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President's Message



Thank you for the opportunity to serve each of you as President of the NMDA. If I could make one wish for the term you have allowed me that would be to set aside petty differences and/or old past issues and do what is right for OUR industry.

Each of us is 100% responsible everyday for choosing a positive or negative attitude.

All of us stand at a turning point in the boating industry. Demographics are in our favor with Boomers having the money to enjoy boating.

Many boat companies are trying hard to make boating a fun and relatively trouble-free experience. Many different groups are coming together to launch the "Grow Boating" campaign. A matter closer to part of my background is Briggs & Stratton trying to make entry point boating even more affordable.

These could be opportune times for those with a positive perspective. However wavering consumer confidence, rising fuel costs (for manufacturers, distributors, and consumers), less boating time in a stressed out lifestyle, and natural disasters (that personally affected my business) are enough to bring positive attitudes crashing down.

How do you look at your glass in life, half full or half empty? Each of us is part of a desired lifestyle industry. Sure times are tough and uncertain, however each of us can be great positive influences on thousands of retailers that serve millions of good, fun loving, and family oriented people. In marketing and selling to the commercial part of our industry, most of their needs are driven solely by the demand for their products (food, cargo, transportation, charter, and military needs). In my opinion, we can all positively influence the businesses that sell fun in North America.

Many observers of our industry have seen and read the severe beating most Gulf Coast marinas and dealers have endured from the two most recent hurricanes. Both the pleasure and commercial parts of the business have been hit very hard. The rebuilding will be years in the making. The commercial fishing industry may take years to recover. Their boats and fishing grounds have been severely damaged.

Some may know that it takes years to a build oil and gas platforms. Today there are hundreds in the Gulf of Mexico alone. Another big picture issue that has been brought forward to many American's eyes is the vital strategic role New Orleans plays as a port in serving our national interests.

How do you look at your glass in life, half full or half empty? Each of us is part of a desired lifestyle industry.

2006 Strategic & Executive Conference

The 2006 Strategic & Executive Conferences will be held March 25 - April 1, 2006, at the Embassy Suites in San Diego/La Jolla. The Strategic Conference gives each of you a chance to help shape the future of NMDA while the Executive Conference gives you the opportunity to shape the future of your company.

A tentative schedule is as follows:

Saturday, March 25, 2006

AM Day on your own
PM Opening Reception for Strategic Planning Attendees

Sunday, March 26, 2006

8 AM - 12 Noon Board Meeting #1
PM Informal Group Activities will be planned

Monday, March 27, 2006

9 AM - 12 Noon Committee/Task Force Meetings
12 Noon - 1 PM Lunch for those attending Strategic Planning Conference
1 PM - 5 PM Committee/Task Force Meetings
6 PM - 10 PM Dinner

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

9 AM - 12 Noon Board Meeting #2
PM Opening Reception for Executive Conference

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

8 AM - 12 Noon Executive Conferences begin
12 Noon - 6 PM Golf & Fishing will be available
PM On your own

Thursday, March 30, 2006

8 AM - 12 Noon Executive Conferences continue
12 Noon - 1 PM Lunch will be served
1 PM - 6 PM Conferences resume
PM On your own

Friday, March 31, 2006

8 AM - 12 Noon Executive Conferences begin
12 Noon - 1 PM Lunch will be served
1 PM - 6 PM Conferences resume
PM On your own

Saturday, April 1, 2006

AM Hotel Check Out

More details for this event can be found on page 4.

Even the French understood how vital New Orleans was in the early Eighteenth century. Over the next five years, I believe the Gulf Coast region will be rebuilt to better standards that in the long term will attract more investment and people to this strategic and beautiful part of North America.

I look forward to growing NMDA as an important partner and link in serving the marine end user. Please lend a hand in helping to fill with optimism our half full glass.

Yours in Success and Fun,

Michael Medart
NMDA President

Potential Tax Savings?

The recently passed by Congress and signed by President Bush, Energy Tax Incentives Act of 2005, contains some generous new tax incentives that might benefit you and/or your company. These incentives are all in the form of tax credits which are often the best kind. A credit will lower your federal income tax bill dollar for dollar.

There are four new tax credits for energy efficient vehicles. If you PURCHASE (not lease) a NEW (not used) clean-fuel vehicle, including a hybrid gas-electric vehicle, you will be entitled to a \$2,000 write off on your Form 1040. The other credits are for lean-burn technology vehicles, fuel-cell vehicles, and alternative-fuel vehicles.

Because the qualification rules for the vehicle tax credits are complicated, you probably won't be able to figure out the credit amounts on your own. Two of these credits will also be phased out over a four year period.

Another benefit of this tax act is a tax credit for Residential Energy improvements. The \$500 lifetime limit is broad enough that most will benefit even though the numbers will not be huge. The credit applies to energy-saving items in your main residence after 2005 and before 2008.

Some of the items that will qualify for the 10% of your expenditures for "qualified energy efficiency improvements" include - metal roofs with heat reductions pigments, exterior doors, exterior windows including skylights and insulation materials designed to reduce heat loss or gain.

Some of the items that qualify for 100% part of the credit include qualified electric heat pumps, electric heat pump water heaters, geothermal heat pumps and central air conditioners; qualified natural gas, propane and oil furnaces and advance main air circulating fans. There are maximum credit limits for each of these items.

Please contact your tax advisor for the most current information and what the savings and benefits are to you.

Additional Savings

Just a reminder -- there are several benefits to your membership in NMDA -- many of which can save your firm money! These include Property & Casualty Insurance from The Hartford, Healthcare Insurance from Flex, Freight/Air Shipping, Credit Card Processing from Solveras, Car Rental from Hertz and more. To find out more, go to the NMDA website, www.nmdaonline.com and click on the NAW link on the left side of the page. If there is another service you would like us to look into, please let us know, we will see what we can do.

Upcoming NMDA Events

PLEASE NOTE new DATES for Strategic & Executive Conference

2006

STRATEGIC PLANNING

(To be held immediately preceding Executive Conference)

March 25 - 28, 2006

Embassy Suites

San Diego/La Jolla California

2006

EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE

March 28 - April 1, 2006

San Diego/La Jolla California (Same hotel as above)

2006

S.T.E.P. PURCHASING AT MAATS

July 17 & 18, 2006

Las Vegas Hilton

Las Vegas Nevada

PLEASE NOTE DATES for S.T.E.P. Training

2006

S.T.E.P. TRAINING

December 12 - 15, 2006

TradeWinds Island Grand

St. Pete Beach FL



NOAA & Storm Tracking

The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's Storm Tracker contains live links to advisories, tracking maps and satellite images of a particular storm that is projected to strike the United States or other nations in a storm path. The Storm Tracker also will include links to data from ocean buoys, affected airports and the latest high resolution satellite imagery of a tropical storm or hurricane.

NOAA's administrator states that saving lives and protecting property is one of the primary missions of NOAA. One way they communicate vital information is through this website www.stormtracker.noaa.gov

This site provides accurate, up to date information and is a good one to bookmark on your computer and share with your colleagues. We had several members directly affected by the recent storms and our thoughts have been with them. Hopefully the end of the hurricane season is near and we will be spared any more hits to the US.



When asked to rank NMDA meetings, the majority of you said that S.T.E.P. Purchasing and S.T.E.P. Training were the premier events of NMDA. We have worked hard to improve the areas that you have said needed improvement while at the same time adding a few new ideas to keep the event fresh.

Co-locating S.T.E.P. Purchasing with MAATS, while making for an exceptionally long week, has proven to be a good idea. The opportunity provided buyers, to see NEW products, work with suppliers - both current and potential - outweighs the time away. While the opportunity for the suppliers to see not only NMDA members during S.T.E.P. but retailers during MAATS has added value for them.

Earlier this month the MAATS committee met in Chicago to review not only MAATS but to ask NMDA if we were pleased with how things have been going. Robbie Vititow, Mike Medart and I were at the meeting and brought several things to the committee's attention. We also asked if it would be possible to add a half day to S.T.E.P., in other words S.T.E.P. would be Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning and MAATS buyer/supplier meetings for NMDA distributors would not start until Thursday. This idea is being looked into and will be discussed again in the near future.

We asked about moving the event to a suite property so that the manufacturers could set up product and the distributors would travel from room to room. While this will not work at the current property in Las Vegas we were assured that it would be looked into for the future. Because of the S.T.E.P. and MAATS connection what we do for one event really needs to be done for both.

One change that you will find is the Supplier of the Year will be presented during one of the lunches next year instead of at the opening reception. We will notify you ahead of time, in the registration materials and we ask that you NOT schedule appointments during that time.

As for MAATS itself, Jeff Huntley of TH Marine has been the chair since its inception. He felt it was time for a change so a new chair has been appointed. Michelle Goldsmith of Charles Industry led the meeting in Chicago and has come in with lots of fresh ideas and a novel approach to the event. Watch your mail for some of the new, exciting ideas!

Dates for 2006 S.T.E.P. Purchasing are July 17 & 18 with MAATS taking place July 19 to 21, 2006. The 2007 dates are July 16 & 17 for S.T.E.P. with MAATS immediately following on July 18 - 20. These events are still scheduled for the Las Vegas Hilton and Convention Center.

Dues Reminder

THE NMDA FISCAL YEAR RUNS FROM OCTOBER 1 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30 AND YOUR DUES ARE FOR THE SAME TIME PERIOD. BILLS WERE SENT OUT IN SEPTEMBER WITH AN OCTOBER 1 DUE DATE. IF YOU HAVE NOT YET PAID YOUR DUES, PLEASE TAKE CARE OF THIS AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN.

IF YOU NEED ANOTHER COPY OF YOUR INVOICE PLEASE LET US KNOW. INCLUDED WITH THE DUES BILL WAS A MEMBER UPDATE FORM WHICH LISTS THE INFORMATION WE HAVE ON YOUR COMPANY. PLEASE REVIEW IT AND SEND IT BACK WITH ANY CHANGES NOTED. WE UPDATE OUR WEBSITE AND OUR RECORDS ON A REGULAR BASIS AND WE WOULD LIKE YOUR INFORMATION TO BE CORRECT.



Sort of looks like a mirror image. But not quite. What you are seeing is the redefining of another GREAT NMDA event. This past January we held S.T.E.P. Training in St. Pete Beach at the TradeWinds Island Grand.

While there were many positives there were a few things that the committee felt could be better. Moving the event from January to December is the first of these changes. We will be holding S.T.E.P. Training from Tuesday evening, December 12 through Friday, December 15. This time of year is one of the slowest for hotels and airlines and the rates are reflective of this. The weather should be 10 - 15 degrees warmer which will make the Beach Olympics more enjoyable for all. No frostbite!!!

The meeting rooms in the Breezeway worked, but they were not great. We have made arrangements with the hotel to have the furniture removed from the sleeping rooms on the second floor of that same building and will have not only the regular hotel meeting rooms, but these S.T.E.P. meeting rooms as well.

They will be set up as classrooms and will hold up to 15 people in each of the "hotel meeting rooms". They will have all the regular features of a meeting room, heat/air, lighting, doors, etc., which will make it easier for the suppliers to teach the students. Distractions will be minimized and the quality of the training sessions will greatly improve. Having the regularly numbered hotel rooms on the second floor (the same floor that Teleflex and others were located on) will also make it easy to change from one meeting to the other.

We are working with Travel Plus to help arrange transportation to and from the airport and the hotel - to make it easier for you and to hopefully make it less expensive. It was one of the comments you made, so we are working on making it better.

Sponsorships are being sought, for the speaker, the reception, the beach olympics, the box lunches and more. If you would like to get your company some additional publicity with your customers, please let Nancy know. If you have an idea of something that we have not tried yet, please call and ask. The options are endless and the sooner you commit to a sponsorship, the more publicity we can garner for your company.

More information will follow on this as plans are finalized.



2005 S.T.E.P. Training Beach Olympics. Two versions of the "Team Song". Recognize anyone you know?

Distributor Show Dates

Medart Marine Dealer Show

October 12 & 13, 2005
St. Charles Convention Center
St. Charles MO

Land 'N' Sea

October 23 - 26, 2005
Radisson Hotel at Star Plaza
Merrillville IN

Keller Marine Dealer Show

October 25 & 26, 2005
Radisson Valley Forge Hotel & Convention Center
Valley Forge PA

Vita-Plate Dealer Show

November 2, 2005
Camp Perry Clubhouse
Port Clinton OH

MESCO & Seacoast Dealer Show

42nd Annual Dealer Trade Show
November 2 & 3, 2005
Atlantic City Convention Center
Atlantic City NJ

Marine 1 One Dealer Show

November 7 & 8, 2005
Stardust Hotel
Las Vegas NV

Morgan Recreational Supply

November 9 & 10, 2005
Turning Stone Resort
Verona NY

Payne's Marine Supply Group

November 12 & 13, 2005
Victoria Conference Centre
Victoria BC Canada

Kellogg Marine Supply Dealer Trade Show

November 16 - 18, 2005
Mohegan Sun Casino
Uncasville CT

Coast Distribution Dealer Show

February 8 & 9, 2006
Rio Suites
Las Vegas NV

C.C. Marine Distributors Dealer Show

October 1 & 2, 2006
International Centre
Mississauga ON Canada

If your show is not listed here, please let us know when it is and we'll add it to the list.

Fuel & The IRS

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced on September 9 that it was raising the optional standard mileage rate for the final four months of 2005 to 48.5 cents. Used to compute the deductible costs of operating a car in connection with a business, the rate is increasing by 8 cents a mile for business miles driven between September 1 and December 31.

This special adjustment by the IRS is rare as the service usually sets mileage rates once a year. IRS Announcement 2005-41, issued September 9, implemented the new rates. If additional information is needed, please contact your tax professional.

2006 Strategic & Executive Conference (Continued)

As noted on the first page, we will be holding the Executive Conference after a one year hiatus. When the Board made the decision to alternate the Executive Conference with S.T.E.P. Training there was some concern over losing the momentum of an event that has been held for 22 years. If the calls to the office are any indication, the 2006 Executive Conference should be one of the strongest ones to date! Based on our east coast/west coast rotation, we will be in California in late March at an Embassy Suites.

The purpose of the Executive Conference has been consistent since the beginning. It is the time for the executives of our distribution firms to sit down with the executives of our manufacturing firms for private, closed door, pre-arranged meetings. The length of time you need for the meeting will vary and can be set by you and your customer/client.

Several members have very successfully used the Supplier of the Year report cards as the basis for these meetings and have found that the review process involved with the Supplier of the Year works well for a general overview of the working relationship. If you would like a copy of the "report card", please let us know, we will send it to you.

Another way the Executive Conference has been used is as an opportunity to talk about potential problems - whether it be shipping, delivery, stock/overstock situations - these can all be addressed BEFORE they become a problem thereby saving all parties the headaches associated with problems.

The Board has also decided that we should broaden our approach to this meeting and make it even more useful to the NMDA membership. One possibility being explored is the addition of a Dealer Forum similar to the one that was held in Las Vegas in 2000. We are working with distributors to determine a selection of dealers representative of the whole country and will keep you posted as this idea progresses. A question and answer format is the idea currently being looked at with other ideas being discussed. Look for more information on this in the registration packets.

Being in the San Diego/La Jolla area we also have some great outdoor opportunities. Golf is a major past time as is fishing. We have been talking with the folks at Torrey Pines (site of the 2008 U.S. Open) and are hopeful that tee times can be arranged there on both the North and the South course.

Not to be forgotten are our fishermen! Conversations are ongoing to determine where and what type of fishing will be offered. If golf and fishing aren't your sports, hang gliding, surfing, hiking, sailing, and more are all available within minutes of the hotel.

Think about making your flight reservations and watch your mail and the NMDA website for more information.

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