

The Network News

TRI-STATE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2010

Company of the Month

Ralco Nutrition

Although TSMA's April Company of the Month has seen its share of ups and downs after nearly 40 years in business, the company has never before seen an upturn in business as dramatic as that of recent years. Ralco Nutrition, Inc. has grown from a 25-employee company in 2004 to one that now employs 110 people at its Marshall, MN, facilities.

Ralco Nutrition was founded in Marshall in 1971 by Bob and Lou Galbraith. Thirty-nine years ago, the company was a manufacturer of natural (no drugs, growth hormones, etc.) feed additives, primarily for the beef industry. The Ralco Nutrition of today continues to manufacture and market those same products, and many others that have been added to the product mix over the years.

The company entered the third-generation stage in 2004 when Jon Knochenmus (a son-in-law) and his son, Brian, became sole owners.

To provide clarity and direction for marketing efforts, Ralco Nutrition now distinguishes two divisions: Animal Nutrition Division and Animal Health Division. Both divisions serve the beef, swine, equine and poultry industries, but the marketing focus for the products is different.

The Animal Nutrition Division encompasses the various products that are added to an animal's diet, focused at a customer base that includes feed distributors and farms ranging from the large mega-herd operation to the farmer with a ten head of cattle. Ralco has positioned itself in the marketplace as a company that provides natural additives, with dozens of products that improve overall animal nutrition in one way or another.

One of the most recognized of these products is Birthright, a milk replacer designed to improve the performance of "runts" and late-born piglets. The company also manufactures the Birthright Deck, a plastic stall that houses small pigs and dispenses milk on-demand without competition from the larger piglets.

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The on-site laboratory at Ralco Nutrition helps with quality control of existing products and R & D of new products.



TSMA is affiliated with Midwest Manufacturers' Association.

Company of the Month

Ralco Nutrition

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Other products from the Nutrition Division include grazing supplements, silage inoculants, laxatives, products to improve digestion, and more.

The Animal Health Division manufactures specialty products that improve animal health, with marketing efforts aimed at veterinary clinics as well as direct-to-customer. First Pulse D, for example, is an oral product given to piglets to get them up and going and back on feed and water.

Another example from the Animal Health Division is "Regano" – a trademark product that Ralco offers as a flavor. Ralco teamed up with a company from Greece to develop this product, which is derived from oil extracted from oregano plants. Aiming for a top-notch reputation with this product (there are synthetic options on the market), Ralco is selective as to what type of oregano plant is used – there are some 40 known species – and what process (steam) is used to extract the essential oil.

The manufacturing process at Ralco Nutrition is fairly straight-forward. The company imports high quality raw materials from preferred vendors all over the world – vitamins, minerals and trace minerals. A bar code system is used to track materials and product throughout the process. The raw materials are stored in holding bins. A computer is used to tell the system how much of a particular material should be fed into the mixing bin. Additives are weighed and added to the mix. When all necessary ingredients have been added to the mixer, the mixture is blended for a set amount of time.

The finished product is packaged for distribution in 50 lb. bags, a 2,000 lb. tote, or as a bulk drop in a semi trailer. Ralco maintains a company fleet of ten trucks and 25 trailers, which allow the company to be responsive to customer needs.

Ralco Nutrition delivers products to producers large and small throughout the United States, with concentrations in those regions that are strong in swine, beef and poultry production. In recent years, the company has developed an aggressive international focus as well. They now have a significant presence in the feed markets in Central and South America, Mexico, Canada, and Asia. Two in-house export specialists handle the many challenges associated with getting a product "registered" for sale in another country. Depending on the product and the intended market, this process might take a few months ... or a few years. Ralco's new International Group also includes outside sales associates based in Europe, Latin America and Asia.

Recent certifications awarded to Ralco Nutrition will only help cement the company's reputation as a quality source of animal nutrition worldwide. RUPP, Safe Food/ Safe Feed and HACCP were the three certifications given by FCI. HACCP certification signals to potential customers the company's commitment to control critical points in the production process that have the potential to pose a hazard to human or animal health. Since HACCP certification is not yet required in the marketplace, the company's decision to invest time and resources to achieve certification is a strategic example of managements' commitment to excellence.



Ralco Nutrition invested in a robot to automate the process of palletizing 50# bags of additives.

Perhaps the most significant move made by management in recent years was the decision to bring on-staff a number of industry-renowned nutritionists and scientists. This strategic decision enabled the company to use science to enhance and validate their product line, making Ralco Nutrition an industry leader in the use of research and technology. A chemical engineer staffs the on-site laboratory, conducting research to make products "user friendly" for the farmer, among other things.

Despite significant growth in the past six years, Ralco Nutrition has never had to advertise to fill available positions. The family-oriented company has a reputation for treating people well, based on management's recognition that "people" are a company's greatest asset. The company's Health Wellness Program is but one example of Ralco's commitment to its employees. The program provides an employee with a partially funded health club membership and a coach that advises on diet, exercise, medication, and life-style decision that lead to good health. Financial incentives are available for employees who meet their established goals.

Continued growth is on the horizon for Ralco Nutrition. A sustained focus on international sales will drive the growth projection: doubling in size in the next five years. A facility upgrade is part of the plan as well. Landlocked at the original plant, Ralco expanded into offsite facilities that were available in Marshall during their recent growth. The company now occupies a total of 65,000 square feet at three different sites. The five-year plan includes construction of a new facility that would house the expanded company under one roof.

For more information about Ralco Nutrition, visit their website at www.ralconutrition.com or call 1-800-533-5306.

Would you like your company
featured as

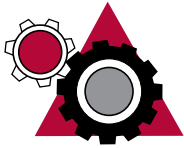
Company of the Month

in the *Network News*?

Contact the TSMA office at

800-654-5773 or

midwest@runestone.net



T SMA May Meeting

Tuesday, May 4

Alexandria, Holiday Inn

Schedule of Events

- 3:00 - 5:00 PM AdvisorNet Seminar
- 3:00 - 5:00 PM Greening Your Business
- 5:30 - 7:30 PM Dinner Meeting

Cost: \$15/person

AdvisorNet Seminar - FREE!

3:00 – 5:00 PM

Pre-registration required

What You Need To Know About Financial, Investment & Retirement Planning

Mike Lynch, *Financial Consultant, AdvisorNet Financial Group*

This session will address the following topics:

- Do you have a sufficient amount of life insurance?
- The importance of asset allocation and diversification
- Does your financial plan meet your objectives?
- Advantages of the Roth IRA, and converting IRA dollars to a Roth IRA
- How does a Variable Annuity (VA) work and when does it make sense?
- Benefits of Dollar Cost Averaging
- Saving for college education expenses
- Is Long-Term Health Care a concern?

Executive Risk Coverage... Serious Claims Not Covered By Your General Liability Policy

Dave Burkart, *Agency Principle, CPCU, AdvisorNet Property and Casualty*

Executive Risk insurance addresses the exposure you have in running your business, not usually covered by a General Liability or Umbrella Policy. Such exposures include decisions regarding products, merger and acquisitions, financing, hiring and firing, and the type of pension plan offered and who administers it.

Executive risk coverage generally encompasses directors and officer liability, employment practices liability, and fiduciary liability. Fiduciary liability deals with the exposures business owners have in acting as trustees in a fiduciary capacity for the pension and welfare plans it sponsors for its employees.

Impact of the New Healthcare

Legislation

Mike Burress, *CEO, Benefit Strategies Group*

This country rarely seems as divided as it is now over the passing of what is often termed "Obamacare." Nevertheless, a new health reform bill has been signed into law, and with amazing speed its parts are being put into place. As complicated as it is, Mike Burress will give an overview that should help us see what impact it might have on our lives, our employees and our businesses, both now and into future years as various parts are phased in. This promises to be an interesting session.

The Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act of 2010:

- What does it mean to me? My business? My employees?
- Who gains and who loses?
- How should I prepare?

Michael Burress is CEO of Benefit Strategies Group, an affiliate of AdvisorNet Financial, Inc. Benefit Strategies Group serves the Midwest region with employee benefit consulting, planning & products, assisting businesses, individuals and financial consultants with health, life, disability, dental, long term care, health savings accounts, cafeteria plans and other benefits. A native of Minnesota, Mike serves on a special advisory board to two of the largest health carriers in the state, as well as the legislative committee of the Minnesota Health Underwriters and several other non-profit organizations. He is a Flotilla Commander in the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, he raises money for sick children through a non-profit foundation he created, he is a private pilot, an avid boater, is the father of 3 and the grandfather of a baker's dozen.

Real Estate and Interest Rate Trends

Vaughn Kavlie, *President, AdvisorNet Mortgage*

- Home Economics and Real Estate updates.
- Many handout materials showing trends and markets.
- Overall market update explaining economic indicators affecting both commercial and residential real estate.
- Inflation and the road to recovery.
- Recent regulatory changes and how it affects our ability to borrow.

Meeting Sponsor



Sponsorship Opportunities Available:
Call the TSMA office!



F Says...

Elroy Vesta, TSMA President
EJ Enterprises, Fergus Falls



It's a New Quarter ...

April – does it seem possible? Winter is past!?! We are in a new mode. I even tried a joke on someone the other day - since it did not work in my April fool plan, I gave up on making further attempts.

He's rambling – yes it does take an extra cup of coffee to get in the mode of writing. With sunshine, breezes which dry out the wet winter – I can make the move to tasks that need to be done to freshen things up. There are leaves to rake up – some touch up painting – sorting the papers that collected and then making connections.

By now I have a sense of how the business is proceeding for 2010. Goals set for the new year can be evaluated. The taxes are filed. (I hope you got to pay some taxes - meaning your business made a profit!) NOW – let's focus on making the sale. Some things I have found helpful to follow.

Keep in touch with customers. In my world, the need for my services is cyclical. Only one school catalog is printed per year. Then there are times of no contact. I use that 'in between' time to discover how else I can serve this customer. Listening to them and observing have helped me to see other areas of need that I can fulfill and now the contact with that customer is not as infrequent.

Be certain to respond to requests. They come in a casual conversation. They may come in an email. Remember to be a connector and get back to the person who makes the request. I need to keep notes of those items because some require research before response. It is easy to forget or neglect.

Be known as a person who is – on time, on budget, provides value and is truthful. I believe that all of these need to fit. Be a person that does not take the easy way but provides above and beyond what the customer wants. Who you are and become is just as valuable to your customers as what you provide.

Do not rely on the past. It seems that none of us are doing things like we used to. The world we live in changes with such speed that it is often difficult to keep up. I discover that in some sectors of my business, change is even more significant than I am experiencing so I must become a student again in order to meet needs.

Be Patient. This is not just with others but with oneself. Failure to do this results in pressures that will often lead us to be ineffective.

So – Spring arrives with new challenges and new opportunities. We can learn from one another – spend some time in the classroom of life.

Are manufacturers interested in establishing a “Green Coalition” in west central Minnesota?

Join the discussion on May 4th in Alexandria!

Modeled after the Tri-State Quality Council, the “Green Coalition” (temporary name) is envisioned as a resource for TSMA members to collaborate, share resources, and learn from one another. This new cohort could potentially meet in conjunction with TSMA general meetings if interest merits.

To express interest in the formation of a “Green Coalition” and provide input regarding the shape and structure of the new entity, join us for the “Sustainable Business Discussion” from 3:00 – 5:00 PM on May 4. This pre-meeting gathering will also feature Shelli-Kae Foster with information about “Sustainable Business Practices” - details below. See Page 3 of this newsletter for information about the May 4th general meeting.

Sustainable Business Basics

Presented by: Shelli-Kae Foster, SK Go Green

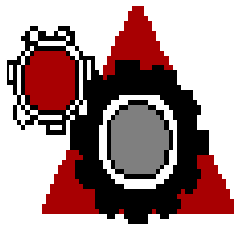
The world of Green is changing, evolving and entering our lives at every level; business, home and community.

This presentation will address:

- Sustainable Business Best Practices
- Case Examples of Sustainability
- 5 Steps to Creating a Dynamic Green Team

Shelli-Kae has been in the “Green” industry for over 20 years. While producing and writing her own show, Shelli-Kae's Greenhouse, she enlightened audiences about the world of sustainability. Shelli-Kae later worked with Twin Cities Public Television in researching and producing environmental programming.

TSMA is again teaming up with Meadowbrook Insurance Group to bring you...



10-Hour OSHA General Industry Course

June 1 & 2 in Bloomington

About the Course

Employees at every level in a manufacturing company, from production staff to management, will benefit from this comprehensive introductory course. Learn about the scope and application of OSHA standards to workplace safety and health. Emphasis is placed on using the 29 CFR Part 1910 general industry standards to identify and recommend abatement for the greatest safety and health hazards. Special emphasis will be placed on recognizing Minnesota-specific regulations. Participants have an opportunity to increase hazard awareness and avoidance using OSHA standard as a guideline, and **earn a general industry OSHA 10-Hour Course Completion Card.**

About the Presenter

Scott Huberty, Loss Control Supervisor
Meadowbrook Insurance Group

Meadowbrook Insurance Group provides a variety of traditional and alternative risk management and insurance services. In Minnesota, Meadowbrook serves as the TPA (Third Party Administrator) for self-insurance groups, including the Trifac Workers Compensation Fund, which is available to members of: Arrowhead Manufacturers & Fabricators Association, Central Minnesota Manufacturers Association, and Tri-State Manufacturers' Association.

Scott Huberty, Loss Control Supervisor for the organization, completed a 30-hour "train the trainer" session that qualifies him to lead the 10-Hour OSHA General Industry Course. TSMA members have appreciated Scott's relaxed yet informative training style at past workshops.



Ten hours of training offered in a one and one-half day format.

Day One: June 1, 2010

10:30 - 11:00 AM Registration

11:00 - 12:00 PM Morning Session

Noon - 12:30 PM Lunch Onsite

12:30 - 5:00 PM Afternoon Session

Day Two: June 2, 2010

7:30 - 8:00 AM Full Breakfast

8:00 - 12:30 PM Training Session

Location

Meadowbrook Insurance Group

7900 Xerxes Ave. S. #300, Bloomington, MN 55431

Cost

TMSA Member: \$99/person

NonMembers: \$149/person

Price includes: Training manual, lunch, and refreshments on day one. Full breakfast and refreshments on day two.

Registration

Class size limited to 30 people.

Registration Deadline: May 21, 2010

Contact TSMA Office for Registration information.



Tri-State Manufacturers' Association

PO Box 150, Elbow Lake, MN 56531

Ph: 800-654-5773

Fax: 218-685-5397

midwest@runestone.net

Phone: 800-654-5773

midwest@runestone.net

Fax: 218-685-5397

Tri-State Manufacturers Association

17th Annual

Golf Social

Wednesday July 21, 2010

Hwy 108 & 78 Ottertail, MN 56571

Thumper Pond Golf Course

www.thumperpond.com

Corporate Hole Sponsorship

Great Value at \$200!

Hole Sponsorships are just \$200/hole.

This is a great value - one golf registration (\$70 value) included with each sponsorship! Call the office at 800-654-5773 to add your name to the list of sponsors. Hold a contest or event at your hole!

2010 Sponsors (To Date):

Alexandria Technical College
Eide Bailly - Primary Sponsor
Frontier Power Sports
Innova Industries
Lavelle Company

11:00 AM Registration
Noon Shotgun Start
4:30 PM Social Hour & Awards
5:15 PM Steak Dinner

Come and network with others sharing an interest in manufacturing! Golf social open to members, friends, and guests of Tri State Manufacturers' Association.



\$70/person

Includes green fees, shared cart and steak dinner. 18 hole 4-person scramble

Tri-State Golf Social

The 17th annual TSMA Golf Social, a 4-ball scramble, will be held on Wednesday, July 21, 2010, with a shotgun start at Noon. Proceeds from the event will continue to support the TSMA Scholarship Program that was created in 2004. Eide Bailly, LLP has again committed as primary sponsor of the event. As in the past, the afternoon of golf will conclude with an awards ceremony and steak dinner.

All members and friends of the Association are invited to attend the golf social ... typical attendance is 80 to 90 golfers. You don't have to be an experienced golfer to enjoy the TSMA Golf Social - many "non-golfers" participate.

Make plans to join us on July 21st! Watch for registration information to arrive via email, or access the information at www.tsm.org.

Corporate Hole Sponsorships are available at a rate of \$200 ... a great value, since the fee includes one FREE golf registration (a \$70 value)! Call the office today to sign up as a hole sponsor.

If you have questions or suggestions regarding the golf social, contact a 2010 committee member: Chair - Bob Grove (Cosmos Enterprises), Tom Mastellar (Kendeco), Bob Nathe (Lavelle Company), Evan Westra (West Tool), or Steve Winter (Dawson Insurance).

HOLE-IN-ONE CONTEST. GRAND PRIZE VALUED AT \$13,000!

Dream It. Do It. Update

Area High Schools Encouraged to Accept
Free Membership in TSMA

As a means of achieving the larger goal of increased networking and collaboration among manufacturers and high schools in the region, Tri-State Manufacturers' Association recently extended an offer of "free membership" to some 30 high schools in west central Minnesota. There is but one stipulation attached the offer of free membership; any school that accepts the offer is required to be an active member of the association. Teachers, administrators, counselors, students, and school board members are invited to attend the TSMA general meetings at no cost. Both "sides" stand to benefit as relationships develop between those in industry and those in education.

TSMA members – If you currently have a relationship with someone at the high school in your region, please make them aware of the offer of free membership and/or invite them to attend an upcoming general meeting. Or, provide the office with their contact information so we can extend the invitation and get them setup to receive meeting notices, the newsletter, etc.

In further efforts tied to Dream it. Do it., a working committee in the Alexandria region continues to explore the potential of hosting a "Tour of Manufacturing" event in the fall of 2010. The proposed event would feature an open-house format that encouraged visits to designated manufacturing plants for a first-hand look at manufacturing facilities and corresponding career opportunities. A number of manufacturers in the Alexandria-Glenwood region have expressed interest in participating in the event. The next planning meeting is scheduled in Alexandria on May 7: contact the TSMA office if you'd like to get involved.

Dream !t. Do !t.

www.dreamit-doit.com/mn

TSMA Financial Reports

Tri-State Manufacturers' Association Balance Sheet March 31, 2010

ASSETS	
Petty Cash	100
Cash	88,427
Investment/CVI	1,000
Grants Receivable	<u>0</u>
Total Assets	<u>89,527</u>
LIABILITIES	
Liabilities	265
FUND BALANCE	
Fund Balance	93,718
Revenue Over (Under) Exp.	<u>-4,457</u>
Total Fund Balance	<u>89,261</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Bal.	<u>89,527</u>

Tri-State Manufacturers' Association Statement of Activity For Three Months Ending 3/31/2010

REVENUE	
Advertising Income	210
Golf Income	0
Membership Dues	10,025
Meeting Income	1,812
Misc. Income	<u>148</u>
Total Revenue	<u>12,195</u>
EXPENSES	
Golf Expense	0
Insurance	1,187
Meeting Expense	1,885
Misc. Expense	393
MMA Dues	1,294
Staff Time	7,065
Office Supplies/Postage	341
Travel & Training -Staff	587
Workforce Dev/Scholarship	<u>3,900</u>
Total Expense	<u>16,651</u>
Revenue Over (Under) Exp	<u>-4,457</u>

FREE Half Day Workshop!

Growing Leadership

How to Identify and Develop Your Future Leaders

Seating is limited so register now. Registration is open to anyone in a leadership or supervisory position in a TSMA member organization. Priority will be given to people with greater seniority if the workshop fills beyond capacity.

Monday, May 10

1:00 – 5:00 PM

West Central Initiative, Fergus Falls

About the Workshop

Look at any poll of corporate executive teams and “future leadership of the organization” always ranks as one of their top concerns. People turned out in record numbers to vote in the last presidential election. We’re more concerned about leadership than ever so how do we answer the following questions.

- What is effective leadership?
- Where do effective leaders come from?
- How do we grow the next generation of leaders for our organizations and for our country?
- Does leadership require some kind of natural charisma or can anyone be an effective leader?

This half day workshop attempts to answer some of these questions with historical and practical examples of effective leadership. It takes the mountain of theories and mythology about leadership and boils them down to a few basic principles and practices that can be used to grow future leaders. Participants will be guided through a process to develop plans for the growth of their own leadership competencies and those of others in their organizations.

About the Instructors



Charles A. “Chad” Weinstein is director of the Hill Center for Ethical Business Leadership, an organization dedicated to helping businesses prosper through a strategic commitment to ethics and social responsibility. Weinstein has served clients in a variety of industries, including consumer products, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, specialty chemicals, mining and mineral extraction, and high-tech manufacturing. He has also held leadership positions in firms in the information services and industrial safety industries. Weinstein holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in business ethics (philosophy) from the University of Minnesota, and a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin.



Tom Laughlin is the President of Caravela Inc, an International Leadership and Business Development consulting firm he established in 2002, where he helps leaders in businesses and non-profit organizations improve their leadership effectiveness. Prior to founding Caravela he spent two decades in leadership positions for a wide range of organizations including startup organizations, small businesses and Fortune 100 companies. Tom is a professor of Leadership and Business at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and a faculty member of the Minneapolis Rotary Leadership Academy. In addition to his hands-on experience, he derives his perspectives on leadership from a broad educational background that includes an MBA from the Anderson School at UCLA and a Masters in International Leadership and Organizational Development with Post Graduate studies in Psychology from Saint Mary’s University.



Registration is requested by **April 30, 2010**

To register contact Sandy Kashmark
800-654-5773 or midwest@runestone.net.

TRI-STATE
Manufacturers' Association

Highlights of the TSMA March Board Meeting

The Tri-State Manufacturers' Association Board of Directors met on March 2, 2010, at the Prairie Event Center in Parkers Prairie. The meeting was called to order by president Elroy Vesta at 9:45 AM and adjourned at 10:45 AM.

The consent agenda was approved, including January meeting minutes, February financial reports, and updates on: Dream It. Do It., scholarship committee, Cap & Trade Symposium, Rigging Fundamentals training, Growing Leadership workshop, and MMA.

It was agreed that the annual Meadowbrook/TSMA OSHA training session will be scheduled in Bloomington in early June.

Discussion was heard regarding the annual Tabletop Trade Show, with consideration given to suggestions to enhance the event, including breakout sessions, a keynote speaker, free beverages, improved marketing efforts, etc.

The board is researching the potential to bring a "high dollar" speaker to the region.

The board approved an expenditure of \$6,000 to provide four scholarships to high schools students in the region pursuing a field of study related to manufacturing.

Sandy will draft a letter offering free membership in TSMA to high schools in the region, using contact names provided by Lakes Country Service Cooperative.

The list of Goals for 2010 was reviewed, with Elroy volunteering to spearhead the discussion regarding upgrades to the TSMA website.

Highlights of the TSMA April Board Meeting

The Tri-State Manufacturers' Association Board of Directors met on April 6, 2010, at West Central Initiative in Fergus Falls. The meeting was called to order by president Elroy Vesta at 11:30 AM and adjourned at 12:15 PM.

The consent agenda was approved, including March meeting minutes, March financial reports, and updates on: Dream It. Do It., Growing Leadership workshop, MMA staffing, OSHA training, golf social, green consortium, MJSP grant, and TSMA programs.

Harold Stanislawski, Fergus Falls Economic Improvement Commission, spearheaded a discussion regarding the value of activating a TSMA legislative committee. Research and discussion will continue at the next board meeting.

The board authorized the Golf Committee to purchase 20th anniversary commemorative items for the event scheduled on July 21, 2010.

Discussion continued regarding the annual Tabletop Trade Show, which was postponed from the original date in May until autumn 2010. The potential to collaborate with the Impact Alexandria event is being explored. Elroy and Todd agreed to assist on the planning committee.

Due to time constraints, the remaining agenda items were tabled until the next board meeting, which will be held from 2:00 – 3:00 PM at the Holiday Inn in Alexandria on Tuesday, May 4, 2010. Board meetings are open to the membership.

MMA Office Welcomes LeeAnn Rostberg



Midwest Manufacturers' Association is pleased to announce the addition of LeeAnn Rostberg as a part time Executive Assistant in the Elbow Lake office. A recent graduate of the Communication Art and Design program at Alexandria Technical College, LeeAnn is a native of Isanti, MN. She now resides in Hoffman, MN.

LeeAnn will fill the position previously held by Melissa Christianson. Melissa and her husband welcomed the arrival of their first child, Sophia Hazel Christianson, on April 22, 2010.

Midwest Manufacturers' Association is the "central hub" that provides services for AMFA, CMMMA, and TSMA. While these three associations are largely volunteer driven, each relies on the MMA office for services ranging from meeting coordination to dues maintenance to newsletter production and more. LeeAnn will assist with a variety of these services, including management of the annual membership directory, editing the monthly newsletters, and coordinating meeting registrations. Please extend a warm welcome to LeeAnn the next time you call the office!

Tabletop Trade Show To be scheduled this Fall.

The annual TSMA Tabletop Trade Show, originally scheduled in Alexandria on May 4, has been postponed to the fall of 2010, to allow organizers time to implement new ideas to enhance the show.

TSMA members and prospective members, students, parents, community members --- all are invited to attend the Tabletop Trade Show to learn about the manufacturing related products and services available in the region.

Exhibit space at the Tabletop Show is available to members only, at no charge.

- 6' table provided
- Displays can be formal or informal
- Offer a door prize to encourage visits to your booth!
- Trade show attendance is free and open to the public
- Following the Tabletop Show, join us for dinner at a cost of \$15/person. (This is an excellent time for networking!)
- Cash bar available

To reserve an exhibit space

Contact: LeeAnn
leannr@runestone.net or 800-654-5773



Lean Office Training Available to TSMA Members through MJSP Grant

Procurement Training Underway

TSMA members have access to low-cost training opportunities right here in west central Minnesota. Working in collaboration with M-State and Alexandria Technical College, the association received an MJSP grant earlier this year to help fund training on four topics.

The second topic - Lean Office Training – will be offered in two locations. The Alexandria session is scheduled from Noon to 4:00 PM on Thursdays, beginning on May 27. The Fergus Falls session will run on Friday mornings beginning June 4. Both sessions have limited space available for additional attendees. Lean Office Training is open to TSMA members on a first-come, first-serve basis at a cost of \$30/person to cover the cost of materials. Employers are also required to cover the cost of wages for employees to attend the training.

Lean Office—also known as Business Process Improvement - is a customized class that takes the concepts used for years in the manufacturing setting and applying them to the office setting. Most Lean type courses offered today are specifically designed for the manufacturing or healthcare markets. This class will be customized to the office environment. Course instructor Debbie Johnson, M State Custom Training Services, has over 20 years experience in continuous improvement training and implementation.

Training on the initial topic launched earlier this month. Procurement Training, an 8-week session, is focused on: term negotiations, re-order point calculation, inventory carrying costs, hidden costs of purchase orders, and relationship building.

Specific details regarding the remaining two topics, CNC Operator Training and Set-up Reduction Class, will be announced at a later date. This training is anticipated in the fall of 2010.

Contact the TSMA office at 1-800-654-5773 to inquire about MJSP training opportunities.



AMFA-ET
12th annual
Golf Fundraiser

Wednesday, June 16
 Black Bear Casino Resort
 Cloquet, MN

12:30 PM Shot Gun Start

Before June 6: \$115/person
 After June 6: \$125/person
 Dinner Only: \$25/person

Includes 18 holes, shared cart, dinner and prizes.
 Proceeds support workforce development efforts.

TSMA and CMMMA members
 are invited to attend.

Call the office for registration information.

New Member Corner

A welcome is extended to the newest members of Tri-State Manufacturers' Association...

Christianson & Associates, PLLP
 302 SE 5th St., Willmar, MN 56201
 Product/Service: Certified public accountants and consultants.
 Employees: 28
 TSMA contact: Bradley Pederson, CPA
 Website: www.cnc-solution.com

MN Trade Office (DEED)
 332 Minnesota St., Suite 200, St. Paul, MN 55101
 Products/Service: The Minnesota Trade Office provides export assistance to Minnesota's manufacturers and service providers. Programs and services focus primarily on assisting small and medium-sized companies.
 Employees: 14
 TSMA contact: Ed Dieter, Executive Director.
 Website: www.exporthminnesota.com

Welcome!



**ANNUAL MEETING
 RESCHEDULED**

Thursday, May 27
 11:00 AM

Southview Country Club, West St. Paul

Open to all members of the
 Trifac Workers Compensation Fund.

The Trifac annual meeting was originally
 scheduled on May 4th.

Thank You

Thank you to **Lari Kippen**, OECS, Inc for his presentation at the April meeting. Thank you as well to Hoot Lake Power Plant for hosting the tour.

Upcoming Events

Date	Location	Event/Speaker/Topic
May 4	Alexandria	TSMA Monthly Meeting
May 10	Fergus Falls	Growing Leadership Workshop
June 1 & 2	Bloomington	OSHA 10-Hour Training
Sep 7	Fergus Falls	TSMA Dinner Meeting
Oct 5	Alexandria	Tabletop Trade Show
Nov 2	Fergus Falls	TSMA Monthly Meeting
Dec 7	TBA	Holiday Party

\$100 Cash Drawing: Update

Remember to turn in your business card at each Tri-State meeting for a chance to win \$100 at a future meeting! One business card will be drawn from "the hat" each month; the person named on the card must be present to win.

When a name is drawn and that person is not present, \$100 accrues to the TSMA Scholarship Fund. The name of **Roger Cullen**, Innova Industries was drawn at the April meeting; this money was donated to the scholarship fund.

Advertising Rates

TSMA Member Rates

	one <u>month</u>	six <u>months</u>	twelve <u>months</u>
1/8 page	\$20	\$100	\$180
1/4 page	\$35	\$175	\$315
1/2 page	\$60	\$300	\$540
Full page	\$100	\$500	\$900

Contact Sandy Kashmark at the TSMA office for more information:
 Phone: 800-654-5773
 Email: midwest@runestone.net

Check out the TSMA website:

www.tsma.org

April Did You Know?

"Did You Know?" provides the opportunity to share timely, manufacturing-relevant information about government programs, human resource issues, tax laws, etc. "Did You Know?" information from TSMA's April meeting is featured below.

Two New Tax Benefits Aid Employers...

Provided by: **Lee Helgense**t, MN Workforce Center/DEED

Two new tax benefits are now available to employers hiring workers who were previously unemployed or only working part time. These provisions are part of the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act enacted into law on March 18, 2010.

- Employers who hire unemployed workers this year (after Feb. 3, 2010 and before Jan 1, 2011) may qualify for a 6.2 percent payroll tax incentive, in effect exempting them from their share of Social Security taxes.
- In addition, for each worker retained for at least a year, businesses may claim an additional general business tax credit, up to \$1000 per worker, when they file their 2011 income tax return.

The new law is especially helpful to employers who are adding positions to their payrolls. New hires filling existing positions also qualify but only if the workers they are replacing left voluntarily or for cause.

Each new hire must certify that he or she was unemployed during the 60 days before beginning work or, alternatively, worked fewer than a total of 40 hours for someone else during the 60-day period.

Employers claim the payroll tax benefit on the federal employment tax return they file with the IRS, beginning as early as the second quarter of 2010. Revised forms and further details on these two new tax provisions will be posted on the www.irs.gov during the next few weeks.

Do you have information to share with others involved in manufacturing?

i.e. legislation ~ HR updates ~ government programs ~ tax issues

Contact the TSMA office so we can share the information with other companies.

2010 Membership Directory Distributed to Current Members

All current TSMA members should be receiving a complimentary copy of the 2010 MMA Membership Directory via regular bulk mail in May. If you did not receive a copy or if your company can make use of additional free copies, call or email the office with your request. The directory is also available electronically as a pdf file. Thank you to the following members for their advertising support of the directory:

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1. Tri-State Manufacturers' Association is committed to developing people and companies by providing opportunities for members to acquire industry relevant knowledge or skills.
2. Integrity and trust are guiding principals for Tri-State Manufacturers' Association.
3. Tri-State Manufacturers' Association believes that open, accurate and timely communication is important to accomplishing its mission.



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Membership Plaques are presented to current members at TSMA networking events. Several TSMA members collaborated with the Machine Technology students at North Dakota State College of Science to produce the plaques.

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Preventing Fires at Your Business Location

Contributed by: Diane Brzezinski, Sentry Insurance

Every year since the Great Chicago Fire on October 9, 1871, the week that includes that date has been set aside as National Fire Prevention Week to commemorate the disaster that killed some 300 people, left 100,000 homeless and destroyed more than 17,000 structures.

Fire causes more destruction each year than all natural disasters combined. In fact, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that direct property loss due to fires was estimated at \$13.6 billion in 2006.

To help guard your workplace against fire hazards, we have prepared the following information to assist you in taking the necessary precautions to protect your business.

Before a fire starts

- Inspect your facility for fire hazards. Conduct a walk-through inspection or ask your local fire department to do so. Correct discovered hazards.
- Consider installing a building sprinkler system. If a sprinkler system is already in place, inspect and test it on a regular basis.
- Provide the appropriate number and type of fire extinguishers, and train employees how to use them. Provide periodic refresher training.
- Consider which operations or processes in your workplace may require special fire safeguards. Be sure proper controls are in place and employees are trained on safeguards.
- Establish housekeeping rules in your workplace, including frequent cleaning, prompt waste disposal and proper material handling practices.
- Enforce a no smoking policy. If smoking is allowed, restrict it to posted safe areas and provide receptacles for disposal.
- Have an emergency fire plan in place, including a system for warning employees of a fire. Designate evacuation routes and conduct periodic evacuation drills.
- Establish a preventive maintenance schedule to keep equipment and operations running safely.
- Consider using InfraRed (IR) testing of equipment and electrical apparatus to detect potential problems.
- Identify and mark all utility shutoffs so electrical power, gas or water can be turned off quickly by fire responders or personnel.

During a fire

- Immediately contact the fire department
- Follow your emergency fire plan and evacuate the building. Account for all employees, visitors and customers
- If the fire is small, allow trained employees to extinguish the fire. Follow the fire department's instructions upon arrival

After a fire is extinguished

- Contact your insurance company
- Take steps to prevent additional loss
- Keep employees informed on repair and start-up plans

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TSMA Standing Committees

Tri-State members are invited to join a committee at any point throughout the year. Contact the TSMA office or the committee chair directly.

Membership Committee, chair:
Todd Peterson, TS&L Properties / 3M

Program Committee, chair:
Elroy Vesta, EJ Enterprises

Special Events Committee, chair:
Bob Grove, Cosmos Enterprises

Youth Involvement Committee, chair:
Mike Westergard, StoneL Corporation

Membership Dues Structure

The TSMA Membership Dues Structure is identical for manufacturing and associate members. Dues are based on number of employees.

No. of Employees	Annual Dues
1 person shop.....	\$ 75
2 to 5.....	\$ 125
6 to 15.....	\$ 175
16 to 30.....	\$ 200
31 to 50.....	\$ 250
51 to 99.....	\$ 275
100 to 199.....	\$ 325
200 or more.....	\$ 350

TSMA MISSION STATEMENT: Tri-State Manufacturers' Association assists manufacturing related companies by providing networking, education and programs to enhance the success of members and their communities.



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