

PMI MEMBER INVOLVEMENT....WE CAN'T SPELL SUCCESS WITHOUT "U"

BY FRANK EVANS, PMI PRESIDENT



Frank Evans

I am a firm believer in the adage that you get out of an organization as much as you put in. I have been personally involved in PMI for several years and am truly proud to now be the president of an organization which has been such an important part of my life and given me so much in terms of knowledge, friendships and opportunities.

In today's society, we are seeing an unfortunate and rapid decline in the number of "joiners". Volunteer organizations such as scouting, Kiwanis, Lions Club, parent/teacher groups, community organizations, even church membership rosters are in decline. People are *too busy* to be involved.

Too busy to be involved in the things that affect your life? Too busy to make a difference? It's frightening to me to see

people withdraw from important leadership roles within the community. We come to depend on others — "I'm too busy — let someone else do it." Through our apathy and low voter turn out, we even let others dictate the course of our nation, beginning at the most local of levels.

Are you content to be a spectator? To stand back and let others determine the course of the country, this industry, your company, and your career? I encourage each of you to be proactive. Jump in with both feet. Make a difference!

We now have a PMI staff that is eager to serve the membership...they are listening and reacting to your ideas and concerns. They are hungry for your input and involvement. Let's keep them filled up! The staff serves as the eyes and ears of the industry and keeps all of us up to date on what's going on out there...but it's not enough to simply sit back and take it all in. The success of our association is the combined efforts of all of us — working together to improve our industry. We cannot depend on a few reliable old souls to carry the water. Each of us

Continued on page 4

MAY I.T. FORUM FOCUSES ON VISION AND STRATEGY BY LORI SMELSER, ASSOCIATION MANAGER

Presentations on the e-commerce strategies of Home Depot, U.S. Build and ChannelLinx highlight PMI's second I.T. Forum on May 14-15 at the Sofitel Chicago O'Hare, 5550 North River Road, Rosemont, Ill., which will explore the real and potential impact e-commerce and the Internet are having on the plumbing industry. Sessions on May 14 will be held from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., with a dinner and presentation from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. May 15's session begins with a 7:30 a.m. breakfast.



The May Forum's focus is on the vision and strategy of e-commerce initiatives from several perspectives — marketplace exchanges, e-chain/supply chain management, construction industry retail, and case studies of "how it's done" in other industries.

The Forum was designed with four questions in mind: 1) What are the vision and internet strategy of marketplace exchanges?; 2) What does it take to thrive and survive in the

proliferating "B2B" world, and what do those companies need from plumbing manufacturers?; 3) How can the plumbing manufacturing industry meet those needs and exist in a mutually beneficial relationship?; and 4) How are other industries using e-commerce to their benefit?

Continued on page 8

IN THIS ISSUE...

(In addition to our regular features)

Success, Change and Membership Growth.....	2
Meet John Lauer, PMI's Newest Board Member	4
PMI's Spring Meeting Wrap Up	5
AquaBrass International Corporation — PMI's Newest Member	9



Barb Higgins

Successful people have a vision of their success. They have a sense of who they are, where they want to end up and how to get there. Some of the world's most successful people were written off as odd balls marching to the beat of a much different drummer. From Einstein to Elvis, history is filled with stories of individuals

"In order to succeed, you must know what you are doing, like what you are doing and believe in what you are doing."
— Will Rogers

who dared to color outside of the lines and as a result change the world. As we approach the 98th anniversary of the flight of the Wright Brothers, it's amazing to look back at the innovations since that fateful day at Kittyhawk. Air travel, for example, has gone from a dream to a miracle to a real pain in the neck for those of us who do it on a regular basis. The Wright Brothers' vision changed the world and now we can't imagine life without air travel.

At the spring meeting, keynote speaker David Cork made the point that the baby boomers who were once warned "not to trust anyone over 30", and to "do your own thing", fell right into line and ended up with a lifestyle and work ethic very similar to their parents. Now we even *sound* like our parents as we try to understand the new music, fashion and morals of the day, and wonder what the heck motivates those kids of the "Y" generation?! (By the way, I'm told that the origin of the term "X" generation refers to the fact that they are the 10th generation since the founding of our country. "Y" generation is so named simply because it follows "X". I love trivia!)

"New and different" is not bad. Change is good. There is no other choice but change. (It's amazing to me that entire books including the recent best-seller "Who Moved My Cheese?" are devoted to calming people down in the face of change. What else is there but change?)

However, I firmly believe that some principles transcend the years and will remain prerequisites to success: honesty, integrity, work ethic, respect for others, commitment, confidence, drive. These are qualities that, in my view, will never become outdated. It seems to me that people, and in particular *successful* people, through the ages are more alike than different.

Having said all that, it is amazing to me how the years sneak up on you. Our kids were stumped by a rotary phone they came upon recently. Stumped...by a rotary phone. They didn't know which way to turn the dial. And these are smart kids for goodness' sake! Missy is in graduate school at Washington University in St. Louis, and Tracy is a freshman at McGill in Montreal. I'll have you know I spent most of my adolescent years on a rotary phone. I was proud to demonstrate the gadget for them.

As shocking as these differences between the generations may be, it's important to be aware of them and react to them. It

is an essential element of good marketing.

PMI meetings have been adapted and compressed to be compatible with the hectic demands of today's work schedules. Some people think we've compressed too much. Other people want even more compressed schedules. I'm pleased to say that the spring meeting survey results seem to indicate that we have hit on a good compromise between the two extreme views.

This year as you've heard, we will focus on attracting new members to PMI. Just as people have changed over the years, so has business. We continually benchmark PMI's strengths and value against the needs of our members. We will do this on a strategic, executive level at the upcoming CEO breakfast hosted by PMI during the K/BIS® show April 27 in Orlando. We'll assemble the CEOs and principal representatives of member and non-member companies alike to validate our current direction and brainstorm new areas of interest. With regard to PMI membership recruitment, we take very seriously the question of, "What's in it for me?"

At a recent meeting of association executives held here at PMI headquarters, we discussed the importance of keeping our organizations fresh and relevant to attract and retain members, and the challenge of motivating younger people into volunteer, leadership roles. Awareness is half the battle, action is the other half. Just like that huge ball rolling at the heels of Indiana Jones in the Temple of Doom, change is coming and it's coming fast. PMI is ready!

And speaking of change — looks like it's about time to update my photo again! Time marches on!

PMI IN TRADE PRESS

"What Does ISH North America Mean for ASPE?", *PM Engineer*, December 2000.

"ISH North America to Debut in 2002 with NEX Partners", *Supply House Times*, January 2001.

"ISH Crosses Atlantic; U.S. Show Set for 2002", *Contractor*, January 2001.

"PMI Elects Evans President for 2001", *Supply House Times*, January 2001.

"NCSBCS Votes Yes on Product Approval Model", *Plumbing and Heating Contractor News*, January/February 2001.

"ISH North America to Debut in October 2002", *Plumbing and Mechanical*, February 2001.

"PMI Announces Plan to Gain Support For Trade Show Consolidation Effort", *PM Engineer*, March 2001.

"PMI Concludes 25th Anniversary, 20th Century With Time Capsule", *Plumbing and Mechanical*, February 2001.

"PMI Concludes 25th Anniversary With Time Capsule", *Supply House Times*, February 2001.

"PMI Promoting Trade Show Consolidation", *Plumbing Engineer*, March 2001.

EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT SUCCESS

By DAVID W. VIOLA, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

As we move forward in our efforts to level the playing field in the area of product approval, we are finding that a great many of the key players lack even a basic understanding of the process. Code authorities, manufacturers, manufacturers' representatives, plumbers, specifiers and product certifiers all must understand the role of product standards, codes and certification in order to accomplish our goal of creating a product approval infrastructure allowing plumbing products to be "tested and certified once, and recognized worldwide".

As unbelievable as it sounds, we are finding that code authorities do not understand the difference between a standards development organization (SDO) and a product certifier. During a presentation I recently made in front of the chief plumbing inspector and top inspectors for a major jurisdiction, it became very apparent that this was the case. These individuals firmly believed that ANSI is a standards writer, and that organizations such as American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) are product certifiers. To put this in perspective, they believe that a faucet marked "ASME A112.18.1" meant that ASME certified that the faucet complied with the A112.18.1 standard written by ANSI.

This seemingly minor misunderstanding has recently evolved into a major problem. This jurisdiction has adopted an unwritten policy requiring products to be certified by the organization that writes the standard. The result is the unnecessary exclusion of products certified by other equally qualified certifiers.

I also had an opportunity to discuss PMI's conformity assessment objectives with officers and executive staff of a prominent plumbing product certification agency a few days ago. Although this organization had applied to have their certification program accredited by ANSI, and have repeatedly stated that this process is well under way, they did not know what ANSI's requirements were with regard to test labs, and ongoing factory audits and testing. This is amazing considering that these are critical elements of every third party certification program. More notably, this organization hasn't felt pressure from their competitors, customers or program users to identify and understand these requirements and how they would affect their business.

To combat these problems, PMI is developing an education program aimed at addressing the essential elements of the product approval process, and the importance of requiring product to be certified by an accredited third party certifier. Once complete, this information can be used to educate the code authorities. Concurrently, this information can be used to assist your sales staff, manufacturers' representatives and other personnel responsible for obtaining and maintaining code approvals for your products. It is essential that our folks in the trenches understand the process and our objectives.

One of the many goals of the educational material is to stress the importance of including the latest edition of product and design standards in all of the plumbing codes. These standards serve as a valuable source of information for manufacturers, specifiers and code authorities. Product standards also level the

playing field for manufacturers by establishing a minimum level of product performance, and serve to reduce antitrust and product liability exposure. Finally, with widespread adoption, product standards are the most important tool we have in our campaign to reduce technical trade barriers.

As illustrated in the earlier example, we also need to clarify the difference between the standards development

organizations (SDO), product certifiers and ANSI. ANSI does not certify products or develop standards. They only serve to evaluate and approve the development and maintenance process for standards. ANSI approval of standards is intended to verify that the principles of openness and due process have been followed in their development and that a consensus of those directly and materially affected by the standard has been achieved. The SDO, otherwise known as a secretariat, writes and maintains product standards. They can be trade associations, professional societies, and laboratories. In some instances, these organizations will also operate product certification programs. Organizations that develop standards and certify products are required to clearly separate the standards development and certification functions to avoid anti-competitive concerns and conflicts of interest.

We need to emphasize the need to require certification by a competent, independent and objective third party agency for products affecting health and safety. Third party certification includes initial product testing by an approved test lab, placement of the certifier's mark on the approved product, and ongoing random factory audits and product testing to ensure continued compliance. Because the third party certification agency mark is placed on the product, compliance with code can readily be determined in the field. If a code official needs additional assurances that the product complies with the code, proof can be determined by viewing online directories or requesting written documentation from the third party certification agency. The end result is an increased level of confidence that the products comply with code.

The last important element of the product approval process is accreditation of the third party certifier. We must encourage the code authorities to require third party certifiers to be accredited by ANSI or other independent and objective organization, because accreditation creates a level playing field for certifiers by establishing a minimum acceptable level of performance. Accreditation ensures initial and continued compliance with the provisions of the accreditation program. Finally, accreditation also provides the code authorities with the highest level of confidence that products comply with code.

The success of our conformity assessment initiatives will depend on the success of our campaign to educate our field personnel and code authorities.



Dave Viola

MEET JOHN LAUER, PMI'S NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

BY LORI SMELSER, ASSOCIATION MANAGER

Typically at spring meetings, PMI members don't have the privilege of electing a director at large or officer to the PMI Board of Directors. But things were a little different at our 2001 Spring Meeting last month in Marco Island, Fla. The Board came to the meeting one member short — a director at large was unable to fulfill his one-year obligation this year. So the Nomination Committee geared up earlier this year and picked a truly qualified candidate for the job, **John Lauer** of **Sloan Valve Company**. Lauer was officially "sworn" in to duty on March 6 and will serve until the end of this year, at which time he would be eligible for re-election to a fresh, three-year term.

What does Lauer think of all of this? Well, if he lives out his motto, "Life is short — enjoy whatever you do", he's going to have a swell time serving PMI in this, his newest leadership capacity. Lauer has served, and currently serves, as co-chair of the Flushing Devices product group. Sloan Valve Company, he says, originally joined PMI in 1978 "to maintain an awareness of issues within and outside of our industry which can seriously impact our business and operations."

In the 21 years that Sloan Valve has been a PMI member, the company continues to champion PMI's continued growth as a leading force in the industry, as well as the Institute's continued presence whenever a problem develops within the industry. During Lauer's 10 years as an active participant in Institute activities, he has also enjoyed watching PMI grow. "I am happy with the way that PMI has evolved over the past few



John Lauer

years, and I am glad that I have been involved during this transition period." PMI, too, is glad!

Lauer has been with Sloan Valve for 16 years, and he currently serves as Director of Technical Support Services, overseeing the technical customer support for Sloan's commercial plumbing products (including Sloan's traditional flushometer valves as well as Sloan's Optima line of sensor-operated faucets and flushometers). He started with the company as a design engineer and was involved in much of the early design and development work of Sloan's sensor plumbing products. From there, Lauer moved to "Installation Engineering", a unique customer support department at Sloan that caters to the technical nature of Sloan's products by providing assistance and support for engineers, plumbers and end-users.

Prior to working for Sloan Valve (which has been a while!), Lauer worked as a design engineer for a manufacturer of pneumatic valves. He has a Bachelor's degree from Southern

Illinois University in Product Design and Development, and a Master's of Business Administration degree from Roosevelt University in Chicago.

What have been Lauer's keys to success, both personally and professionally? "First, by treating all people with respect. Second, don't accept mediocrity. And third, be self-motivated. Don't wait to be asked to make a difference — just do it!"

Perhaps those are the qualities seen in Lauer by the man he describes as the most influential person in his professional life, Chic Weege, who was Sloan's Director of Sales and Marketing. According to Lauer, Weege, who is now retired, was the person who "recognized my potential and put me into a position where I could take my engineering background and meld it into the realm of sales and marketing. Chic was also the person who began my involvement with PMI." Of course, knowing that Lauer's "hero" is Homer Simpson and that he can't stand words that begin with "Z"...well, there's potential in that as well!!

And what keeps Lauer busy, away from the job? How about starting with a nice vacation on the Outer Banks of North Carolina...adding in a long drive through the mountains with some good music — rock, jazz and blues to be exact...taking in a pro football game (actually semi-pro as he is a Bear's fan)...and sharing that time with his two children — Allyson, 14, and David, 12. And, if you throw an exotic meal into the mix, you may just have the recipe for total, blissful relaxation!

Welcome to the PMI Board of Directors, Mr. Lauer! Let us know if we can join you on your next vacation!

PMI MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Continued from page 1

has a responsibility to lend a hand. The sum truly IS greater than the parts!

I hope each of you will consider taking a leaderships role in PMI over the coming year — there are many opportunities. Be a co-chair of a committee. Bring a prospective member to the I.T. Forum, Fall Meeting, or other PMI event. Make suggestions to staff for topics and speakers for upcoming meetings. Voice your opinion in constructive, thoughtful ways and watch how PMI gets better and better.

Don't let the opportunity of PMI pass you buy. Don't rely on the "usual suspects" to get the job done for you. Come on in — the water's fine! Get involved! You won't regret it!



Who would have thought it would rain in drought-stricken southwest Florida? Then again, if you're familiar with attending PMI meetings in the spring, you'll know that sometimes rain, wind and — yes, even cold — can follow us from location to location. But the rain on Sunday and wind throughout our stay in Marco Island, Fla., was not enough to dampen the fun had during PMI's 2001 Spring Meeting, March 4-7. The Marco Island Marriott was the perfect setting to a fantastic four-day meeting.

The golf was great on Sunday at Lely Resort in Naples, albeit a bit tricky in the stiff winds. The Sunday dinner featured an all-you-can eat feast on lobster and PMI President **Frank Evans** of **The Chicago Faucet Company** welcomed the 102



PMI President Frank Evans addressing the membership at Tuesday's dinner.

members, spouses, guests, speakers and staff to the first PMI meeting of the new millennium. At the dinner, **Fred Luedke** of **NEOPERL, Inc.** received a plaque acknowledging the company's induction into PMI's Quarter Century Club with 25 years of PMI membership, **Pat Kelly** of **Haws Corporation** was recognized for his many years of service to PMI

(Mr. Kelly retires in June), seven new member attendees were welcomed, and Immediate Past President **Linda Mayer** of **Moen Incorporated** was honored for her leadership last year.

Monday morning came quickly, with a full slate of committee meetings which carried over to the late afternoon on Tuesday, culminating in the general membership meeting. PMI members voted on revised bylaws to govern the Institute and the membership affirmed **John Lauer** of **Sloan Valve Company** to fill a one-year, unexpired term on PMI's Board of Directors (see box, right, for a list of other major action items from the meeting). **Plus, members learned that, should they invite a guest eligible for PMI membership to the 2001 Fall Meeting and that guest attends, that member's meeting registration fees would be waived!** Not a bad deal!

Spouses were treated to a sailing/shelling trip on Monday morning, and the winds did not interfere in the fun. The "sailers" came back with buckets full of unique shells and truly had a wonderful time cruising the Intercoastal waterway and nearby islands.

Tuesday evening's dinner featured a keynote presentation by David Cork, author of the best-selling book "The Pig and The Python: How to Prosper from the Aging Baby Boom", who gave a very well-received presentation on the challenges and opportunities baby boomers present to the economy. Winners from Sunday's golf tournament were also announced and the evening finished with a celebration of **Barbara Higgs'** birthday.

Wednesday morning concluded the Spring Meeting with a breakfast, meeting of the Technical Committee and the final Board of Directors meeting. The meeting was action-packed and informative, and PMI members and staff will carry that momentum forward to PMI's 2001 Fall Meeting, September 23-26 in Washington, D.C.!

ACTION ITEMS FROM PMI'S 2001 SPRING MEETING

- ◆ Aquabrax was approved as a member of PMI.
- ◆ Membership development will be a major priority for PMI staff and Board. Staff and leadership will call upon PMI members to conduct "buddy calls" with prospective members as appropriate.
- ◆ The Board approved the creation of the Showerhead and Hand Shower Product Group.
- ◆ PMI will allocate financial support, if necessary, to support a coalition opposing the metal products and machinery (MP&M) rule.
- ◆ PMI will look at less expensive venues in Washington, D.C., to hold its 2002 Fall Meeting.
- ◆ The Small/Medium Sized Business Concerns Issue Committee approved a scope/purpose and agreed on a core of priority issues to address.
- ◆ PMI position statements on ergonomics, product liability, effluent guidelines and safe drinking water will be updated.
- ◆ Ad hoc and task groups were established to address a variety of product-specific issues, including:
 - ◆ Exploring the feasibility of becoming a product certification agency;
 - ◆ Developing a position statement regarding ASSE 1016 product marking requirements;
 - ◆ Reviewing the ASPE research proposal on water closet testing in detail and responding to ASPE;
 - ◆ Reviewing suggested revisions to the State of Wisconsin proposed code changes;
 - ◆ Developing a joint PMI/certifier position statement on universal conformity assessment using PMI's existing position statement and product approval model;
 - ◆ Investigating other industry standards or the development of other tests to replace the current CSA thermal cycle test for plated plastic components; and
- ◆ Addressing and reacting to issues affecting flushing devices and fixtures.
- ◆ Manufacturers are requested to forward staff specific examples regarding problems and barriers in obtaining and updating NSF 61 certifications; staff will maintain this data confidentially and forward a summary to certifiers.
- ◆ Proposed changes to the International Plumbing Code and Uniform Plumbing Code were discussed and approved.



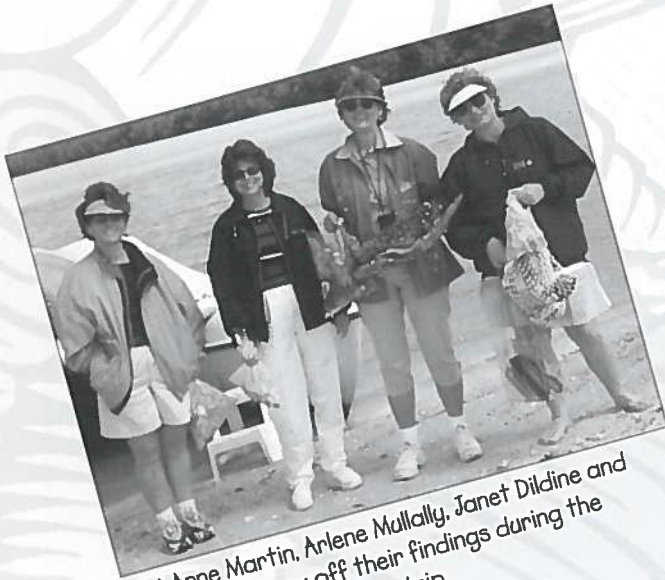
What? Me Stressed? Never! (Kelly Enright)



PMI President Frank Evans and "first lady" Jerri enjoy the festivities



Transfer of Power - Tom White's (left) first meeting with PMI and Pat Kelly's final meeting



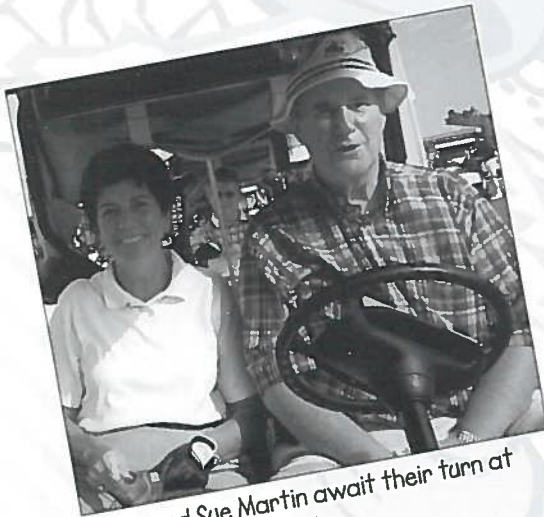
(l-r) Anne Martin, Arlene Mullally, Janet Dildine and Jerri Evans show off their findings during the family/companion shelling trip



Barb Higgins celebrates her birthday with a box of "singing" Elvis chocolate



Fred and Jeanne Luedke celebrate NEOPERL's induction into the Quarter Century Club



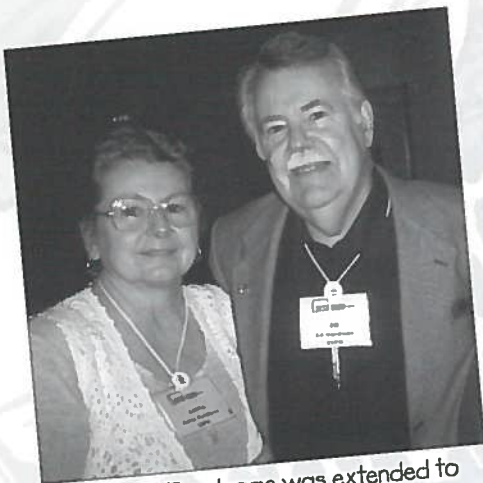
Bruce and Sue Martin await their turn at PMI's golf tournament



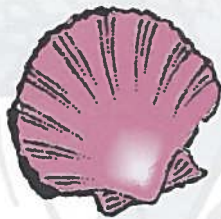
David Cork delivers the "Big Boom"



Cece Kremer, Tim Mullally (center) and Jim Westdorp ham it up for the camera during Sunday's welcome dinner



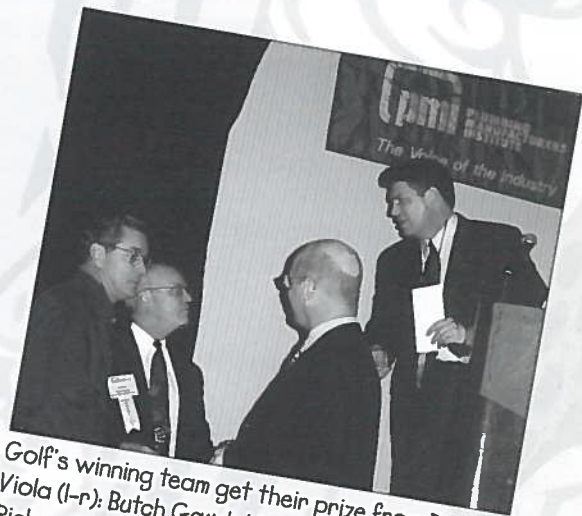
A special PMI welcome was extended to guest Ed Hardison, CIPH, and his wife Anita



Richard O'Reagan (left), Alan Lougee (center) and Ken Martin (right) anticipate a hearty lobster dinner



Sally Remedios enjoys Sunday's dinner



Golf's winning team get their prize from Dave Viola (l-r): Butch Gaudette, Gary Turner and Richard O'Reagan; Al Walcutt not pictured



Don Milroy (left) and Will Denham await the golf tournament start



Don Glover and Lee Mercer get down to business at the UCA meeting



PMI's newest member rep. - David Ross of AquaBrass International with his wife Nora



Al Barry (left) and wife Karen join in the fun with PMI's First Vice President Todd Talbot

Program Details

Monday afternoon kicks off with "Home Depot: A Rational Internet Strategy", with internet plumbing merchant Randy Altmann. Following a roundtable session, Gary Hyman, vice president of marketing at ChanneLinx will present, "Preparing for E-Commerce and Opening the Lines of Communication". The afternoon session will conclude with Jim Jefferies, vice president of logistics and procurement at U.S. Build, discussing, "USBuild - A New E-Chain Solution for Production Home Builders". (An E-Chain is an internet based supply chain that connects manufacturers directly to production home builders.)

Monday evening will feature dinner and a presentation by Boyce Thompson, editor-in-chief of *BUILDER* and *Big Builder* magazines, on the trends toward e-business among segments of the construction industry.

Tuesday morning will feature a look at how e-commerce is being used by other industries. Ray Pate of Merillat Cabinetry will take attendees on the company's unique, interactive e-commerce-based website. Another speaker will also give a presentation (not confirmed at press time) before the morning concludes a general discussion on the information and ideas presented.

According to PMI Executive Director Barbara C. Higgins, "We're moving out of the 'surface' learning phase that we've gone through since we began tackling this issue last year, and

we're diving into how we can learn more about the strategies behind the successful e-commerce initiatives and determine how we can position ourselves as manufacturers to be a very real part of the equation and benefit from the process."

Hotel Information

The Hotel Sofitel will serve as the host hotel for May's program, and the room rate for the evening of Monday, May 14 is \$149 single/\$169 double. To make your reservation, contact the Hotel Sofitel directly at (800) 233-5959 and mention either "I.T. Forum" or "PMI" to obtain the discounted rate. **THE DEADLINE TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AT THIS PRICE IS APRIL 16!!** Promotional material, which was emailed out to PMI members and mailed to non-members, includes information on getting to the hotel from O'Hare International Airport (it's 1.5 miles away).



If you have any questions or need a registration form for May's I.T. Forum, please contact PMI at (847) 884-9PMI (9764). We'll see you there!

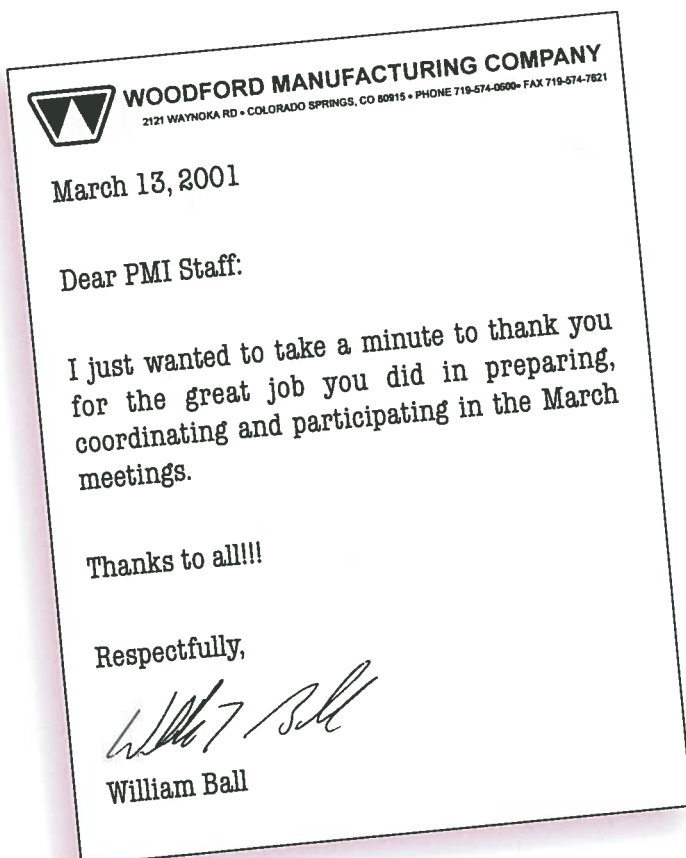
MICHIGAN METAL FINISHERS RECOGNIZED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

Electro Chemical Finishing (ECF) was among Michigan-based metal finishing facilities recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the Detroit Water and Sewage Department (DWSD) for their environmental achievements under the National Metal Finishing Strategic Goals Program (SGP). The SGP is a voluntary partnership between industry, regulators and communities that rewards facilities for going beyond compliance with existing environmental standards. Thanks to the SGP, six of the Michigan facilities have achieved at least 30 percent of these aggressive goals with the remaining four reaching 60 percent or more of the goals. The February 27 award ceremony is nationally significant because it is the first time ten facilities have been placed on an SGP state performance ladder.

The SGP focuses on commitments by the metal finishing industry to meet multi-media environmental targets that substantially reduce pollution from their operations. There are approximately 252 electroplaters, polishers, platers, anodizers and colorers currently operating in Michigan representing close to \$750 million in annual sales, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. They have a large impact on Michigan's economy. The Michigan SGP has resulted in significant environmental and bottom line benefits that have enhanced the industry's ability to compete.

The goals help facilities conserve water, energy and metals, and reduce hazardous emissions. The program has resulted in nationwide reductions in sludge shipments to landfills by over 120 million pounds, wastewater discharges by 380 million gallons, and organic chemical releases by 700,000 pounds. Congratulations to everyone at Electro Chemical Finishing!

A WORD OF THANKS TO PMI



AQUABRASS INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION — PMI'S NEWEST MEMBER!

By BARB HIGGENS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Founded in Canada in 1985, **AquaBrass** is the newest member of PMI, having been voted in by the Board of Directors at the Spring Meeting. The company has assembly facilities in Montreal, Vancouver, and for the past eight years, Florida. The product line includes faucets, showerheads and decorative hardware.

David Ross, vice president of AquaBrass, will serve as the principal PMI member. He sees the value of PMI as being the eyes, ears and mouthpiece of the industry. "As manufacturers, we are focused on producing and selling products," he says. "We'll depend on PMI to be the industry watchdog, to know what's happening, to head off at the pass future issues, and to speak up for us."



David Ross at AquaBrass headquarters

Ross attended the 2000 PMI Fall Meeting and was impressed with the efficient agendas, meeting content and the people. He feels that PMI meetings provide the perfect forum for networking with industry peers, offering opportunities to benchmark performance and business practices, as well as being a sounding board for industry issues and concerns. Issues of trade show consolidation, conformity assessment, fair trade and leveling the playing field are among his top concerns. He sees the rising cost of raw materials a growing worldwide crisis and is keeping a watchful eye on developments in China as the next threat to trade.

He is a believer in trade shows and does not think that virtual shows will ever replace the "touchy-feeling" aspect of conventional shows. While he feels shows are important for making customer contacts, he says to really meet and get to know your industry peers you need an organization like PMI!

(Thanks for the endorsement, David!) He also values person-to-person communication and opts for phone calls over e-mails. "We must not lose the personal touch," he says.

Ross and his wife Nora make their home in Deerfield Beach, Florida. They have two children and a three grandchildren. Nora is originally from Belfast, Ireland having immigrated to Canada in 1956. Like her husband, she too worked in the plumbing business, which Ross says makes her an invaluable partner, providing him with a good perspective. The couple enjoys traveling, with Greece, Italy and France topping their list of favorite destinations. While they miss living near their Canadian relatives, the Ross' admit they are getting very accustomed to the mild Florida winters.

Ross is pleased with the rapid expansion of AquaBrass over the years, though he admits that "the more you sell, the more challenges you have!" His hectic schedule has cut into his leisure time and he sorely misses having the time to read good books. He follows his personal philosophy of "work hard, and pay attention — You've got to keep your eyes open!" His business philosophy is to "offer good value and good quality."

Given the rapid growth of AquaBrass, these philosophies appear be working!

Welcome to PMI, David and AquaBrass! We're pleased to have you aboard!

SUPPLY HOUSE TIMES REJOINS PM

Business News Publishing (BNP) II, LLC, announced the acquisition of *Supply House Times* from Cahners Publishing Company. After 10 years of separation, *Supply House Times* will rejoin *Plumbing & Mechanical* (PM) as a sister publication effective with the February 2001 issue.

Supply House Times is the leading magazine serving wholesalers, distributors and manufacturer representatives. PM is the industry's number one publication overall and focuses on contractors.

This acquisition can now serve the plumbing market by providing complete coverage of all buying influences within the plumbing industry. "Adding *Supply House* allows plumbing product and service marketers to reach 30,000 wholesalers/distributors/ reps., PM's 45,000 contractors, PME's 25,000 specifiers and *Reeves'* coverage of 14 Western states," says Tim Fausch, Construction Division publishing director.

John Schrei has also been named publisher of *Supply House Times* — Congratulations, John!!

AND THE WINNER IS. . . .



John Petrovic of **Alsons Corporation** is the winner of PMI's Palm Pilot drawing! John turned in his Spring Meeting survey before he left Marco Island and was entered into the drawing. John and his wife, Beverly, are pictured above. Congratulations, John!!



Cece Kremer

HE'S BACK...yet again. Representative Joe Knollenberg appears poised to reintroduce legislation to repeal national water efficiency standards for plumbing products.

Renewing his previous efforts, Rep. Knollenberg has begun to recruit cosponsors for a new bill with an old title, the Plumbing Standards Improvement Act of 2001.

Other than the date, there is no difference between this new Plumbing Standards Improvement Act and the one defeated in a subcommittee mark-up last year.

In mid-March, Rep. Knollenberg circulated "Dear Colleague" letters encouraging members of the House to become cosponsors of the bill. At the same time, Executive Director Barbara Higgins of PMI wrote to all House members who previously cosponsored the bill during the 105th and 106th Congresses and all newly elected freshmen members, to urge their careful consideration of the impact of such legislation before agreeing to cosponsor a similar bill this Congress.

PMI also distributed to the hill copies of the "Consumer Guide to Low-Flow Toilets", a guide developed by PMI and leaders in the industry to educate consumers on the evolving technology of low-flow toilets and on their proper installation and maintenance — keys to peak performance with every mechanical installation in the home.



In addition to discouraging cosponsorship, PMI has reactivated the umbrella coalition and begun activities to include:

1. meeting with key leaders in the House, especially those in new leadership positions and those that are uncommitted on this issue;
2. activating grassroots meetings between manufacturers and key congressional members in the districts;
3. preparing a proactive and possibly a preemptive press strategy including action on a powerful, recently completed report by AWWA's Conservation Division on the potential water savings and infrastructure savings projected out to 2020;
4. finding a common ground on issue with other associations such as NAM and the Chamber of Commerce; and
5. meeting with members of the new administration at the White House, EPA and DOE.

PMI members are strongly encouraged to schedule meetings with representatives in their districts to discuss the issue. We estimate that over a quarter of all toilets in the United States are now 1.6 gallons per flush (gpf). If 65 or 70 million toilets weren't working, we'd know about it. If consumers were discontented, we'd know about it. If there was truly a black market of 3.5 gpf toilets, we'd know about it. It's time for the truth — to turn back the clock now would be a huge mistake that would negatively impact our industry as well as the environment. Water conservation is a national problem requiring a national solution.

President Bush signs repeal of the Ergonomics Rules on March 20 signaling a new era in regulation oversight.

Congress this month approved a joint resolution of disapproval, S.J. Res. 6, repealing OSHA's ergonomics regulation. The action marked the first time a federal agency rule has been overturned using the Congressional Review Act of 1996. PMI manufacturers who personally contacted their representatives and senator regarding the action should communicate their appreciation.

The ergonomics regulations, which were 10 years in the making, would have taken effect in October. Labor Department Secretary, Elaine Chao, said that they have begun working on alternative rules could be either replacement regulations or voluntary guidelines. (See article on page 11 for more information.)

The Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) take actions that intend to ease the energy crisis and give more study to last-minute regulations issued by President Clinton.

Earlier this month the Administration announced opposition to mandates that would impose mandatory emissions reductions for carbon, reversing a campaign promise by President Bush to require that electric-power plants reduce these emissions.

Also this month the EPA announced the Administration's intention to withdraw the new regulations for arsenic in drinking water. The withdrawal came just days before the new rule, approved in the Clinton Administration's final days, was to become final. The regulations would have reduced by 80 percent the permissible standard for arsenic in drinking water — from 50 parts per billion (ppb) to 10 ppb. The decision leaves in place a standard for arsenic that was created more than 50 years ago.

EPA Administrator Christie Whitman said that the Administration hopes to come up with its own recommendation by this summer. The rules on arsenic in drinking water fall under the Safe Drinking Water Act, and Congress has set a deadline of June 2001 for EPA to promulgate a new standard.

To access information regarding your lawmakers please contact me at (816) 931-4077 or cecepmi@aol.com.

Next edition: EPA'S controversial newly proposed MP&M Rule.

ERGONOMICS RULE OVERTURNED BY CONGRESS

On March 6, the U.S. Senate voted 56-44 to pass a joint resolution of disapproval of the Occupational Safety and Health Association's (OSHA) final rule on ergonomics. The U.S.

NAM National Association
of Manufacturers

Terry J. Jasnowski

resident

March 21, 2001

Ms. Barbara Higgins
Executive Director
Plumbing Manufacturers Institute
1340 Remington Rd, Ste A
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4821

Dear Barb:

As you know, with the help of your members last week Congress voted to overturn the OSHA ergonomics regulation, which we have now listed as an NAM "Key Vote." On behalf of NAM, I want to thank all the members of the Association Council for their rapid response to our urgent requests for communications to Members of Congress regarding the joint resolution of disapproval. Your members' direct personal involvement through phone calls, faxes, emails and meeting with their representatives and senators made all the difference.

As for the future of OSHA's ergonomics rule, upon the President's signature to the resolution the ergonomics regulation will have "no force or effect." No organization will have to comply with it. No states will be required to adopt a similar rule, and no further litigation over the validity of the rule will be required. We expect all business and labor petitions against OSHA to be withdrawn or dismissed in the next several weeks. This is a total victory over an unreasonable and oppressive regulation.

Of course, as important as it is to ask a Member of Congress for his or her vote, it is equally important to reinforce that communication by saying "thank you." Your brief call or note lets the member know that you have been watching and appreciate his or her efforts to advance a pro-growth, pro-business agenda in Washington.

After this impressive legislative victory, there may still be some doubters who question the efficacy as well as the need for a unified business community on public policy. But there are surely no such doubters among manufacturing associations. Without such unity among our organizations, we never would have succeeded on the China Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) last year, or the ergonomics regulation this week.

Again, thank you for your efforts.

Best regards,



House of Representatives followed suit on March 7, approving the resolution 223 to 206.

This overly broad rule applying to all manufacturers would have cost employers at least \$18 billion to comply. The rule would have required manufacturers to set up a comprehensive ergonomics program for just one musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) reported and required manufacturers to compensate employees with MSDs 90 percent of pay and 100 percent of benefits during their absences from work. Worst of all, the 1,500 plus page rule was scientifically unsound.

On March 20, President Bush signed into law the joint resolution of disapproval repealing OSHA's final ergonomic rule, calling the regulation "unduly burdensome and overly broad." The President's signature marks the first time a federal agency rule has been overturned under the Congressional Review Act (CRA) of 1996. Maintaining that there "needs to be a balance between, and an understanding of, the costs and benefits associated with federal regulations," the President pledged to pursue a "comprehensive approach to ergonomics that addresses the concerns surrounding the ergonomics rule repealed."

Since the President has signed the legislation, OSHA cannot revive the regulation in the same form. OSHA would need to come up with an entirely new approach, should they wish to re-address workplace ergonomic issues.

PMI worked with NAM in combating this rule, and the Institute provided \$2,000 in assistance from PMI Board-approved funds to help fund the battle legally. We are gratified over the win and were pleased to be able to work with NAM in combating this costly rule.

HOW PMI NEWS BECOMES NEWS

On January 24, Lori Smelser and Kelly Enright traveled to Aurora, Ill. to take a tour of Kelmscott Press, Inc. given by Mike Gray, PMI's representative. Kelmscott Press is the company that prints *PMI News*, and featured below is Kelmscott Press employee, Jason Wood, working on a printing job. Lori and Kelly were fascinated to learn the steps that *PMI News* goes through prior to reaching its final printed stage.



PMI MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

SLOAN ANNOUNCES NEW MAINTENANCE AND PARTS GUIDE

Sloan Valve Company has announced the availability of its new registered Maintenance and Repair Parts Guide, which is designed to help customers upgrade and maintain their plumbing to current Sloan quality standards.

Diagrams, parts lists and recommendations for performing regular maintenance and troubleshooting, as well as regularly updated price lists, are included in the color-coded, 90-page binder.

SYMMONS WINS INDUSTRY AWARDS

Symmons Industries, Inc. recently collected several awards from the Massachusetts PHCC, The Educational Society for Resource Management and the American Society of Plumbing Engineers (ASPE). The PHCC of Massachusetts presented Symmons with an award for outstanding and significant contributions to both the association and the industry. APICS named Symmons the Boston area "Company of the Year" and ASPE inducted Symmons into the Honor Roll of Employees.

ELKAY MANUFACTURING COMPANY OFFERS ONLINE PRODUCT AVAILABILITY

Wholesalers can track the status of their orders and check product availability online at Elkay Mfg. Co.'s new Elkay Connect internet-based service.

The system allows wholesalers to locate an open or recently closed order, ship date and carrier. This secured site is available through Elkay's website at www.elkay.com or www.elkayconnect.com.

MOEN ELECTRONIC-COMMERCE TOOL DEBUTS

Moen Incorporated announced the introduction of SupplyNet, an Internet-based global supply-chain management tool designed to provide suppliers with the data they need to do business with Moen and communicate directly with the company.

SupplyNet delivers information on all purchase orders and requirements allowing vendors to meet Moen's demand for parts, products and raw materials.

THE WHO'S WHO OF LOOS

Get the "poop" on the best toilets in town with the online guide www.besttoilets.com. You can read what others had to say about their favorite outhouses in Toronto, Atlanta, Seattle, New York and a host of other cities. There are lots of pictures, comments and a section devoted to the art of the toilet.



You can post your comments about your own favorite loo. There is a rating system (proprietors flush with pride when they are featured) and directions on where the amenities can be found — presumably for those in a hurry.

Tours anyone?

PMI CALENDAR CHECK

April 2001

- 8-15 Passover
- 13 Good Friday — PMI Office Closed
- 15 Easter
- 26 National Standard Plumbing Code Change Deadline
- 27-29 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show Orlando, FL
- 30-May 4 IAPMO Code Hearings Reno, NV

May 2001

- 28 Memorial Day — PMI Office Closed

June 2001

- 17-21 AWWA Annual Meeting Washington, DC
- 23-27 ASHRAE Annual Meeting Cincinnati, OH
- 24-27 Canadian Institute of Plumbing & Heating (CIPH) Annual Business Conference (ABC) Charlottetown, Prince Edward's Island

2001 PMI LEADERSHIP

Executive Committee:

Frank Evans, Chicago Faucet Company, President
Todd Talbot, Alsons Corporation, First Vice President
Ralph Herrbach, Cifial Brass Works, Second Vice President
Jim Westdorp, Kohler Company, Treasurer
Linda Mayer, Moen Incorporated, Immediate Past President

Directors at Large:

Ed Pages, Garvin/Guarantee Specialities (1/01-12/03)
John Lauer, Sloan Valve Company (3/01-12/01)
(completing an unexpired term)
Ken Martin, Delta Faucet Company (1/99-12/01)
Claude Theisen, T&S Brass & Bronze Works (1/00-12/03)
Al Walcutt, MPC Plastics, Inc. (1/00-12/02)
Claus Zieger, Interbath Inc. (1/00-12/02)

PMI Staff:

ADMINISTRATIVE

Barbara C. Higgins, Executive Director
Lori Smelser, Association Manager

LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY

CeCe Kremer

TECHNICAL

David W. Viola, Technical Director
Kelly Enright, Technical Services Coordinator

LEGAL COUNSEL

Michael Sennett, Bell Boyd & Lloyd

PMI Headquarters:

1340 Remington Road, Suite A, Schaumburg, IL 60173
Phone: 847-884-9PMI (9764) • Fax: 847-884-9775
www.pmihome.org

PMI Works...for you!!!