

On the Right Path

By: **Stewart Yang**, PMI President and Vice President Engineering Global Faucets, Kohler Co.



Stewart Yang

One of the objectives at each PMI Conference is to invite speakers that are informative, inspirational, and entertaining. The opening speaker at our Spring Conference last month in California was **Bruce Vincent**, a third generation logger from Montana. Although our speakers are well vetted, just how was a logger going to relate to a group of plumbing manufacturers? Mr. Vincent's talk gained momentum as he spoke about his

20 years of seeking more balanced and practical environmental legislation for rural America. But then he began describing some initial advocacy efforts by the timber industry and the parallels to PMI's experience with the lead issue were astonishingly similar.

Mr. Vincent spoke of how the pendulum will swing on emotional issues and may not swing back nor settle on common sense. How the "Court of Public Opinion" drives the "Court of Law" and how TRUTH is a moveable object. He explained that social movements can be as well organized and savvy as any business. PMI learned these same lessons during passing of lead legislation. Mr. Vincent provided three take away points:

- Democracy works, but it is not a spectator sport
- When people lead, leaders follow
- The world is run by those who show up

He concluded with some sound advice, "There is tremendous power in multi-sector support of a single issue. If you don't talk to your leaders about how to protect your industry, you'll be protected right out of business. It's important for people with a vested interest to get involved in the process,

to identify the policymakers who understand your issues and are willing to fight for them."

This sound advice aligns with our PMI strategy: identifying and securing proactively the right legislative support; using the marketing track to make the PMI voice louder and wide spread; reaching out to a diverse group of individuals and organizations on the Water Panel at the Spring Conference; and engaging our own members, who are the true experts of the industry.

PMI is also asking member companies for general information to help define our industry size and employment impact. This consolidated industry information is essential to support of our advocacy efforts. A questionnaire will be sent to member companies from PMI to be compiled by an independent third party. Please support PMI by making this important information available.

At this year's Spring Conference, 25 of 27 member companies attended as well as all four of our new allied members. Once again, thank you to our PMI staff for making our Spring Conference so successful.

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Maximizing PMI as the Voice of the Industry



Barbara C. Higgins

An important decision currently faces PMI. Are we to grow or maintain status quo? Will the Voice of the Industry be a shout or a whisper? What

is PMI today and what should we be in the years to come?

PMI was reformulated in 1998 through the work of a Strategic Advisory Council (SAC) comprised of senior executives from member and prospective member companies. Having achieved the goals set forth in 1998 of stabilizing PMI and adding member value, the upcoming Think Tank set for June 6-7 is an excellent opportunity to explore the expectations of members, identify where we are today and set our sights on where we hope to go and how we get there.

With the guidance of President **Stu Yang** and Board Member **Paul Patton** who will facilitate the meeting, we will re-energize the SAC, working in conjunction with a group of about 20 volunteers representing the industry's thought leaders. The aim will be to prioritize PMI's goals and objectives, and to consider funding options and revenue streams for the next phase of PMI's development.

Today, the PMI value proposition includes legislative and regulatory advocacy, technical expertise, information exchange and education, international outreach and networking. PMI has moved from being a reactive entity to a proactive one providing early warning to members on issues affecting them and their businesses. We have positioned our organization as the Voice of the Industry – an organization that provides thoughtful and balanced input on industry issues.

As a reminder, PMI's Mission is:

- To promote the water efficiency, health, safety, quality and environmental sustainability of plumbing products while maximizing consumer choice and value in a fair and open marketplace.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of information and industry education
- To represent openly the members' interests and advocate for sound environmental and public health policies in the regulatory/legislative processes.
- To enhance the plumbing industry's growth and expansion.

The recent 2012 Spring Conference delivered on these objectives as evidenced on the attendee satisfaction survey. Please take a look: www.tinyurl.com/2012SurveyResults. If you attended, you came away with a head filled with industry knowledge and unique insights from speakers including a microbiologist, government officials and subject matter experts. And you learned a bit about your peers during the exhilarating Wine Blending Competition. I hope you will all mark your calendars for the 2012 Fall Conference October 7-10, in Washington DC, where we will continue to work to maximize PMI's role as the only industry association focused specifically on the issues and needs of plumbing manufacturers. We have virtually unlimited opportunities to increase PMI's visibility, credibility and influence domestically, internationally and with policy makers as a proactive partner in issues such as water efficiency.

As an industry trade association, PMI exists solely for the purpose of enhancing the success of our members in the marketplace. A strong trade association

is a benefit to its members. All activities and initiatives must be dedicated to that end. No projects or products will be adopted unless there is a demonstrated interest and need by members. Members' priorities become priorities to PMI. Programs that are not designed to meet members' needs and requests (do not add value) should be abandoned.

While we have advanced a number of key initiatives and have become more proactive in our approach, there is much more to do! Despite increasing industry pressures over the years, PMI's resources (income and staffing) have been relatively flat over the past decade. Dues have seen only two increases since 1998, when gas prices hovered at \$1.15 per gallon, and despite overall cost increases since then, PMI's revenue has remained essentially unchanged.

The key to our success has been our creativity when budgets and personnel resources are limited. For example, PMI has effectively built and leveraged industry relationships to move forward on objectives. Partnerships such as the PMI-IAPMO collaboration on training now in-the-works, will be the key to our success. Most recently, I am pleased to report as successful, the April 30th Plumbing Industry Leadership Coalition Summit meeting in Washington DC. The concept was the brain child of **Jim Kendzel**, ASPE, **Russ Chaney**, IAPMO and me, **Barb Higgins**, PMI and was patterned after the panel created during **Lee Mercer's** term as PMI president. Attendees included the executive and volunteer leaders of 13 related industry associations: Plumbing Manufacturers International, American Society of Plumbing Engineers, IAPMO, PCA, Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Water Quality Association, Alliance for Water Efficiency, ABPA, Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors, United Association, American Society of Sanitary Engineers, American Rainwater Catchment Systems Associa-

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Barbara Higgens Attends CEIR Conference

PMI Executive Director **Barbara Higgens** attended the 53rd annual CEIR-European Valve Conference, held May 3–5 in Paris, France. Agenda topics for the conference included water efficiency and new limits on the lead content of plumbing products in the United States, as well as emerging

issues. Also attending the conference was **Yvonne Orgill** of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association, the British counterpart to PMI. Both are pictured below with the group.

The CEIR conference has moved to a template used by both the BMA and

PMI, which divides the meeting by issues along technical and marketing lines. PMI has participated in CEIR conferences since 1999 and through the affiliation has built strong relationships with allied organizations and manufacturers around the world.



Maximizing PMI as Voice of the Industry

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tion, and Copper Development Association. Invited but unable to attend was International Code Council. Special presentations were given by **Henry Green** of the National Institute of Building Sciences (who hosted the event) and **Chad Moutray**, chief economist of the National Association of Manufacturers. Representing the industry press were the editors of trade publications: *Plumbing & Mechanical Engineer*, *Contractor* and *Plumbing Engineer*. It was decided that the group will be expanded to include other interested groups as identified and meetings will be held annually.

Our international outreach has also proved fruitful through our relationships around the world. The recent CEIR European Valve conference was again a valuable venue for raising PMI's visibility and to maintaining important contacts there.

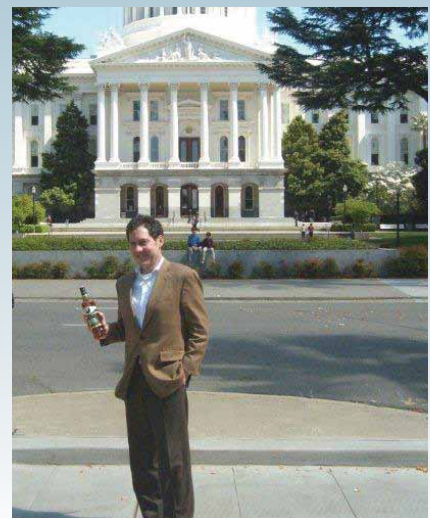
The Think Tank meeting will take place June 6 and 7 at the Tooling and Manufacturing Association, 1177 S. Dee Road, Park Ridge, Illinois.

Look for a report on the meeting in the next issue of *PMI News*.

We have accomplished much but there is much more to do. Thanks to those who have volunteered to loan us their brains for the Think Tank! Stay tuned for further developments!

California lobbyist **Jerry Desmond** reveals the secret to maintaining his cheery demeanor while coping with the pressures of his advocacy efforts.

Cheers, Jerry! Thanks for the good work! (Note that Jerry received a special thank you gift of Black Grouse whisky from PMI staff in recognition of his hard work.)



PMI Hosts Spring Conference in California Wine Country

Following a day of Habitat for Humanity volunteer work, PMI hosted its Spring Conference, April 1–4 at the Doubletree Sonoma Wine Country in Rohnert Park, California to rave reviews. Among the highlights were the keynote speakers, *Future of Water* panel and a birthday salute to PMI President **Stu Yang**.

The meeting kicked off on Monday, April 2 with a special presentation by **Bruce Vincent** entitled *With Hope, There is Vision*. Mr. Vincent is a third generation Montana logger who believes that America is ready for a new vision of conservation and environmental stewardship that is based upon hope instead of fear. **Dr. Paul Sturman** of the Center for Biofilm Engineering offered a special presentation concerning the truth about legionella.

On Monday afternoon, the popular dual track program commenced. Attendees were given a choice to attend either the technical council meeting or the marketing council meeting. This separate track system has generated a great deal of interest and attracted many new PMI conference attendees.

Monday's events concluded with market dinner, which consisted of locally grown ingredients followed by entertainment by **Gordy Ohliger**, The Banjo-ologist, who offered a history of the banjo and banjo based music through the decades.

Tuesday, April 3 featured presentations by **Doug Hensel**, Assistant Deputy Director of Codes and Standards for the California Department of Housing and Community Development and **Yvonne Orgill**, Chief Executive of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association during the Water Efficiency and Sustainability Issue Committee meeting.

A panel discussion entitled *The Future of Water* featured representatives from five different water and resource conservation organizations who gathered to

discuss mutual interests with plumbing manufacturing companies. The panel participants were **Ed Osann**, Natural Resources Defense Council; **Chris Brown**, California Urban Water Conservation Council; **Bruce Reznik**, Planning and Conservation League; **Lena Tam**, East Bay Municipal Utility District and **John Koeller**, Koeller and Company. The "Godfather of Green" **Jerry Yudelson** moderated the panel discussion and delivered the keynote address. Mr. Yudelson is a noted author and lecturer with over 25 years of engineering experience.

Steve Lehtonen, Senior Director of Environmental Education for the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) gave a presentation on online training and debuted PMI's online codes and standards

training model, a first time collaboration between PMI and IAPMO.

Tuesday ended with a group outing to the Benziger vineyard for a team building event where attendees were broken up into teams and tasked with creating a blend of wine that most closely resembled Benziger's signature varietal, creating a label for their wine and presenting a marketing strategy to sell their wine. The evening ended with wine tasting and dinner in the Benziger wine cave.

The conference closed on Wednesday, April 4 with breakfast and attendees left to return home. Satisfaction survey results and photos of the PMI Spring Conference are posted on our website, www.pmihome.org. Thanks again to all our attendees, speakers and guests who made this year's conference one of the best!

Habitat for Humanity Says Thank You to PMI

Prior to the start of the 2012 Spring Conference, PMI staff and conference attendees volunteered for a day of service at the Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County's ReStore retail outlet in Santa Rosa, CA. In addition to this service day, PMI also made a \$500 donation to the organization. This volunteer opportunity hosted in conjunction with the Spring Conference is now in its third year. We look forward to giving back to Austin, Texas in 2013!



Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County

May 16, 2012

Plumbing Manufacturers International
1921 Rohlwing Rd, Unit G
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County, I want to thank you for your April 12, 2012 gift of \$500.00. With your support, we are building houses, building dreams, and creating and nurturing a better community.

Since 1984, Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County has rehabilitated eighteen homes and, in partnership with low-income families and community volunteers, built twelve new homes for families in need. We will be finishing two new homes and rehabilitating up to six additional homes in 2012. One of our newest hard-working Habitat families has been living in a cramped trailer that is cold and damp in winter and very hot in summer. One of the family members wrote, "There are no words that will express our gratitude to Habitat, the volunteers and everyone who has helped to make our dream come true."

This year we are celebrating the 500,000th Habitat for Humanity home built around the world. Since 1976, Habitat volunteers and supporters have given half a million families a chance at a better life through owning a safe, healthy, affordable home.

Your generosity toward Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County helps build a foundation from which children can improve their lives. Your gift gives a family the promise of safety, stability and a positive future. From the partner families, Board of Directors, staff and volunteers of Habitat for Humanity, we offer you our deepest appreciation.

Sincerely yours,


Katherine M. Fong
Executive Director

PMI Spring Conference 2012 in Rohnert Park, California



"The Future of Water" panel participants: Ed Osann, Natural Resources Defense Council; Chris Brown, California Urban Water Conservation Council; John Koeller, Koeller and Company; Lena Tam, East Bay Municipal Utility District; Bruce Reznik, Planning and Conservation League. Jerry Yudelson was the Keynote Speaker and panel moderator. PMI President Stu Yang thanked the group for their interesting commentary.



*First Time Attendee
Brian Johnson from
Delta Faucet Company*



*First Time Attendee
Ned Dickey from CSA
International*



*First Time Attendee
Debbie Drury of
American Standard
Brands*



*First Time Attendee
Mark Ogden from
Chase Brass and Copper
Company*



*First Time Attendee
Tom Lefeber from
InSinkErator*



*First Time Attendee Juan
Zaragoza from TOTO
USA*



*First Time Attendee Jan
Van Leyen of Pfister*



*Prospective Member
Matt Dos Remedios of
American Faucet and
Coatings Corporation*



*Prospective Member
Jeremy Brown of NSF
International*



*First Time Attendee
Charles Gross of
IAPMO*

First Time Attendee Scott McDonald is pictured on page 6

PMI Spring Conference 2012 in Rohnert Park, California



Stu Yang presents a plaque to Bill Ball of WCM to thank him for his service to the PMI Board



PMI President Stu Yang presents a plaque to PMI Past President Jack Krecek in recognition of his presidency



Chase Brass & Copper Company representatives Larry Muller (left) and Mark Ogden (right) accept their allied member plaque from PMI President Stu Yang



Stu Yang welcomes allied member and first time attendee, LAPMO representative Charles Gross with a plaque



Joe Napolitan, representative from allied member Mueller Brass Company accepts a plaque on behalf of his company



CSA International representative Ned Dickey accepts an allied member welcome certificate on behalf of his organization



Chad Jones of LSP Products accepts a new member certificate from Stu Yang on behalf of his company



Stu Yang presents a certificate to Craig Selover, Masco, to thank him for his service to the Technical Council



Stu Yang presents a certificate to Alston Williams, Pfister, to thank him for his service to the Technical Council



From Fluidmaster: Barbara Booth and Scott McDonald; Betty Swatkowski, wife of PMI Technical Director Len Swatkowski



Banjo-ologist (and cousin of Masco's Craig Selover) Gordy Ohliger entertained attendees during dinner

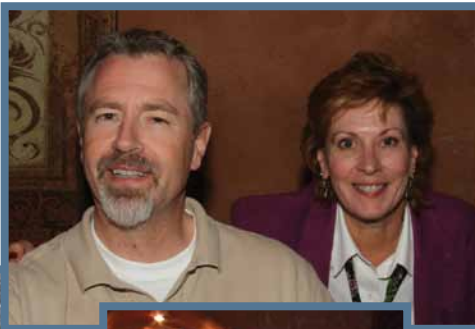
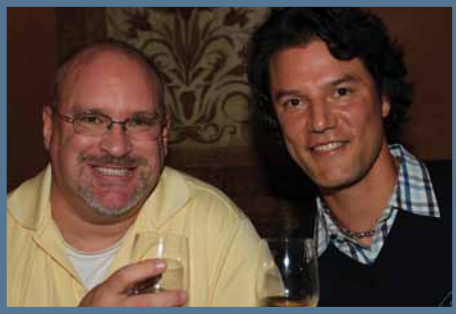


Jack Krecek and his President's gift, a ukulele, per his request

Conference Attendees Enjoy Wine Blending Challenge



Spring Conference Dinner at Benziger Winery



2012 PMI LEADERSHIP

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Stewart Yang, Kohler Co.
President

**Jeff Baldwin, T&S Brass and
Bronze Works**
First Vice-President

Tim Kilbane, Symmons Industries
Second Vice-President

Fernando Fernandez, TOTO USA
Treasurer

Jack Krecek, Elkay Manufacturing
Immediate Past President

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Bobbi Bieschke, Amerikam
(10/11-12/12)

Peter Jahrling, Sloan Valve Company
(1/12-12/14)

**C.J. Lagan, American Standard
Brands**
(7/11-12/12)

David MacNair, InSinkErator
(1/12-12/14)

Paul Patton, Delta Faucet Company
(1/11-12/13)

Tim Schroeder, Duravit USA
(1/11-12/13)

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