in February. Speakers will include **Ruth King**, President, Pro Network TV, Inc., offering a practical guide to E-learning and remote learning;

Michael Colopy, China Specialist, returning from our Fall 2004 CEO Forum will explore the opportunities presented by the emergence of the Chinese business landscape; and **Stuart Varney**, as our keynote speaker. One of the nation's most respected business journalists, Varney is the former host of CNBC's *Wall Street Journal* Editorial Board with Stuart Varney. Previously, he was co-anchor of CNN's daily business program, *The Moneyline News Hour*, and was part of the team that launched CNN's business news division in 1980. Varney joined the Fox News Channel

in December 2003 as a contributor to a variety of the network's shows. We're certain he'll provide a thought provoking and insightful keynote address on the economics of 2005.

So, keep warm thoughts of spring on your mind and before you know it, we'll see you in Savannah!

Please see p. 7 for the full Spring Meeting schedule.



Michelle Frenette

Spring Meeting Registration Materials will soon be in your E-Mail mailbox.



Expressions Of Sympathy And Appreciation

Our sympathies go out to the Corcoran family at the American Society of Sanitary Engineering (ASSE).

Barbara Horvath, who was Diana's mother and Shannon's grandmother, passed away on December 1.

Diana Corcoran is the Product Listing Director, and former Executive Director of ASSE. **Shannon Corcoran** is Diana's daughter and the current Executive Director of ASSE.

"The family of George I. Theisen deeply appreciates and gratefully acknowledges your kind expression of sympathy."

Dear Barbara,

On behalf of my entire family I would like to thank you for your kind expression of sympathy. Your memorial gift* is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Eva Marie Fox

[daughter of George Theisen]

* To the to the Greenville Tech Foundation, Inc. in memory of George I. Theisen for the George I. Theisen / T&S Brass and Bronze Works, Inc.

Endowed Scholarship Fund.

PMI 2005 Spring Meeting Schedule

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

- 3:30p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Meeting Registration
GOLF TOURNAMENT
2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting (Restricted Attendance)
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Welcome Reception
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Welcome Dinner

MONDAY, APRIL 11

- 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast Buffet
8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. ISSUE COMMITTEE: Universal Conformity Assessment
9:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. E-Business Issues and Opportunities Standing Committee with **Ruth King**
11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Lunch Buffet
12:45 p.m.- 2:45 p.m. ISSUE COMMITTEE: Fair Trade with **Michael Colopy**
3:00 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. ISSUE COMMITTEE: Leachates/Lead Seminar
5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. Showerhead/ Hand Shower, Faucet and Shower, Tub, Tub-Shower Fittings Joint Product Group
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Networking Reception
Dinner On Your Own
9:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. Late-Night Networking Reception

TUESDAY, APRIL 12

- 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Board Breakfast (Restricted Attendance)
7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast Buffet
8:45 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. Flushing Devices/ Fixture Joint Product Group
10:00 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. ISSUE COMMITTEE: Water Conservation
11:15 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Government Affairs Standing Committee
12:30 p.m.- 1:30 p.m. Lunch Buffet
1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. Member Services Standing Committee:
Industry Statistics
3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Technical Standing Committee
4:45 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. General Membership Meeting
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Networking Reception
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Dinner/Keynote by **Stuart Varney**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

- 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast Buffet
8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Leachate Strategic Summit (Tentative)



2005 Outlook- Part II: Recent Developments

By: Christian Richter, PMI Lobbyist

In our last update we assessed the election impact on a handful of key issues for PMI members. We signaled a particular note of caution for leaded brass plumbing products in light of strong interest from top EPA officials in revising the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR).

PMI discussions with top Agency officials since late November, along with other developments, have confirmed that EPA may be moving toward a broader review of the Lead and Copper Rule than previously anticipated. Among the array of questions that continue to percolate within the Agency are whether a change to the definition of "lead free" is warranted for plumbing products and whether the current lead leach standard for products should be tightened due to perceived public health considerations.

It's purely speculative at this point to predict the timing for an LCR rulemaking effort. However, we're told the Agency intends to make progress in 2005 on further review and

recommendations regarding certain provisions of the rule that warrant change. There are obvious concerns for industry here. Opening up a major national regulation for revision in the wake of even a minor public health controversy invariably invites all sorts of mischief.

The recently announced departure of EPA chief **Mike Leavitt** may put a wrinkle in EPA's agenda for an LCR regulatory effort. As Leavitt exits to take over the top post at the Department of Health and Human Services, there is already a short list of potential nominees for the EPA job. Our general assessment, however, is that regardless of who heads the Agency, the Bush Administration is committed to revisit the regulation and will likely advance in some fashion on the LCR effort in 2005.

In the meantime, **Senator Jeffords'** "lead roundtable" discussion in Washington ultimately never materialized in December, although PMI continues to discuss Jeffords'

plans with his senior staff. At this point, the Senator still aims to overhaul and reintroduce his "lead ban" legislation in the 109th Congress.



Christian Richter

While the Senator lays the groundwork for his effort, in recent weeks his Senate Republican colleagues have made changes to the committee with jurisdiction over the Safe Drinking Water Act. Reflecting their expanded majority, Senate Republicans have strengthened their control of the Environment and Public Works Committee to a 10-8 margin, putting a slightly higher hurdle in place for Jeffords to move this and other legislation to the Senate floor.

Stay tuned for more updates on this topic and other issues on PMI's agenda.

Annual Reminder:

Electronic Communications Procedures

By: Barbara C. Higgins, PMI Executive Director

While the Internet and electronic mail offer efficient, effective and productive communications, these systems also pose serious administrative problems and legal risks for you, our members.

As in all communications with fellow PMI members, it is important that you follow the guidelines set forth in our antitrust policy statement when communicating electronically. It is a mistake to assume that electronic communications are somehow more protected or confidential than conventional means!

PMI members should use the same caution and procedures with electronic communications as have generally been followed for other forms. **All**

reasonable efforts should be made to direct e-mails between or among PMI members involving PMI matters to or through the appropriate PMI staff member, as follows:

Policy, marketing, member issues, administrative and management matters; focus issues: Barbara Higgins as primary contact, Maria Bazan or Michelle Frenette as backup contacts;

Technical issues, codes and standards, universal conformity assessment: Dave Viola as primary contact, Maria or Michelle as backup contacts;

Seminars, workshops, forums, meeting registration and logistics: Maria or Michelle as primary contacts.

Please note that these are general categories and guidelines. We encourage you to copy any or all of us on your e-mails to other members. This will keep the staff in the loop on all PMI matters and will also enable staff and legal counsel to closely monitor communications between members. Adherence to this procedure will also help protect PMI and you from certain legal pitfalls and will enable staff to better manage PMI affairs.

PMI staff e-mail info:

bhiggins@pmihome.org

dviola@pmihome.org

mbazan@pmihome.org

mfrenette@pmihome.org

Getting To Know PMI's Board Of Directors: Bill Axline

By: Michelle Frenette, Member Services Manager

PMI is ringing in the New Year with a few new additions to the Board of Directors. **Bill Axline**, Executive Vice President and COO of Fluidmaster, Inc. began his term as one of PMI's Directors at Large on January 1, 2005. The term will last three years. A relative 'newbie' to PMI, Bill is looking forward to PMI's assistance in helping its members standardize regulations between states and countries in order to, in his words, "Help us all to keep things simple!"

Previously in the hardware and tools industry with companies like Stanley Works, Alltrade and Distribution America, Bill has been with Fluidmaster for just under two years. His list of the secrets to his success includes high integrity, hard work, leading by example, and balancing work and family commitments. His management philosophy is to focus on building a strong team of people with complementary skills and experience. Bill added that it's important to "not take yourself too seriously" and to mentor people to always look for ways to improve the process and their own skills. Bill cites his own mentor, Richard Hastings, as one of the most influential people in his life. Mr. Hastings was the President of Stanley Tools when Bill started working after college in the early 1970s. "[Richard] was an excellent mentor to young people and made sure they were focused on doing the 'basics' very well. He taught us

that if 'you can't measure it, then you can't manage improvement,'" Bill says.

Bill and his wife Barbara are the proud parents of two sons, Jeff and Mike, an engineer for Kimberly Clark and a student at St. Edwards University, Austin, TX respectively. Bill enjoys traveling with his family, and cites Venice, Italy as a favorite vacation spot. A native of Zanesville, Ohio, he has become accustomed to the California climate and likes to kick back at home and enjoy the view of the



Bill and Barbara Axline

pacific with jazz or blues music in the background, and a glass of good bourbon with some of Barbara's gourmet cooking. Bill's personal credo is to "treat others as you want to be treated, work hard, play hard and have a passion for what you do!" adding, "Have a vision and set goals!"

Bill cites his pet peeve as "people that promise but don't perform" which is quite the contrast to how he views PMI. Despite the fact that he has only been a part of PMI for over a year, Bill said he is very impressed with **Barb Higgins** and the entire PMI team. "They are focused on being cost effective – efficient and providing the programs, information and services that the membership wants. We need to support her [Barbara's] efforts – bring in new members to strengthen our organization. The members and the staff must never stop evolving – changing to meet the current needs of the industry." Bill states that Fluidmaster belongs to PMI because "We feel strongly that our company should support the industry organization to help maintain and build a strong global organization." His vision for PMI is to "keep it focused on industry issues and education – help it become a global voice."

With the vision and dedication of members like Fluidmaster, and directors like Bill Axline, PMI will indeed continue to anticipate and meet the needs of a changing industry. Thank you, Bill for giving us the opportunity to get to know you, we're glad you are on board and look forward to working with you!

 The Most Popular Name in Toilet Repair.
Fluidmaster

New PMI Committee Chairs Ready To Serve

Dear Barbara,

Happy New Year! I am looking forward to beginning my new assignment [Government Affairs Committee Chair]. I have placed several calls to George Bush to inform him of my appointment and to discuss plumbing issues with him. He has yet to return my calls....

Jack, A. Krecek

Vice President, General Manager Water-Cooler Products
Elkay Manufacturing

Barb, Dave, Maria and Michelle,

Thanks for always making Carole and me feel very comfortable and welcome. Hope you all have a wonderful holiday season -

Steve Maple [Fluidmaster]

(Great article, Michelle!!)

Note: Steve was introduced as the new Flushing Devices Chair in the November/December issue of PMI News.

It's Showtime! 2005 ISH International Trade Fair Details

Frankfurt am Main, Germany- The ISH International Trade Fair for Building and Energy Technology, the Bathroom Experience, Air Conditioning and Ventilation Technology is set to take place March 15-19, 2005.

For the first time, the Lifetime Congress will be held parallel to the

ISH from March 17-19, 2005. On show will be the latest spa, wellness and health trends.

ISH trade visitors can benefit from the advantages of online ticketing at the ISH website (www.ish.messefrankfurt.com) and only pay the advance ticket price until the last day of the fair.

The ISH show will once again open its doors to private visitors on Saturday, March 19, 2005. The fair introduces consumers to new bathroom design, shows trends in the field of fireplaces and tiled stoves, and provides information about innovative heating systems.

Crabbiness Revisited

Apparently Barb Higgins' column last month hit a nerve. In the November/December issue of PMI News, she examined the current mood of crabbiness sweeping the nation. We really appreciated hearing from so many of you about the article. Here's a sample of some of the responses we received.

Our best wishes to you for a happy and successful New Year.

No one is crabby here.

I loved your article, Barb!

All the best to you,

Claus and Juscy Zieger

Interbath

Dear Barb,

I hope you are well. Thanks for the PMI News which I had a look at - immediately heading for your article on crabbiness. Well spoken! I was trying to think whether we had a crabbiness problem [in Europe], and concluded that yes, but it is an annual phenomenon, reaching a peak when people are trying to do too many things - working, shopping and juggling and when the weather is damp etc....

All this crabbiness and bickering, when half of humanity can't even find decent water, security and shelter - (there's a legitimate reason to be crabby...)

Barb, I'll stop before my train of thought defeats the real purpose of my note - to wish you and Trey and family a happy Christmas en famille! Hope you get a good break and not too much shopping.

All the best,

Lionel Platteuw

CEIR Secretariat VDMA

Brussels, Belgium

Dear Barbara,

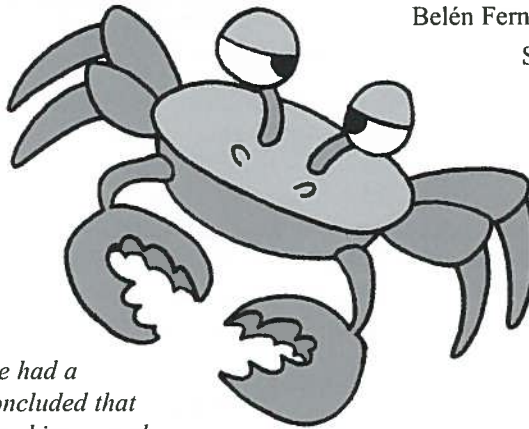
First of all, Happy New Year and Best Wishes for the future.

Congratulations for your last article in *PMI NEWS*. I absolutely agree with you and I see that the situation in USA is quite similar to that in Spain, with the people divided and aggressive. It seems that is only possible one way of thinking and is really difficult to maintain a normal conversation about some subjects (IRAQ war, politics, religion, etc...). Thank you very much for this article and continue being so tolerant. It is very important to maintain the tranquility in these changing and difficult days.

Best regards,

Belén Fernandez Jimenez

Secretary General, Agrival
Madrid, Spain



Hi Barbara-

Loved your last editorial!

Lyle C.R. Landon

Publisher

Kitchen and Bath Business

Good Morning, My Friend,

You just warn that chick who hit you that there are other chicks out here that will bring wonderful shades of black and blue to them if they ever touch one Barb again!

Great, great article...I absolutely have been wondering the same thing..."why all the crabby people?" Perhaps everyone should take a deep breath, look around and see and listen to the small beauties that surround us each day!

Thanks, Barb and a very warm "uncrabby" holiday season!

M. Susan Kennedy

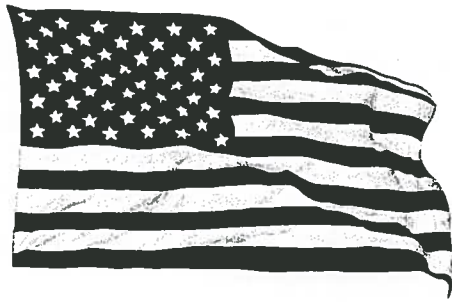
Director of Marketing

Sloan Valve Company

NAM Thoughts On 2004 Election: The Impact Of Manufacturers

By: John M. Engler, President and CEO National Association of Manufacturers

The untold story of the 2004 elections was the decisive influence of business. The National Association of Manufacturer's (NAM) Prosperity Project, a massive voter education and get-out-the-vote campaign managed in partnership with the Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC), helped companies and associations educate and motivate their employees about candidates, issues and elections. Altogether, we and other businesses working with BIPAC signed up almost 800,000 new voters and sent more than 30 million election-related messages.



Now the business community has an extraordinary opportunity to achieve long-overdue policies needed to strengthen manufacturing. The shift in power in the Senate suggests we may be able to make progress on some key issues that have in the past run aground on the threat of filibuster – energy legislation, legal reforms and a solution to the asbestos crisis to name a few. Nothing is guaranteed, but if business can bring the same level of active engagement to the legislative/policy process as it did to the elections, we can achieve great

things in the 109th Congress.

Our objectives are to reduce the costs of production at home, secure a level playing field abroad, unleash the full power of our telecommunications industry and create viable career tracks

to bring more bright young people into manufacturing. We look forward to working with you in the year ahead!

Editor's Note: John M.

Engler has been named president of NAM, the largest industry trade group in America, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states. Engler

became NAM president on Oct. 1, 2004, replacing the retiring Jerry Jasinowski. The former three-term Michigan governor, Engler is committed to educating the public and policymakers that manufacturing is critical to our future as a nation. Born in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, Engler graduated from Michigan State University and later earned a law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing. He serves on the boards of Northwest Airlines, Universal Forest Products and is a past chairman of the National Governors' Association. He and his wife Michelle are parents of triplet daughters born in 1994 -- Margaret, Hannah and Madeleine.

PMI Executive Director Barbara Higgins serves on the Board of Directors of NAM's Association Council.

It's The Right Thing To Do

Continued from p. 1

representing, teaching, networking, and coalition building is nearly impossible to quantify. Membership in PMI is an investment in our industry, both present and future. When asked "Why PMI?" my answer is "Because it's the right thing to do!"

I encourage each of you to expand your view of PMI. PMI's reach now extends beyond the borders of the

United States, and its value goes far beyond the balance sheet. Your membership in PMI is an investment that makes sense! I hope you will help me spread the word to those who have not yet joined our organization. I look forward to working with each of you to expand the value and the reach of PMI in 2005!

PMI Member Companies In The News

Continued from p. 4

Dear Barbara,

Thank you so much for the contact information for editorials used in our current issue of Chicagoland Office and Commercial Real Estate Magazine! We obtained information from **Moen** and **Kohler** for use in our special section, "Buildings as Art/Art in Buildings." We were very pleased with the end result; enclosed is a copy for you.

We appreciate your help and support, and wish you and yours a very Happy Holiday season!

Sincerely,

Judi Mirochna

Communications Specialist

Building Owners and Managers Association of Suburban Chicago

PMI is pleased to have been the relay point for the authors of the three

articles featuring Bathrooms as Art, and the plumbing manufacturers that participated. The Winter 2004-2005 issue of "Office and Commercial Real Estate Magazine" features the Bathrooms as Art topic with articles chronicling Kohler Company's and Moen Inc's nod toward the arts in their product designs and commissioned projects. Please contact PMI for copies of the articles.

Holiday Wishes From A Prospective Member

Meilleurs Voeux, Season's Greetings, Felices Fiestas.

Barbara,

Best wishes of Happiness, Health and Prosperity to all PMI's team members. Special thanks for your support and business cooperation.

Andree Heroux,
MAAX

Ste.-Marie-De-Beauce
Quebec, Canada



Mangia! The PMI staff and spouses celebrate the Holiday Season at Buca di Beppo restaurant in Oak Brook, IL.
Left to Right: Dave Viola, John Bazan, Maria Bazan, Maria Viola, Barb Higgins, Trey Higgins, Michelle Frenette and Tim Schmitz.



Tidings From Old Friends



Bruce Smith (far right), former PMI Board member and former Vice President of J. R. Smith Company, and the Greater Smith Family send Seasons Greetings.

2005 PMI LEADERSHIP

Executive Committee

John Lauer, Sloan Valve Company
President

Al Walcutt, MPC Plastics, Inc.
First Vice President

Claude Theisen, T&S Brass & Bronze Works
Second Vice President

Ken Martin, Delta Faucet Company
Treasurer

Jim Westdorp, Kohler Company
Immediate Past President

Directors at Large:

Bill Axline, Fluidmaster, Inc.

Herb Barnhart, Tempress Ltd.

Pete DeMarco, American Standard, Inc.

Ray Fisher, Jr., Fisher Manufacturing Co.

Rod Ward, Speakman Company

Tom White, Haws Corporation

PMI STAFF:

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Executive Director

David W. Viola

Technical Director

Maria A. Bazan

Association Manager

Michelle Frenette

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