

# March, 1999 Rental Rag

## Presidents Message

Murder Mystery Night offered an enjoyable evening for all 43 attendees. The comradery was flowing from the performers to the members of the association and back again with laughter, thoughts of "who done it?" and why?

If I may put on my cheerleading outfit (please, no applause for my sexy legs) once more, I would cheer the ARA of NJ as a valuable learning center (check out our websight at njara.org). We are constantly looking for new ways to help our members their businesses and better ways to serve our customers. For example, on Marh 17th Bell Atlantic is presenting, on our behalf, a seminar on how to handle irate customers. The meeting will be from 2 to 6 pm at the New Brunswick Hilton and Towers. See details elsewhere in this issue.

The ARA of NJ is a subsidiary association of the American Rental Association which is a non-profit, membership based natiional trade group comprised of more than 4,000 independent businesses involved in the rental of equipment. ARA-NJ consists of over a hundred such companies. If only 20 companies attended our last meeting, then we're not doing a good enough job convincing those not attending of the value of this association.

If our purpose is to proviide information, share and develop methods, skills and relationships, and promote friendships then we must provided enough good information to convince those not attending the value of the association. Obviously we haven't. What can be done about this? If anyone has any suggestons on how we can reach these members, please speak up.

On another topic, on the legislative side, OSHA ans EPA have handcuffed the ARA of NJ by over regulating our businesses. For example, interpretation on the rules and regulations affecting the size of pressurized washer boilers. Does the conversion in place in the state positiively serve the ARA of NJ stores?

We would like feedback on our organization concerning things we should be doing now and what we should be doing in the future. A growing organization is a benefit to all of us - without your support and participation at meetings we cannot help each other and reach our goals. Please send comments to Carl Sparacio at Fax no. 201-236-8934 or e-mail him at poppicarl@msn.com.

Yours in participation,

Anthony Perrotta

# MINUTES OF THE JANUARY "MEETING"

You had to be there - it was more mystery than meeting. As you know, our January get together is always a social affair. This time around it was a Murder Mystery Dinner.

If you've ever played the game "Clue" you'll have some idea of how this works. You have to figure out who killed Aunt Charlotte in the Library with a monkey wrench - or something like that. Members were all given characters to play and some were even asked to perform (don't ask!).

As we ate, the actors who performed in the actual play wandered among our tables and allowed their story to unfold. You already know that members of the ARA-NJ are a lively group and they got right into it.

A good time was had by all.

## From the Veep

In September 1998, the U.S. Treasury put a new \$20 bill in circulation. With the introduction of the new bill many counterfeiters may try to take advantage and pass fake \$20's. The following information will help you understand how to identify a counterfeit bill. Genuine money is made by government master craftsmen who use steel engraving and printing equipment designed for that purpose. Most Counterfeiters, on the other hand, use a photo-mechanical or "offset" method to make a printing plate of a genuine note.

You can help guard against the threat from counterfeiters by becoming more familiar with United States money.

Look at the money you receive. Compare a suspect note with a genuine note for the same denomination and series, paying attention to the quality of printing and paper characteristics. Look for differences, not similarities.

**The Portrait:** The genuine portrait appears lifelike and stands out distinctly from the fine screen-like background. The counterfeit portrait is usually lifeless and flat. Details merge into the background.

**Federal Reserve and Treasury Seals:** On a genuine bill the sawtooth points of the Federal Reserve and Treasury seals are clear, distinct, and sharp. The counterfeit seals may have uneven, blunt, or broken saw-tooth points.

**Border:** The fine lines in the border of a genuine bill are clear and unbroken. On the counterfeit, the lines in the outer margin and scrollwork may be blurred and indistinct.

**Serial Numbers:** Genuine serial numbers have distinctive style and are evenly spaced. They are printed in the same ink and color as the treasury seal. On the counterfeit, the serial numbers may differ in color or shade of ink from the treasury seal. The numbers may not be uniformly spaced or aligned.

**Paper:** Genuine paper has tiny red and blue fibers embedded throughout. Often, counterfeiters try to simulate these fibers by printing taing red and blue lines on their paper. Close inspection reveals, however, that on the counterfeit note the lines are printed on the surface, not embedded in the paper. It is illegal to reproduce the distinctive paper used in the manufacturing of United States currency.

Some people believe a bill must be counterfeit if the ink rubs off. This is not true. Genuine currency, when rubbed on paper, can leave ink smears.

If you doubt a bill is genuine, check it with the United States Secret Service, your bank, or your local police department.

### **IF YOU RECEIVE A COUNTERFEIT:**

Do not return it to the passer.

Delay the passer if possible.

Observe the passer's description, as well as that of any companions, and the license numbers of any vehicles used.

Telephone your local police department or the United States Secret Service. These numbers can be found on the inside front page of your telephone directory.

Write your initials and the date on a blank portion of the suspect note.

Do not handle the note. Carefully place it in a protective covering, such as an envelope.

Surrender the note or coin only to a properly identified police officer or U.S. Secret Service agent.

Brian Higgins

### **LIFE'S LAWS**

The two most common elements in the universe are hydrogen and stupidity.

If at first you don't succeed, sky diving is not for you.

Psychiatrists say that 1 of 4 people is mentally ill. Check 3 friends - if they're OK, you're it!

Nothing in the known universe travels faster than a bad check.

Deja moo: the feeling that you've heard this bull before.

## SMELL THE ROSES

Many of you share a similar background and upbringing in the rental business as mine. As a child I grew up watching my parents devote their time, energies and efforts to running growing rental business. This left little time for family and true "quality time." At 13 years old I had completely mastered the art of microwave dinners. My weekends were spent at the warehouse sweeping floors, washing trucks and doing dishes. This was just a way of life and I probably, like you, accepted it. It wasn't a bad life, it was just different. I remember graduation from high school, removing my cap and gown and breaking down chairs. I did it because I wanted to, not because someone made me do it.

Growing older, I became more experienced in the business, learned as much as I could and became active in it at a local and national level. I have reached a point in my life when one has to look back and reexamine where he came from, where he is now and where he's going. Is this a mid-life crisis?

Have any of you ever wondered about what we really do? Is this rental game we play truly worth it? Is it a game you can win? If so, what do you win? Are there any rules and how often do they change? Can anyone play or is it limited to certain individuals? We can even ponder this further: Who makes up the rules? When is the game over?

Obviously, I don't have answers to any of these questions and there probably are not any answers to be had. But what I do have, is insight, experience and the guts to ask the questions in the first place. So let me take a brief moment of your time and attempt to highlight the "Rental Roller Coaster" we experience daily.

Each day each of us gives 110% of ourselves to our companies. We do this with a goal that we can make a lot of money and live happily every after. OK, that's great, but at what cost? Are we neglecting our health, our wife, our families, our friends and our own well being or all of the above? Are we walking stress factories? Is there anything left of you at the end of the day and can you say that you are truly happy? Hey, we all have good days and we all have bad days, but are we winning the rental game?

If you close your eye right now and think of a perfect day you have had or wish to have, is there anything related to the rental business in that dream? Should there be? If there is, you have been working too hard. Did you ever wonder if you could do anything else if you weren't involved in rental? Would you even consider it? If someone came up to you and said, "I want to buy your business," would you sell? Everyone has a price. Yes, even you!

OK, Steve, why are you writing this? you're usually an upbeat guy and a true supporter of the rental business. Good question. Let's just say a recent event at work has given me a new perspective on what is important and what is not. First of all, work is work is work. I don't care if you're a plumber or nuclear scientist, a librarian or a truck driver, there has to be more to life than work. I don't believe we were put on this earth to work and then die (I'm not getting religious here). Let's get our priorities in order. What's important, besides your own well being, should include, but not be limited to, your wife, children, family and friends. These are the people that are there supporting you, not only in good times, but in bad times as well.

I have no intentions of leaving the rental business at this time of my life and I'm sure you don't either. It's a tough life, but it's what we do and it is a part of us. What I do plan to do is reexamine priorities and not let the events that happen in my business effect how I am as a husband, father, family member, rental person or friend.

I leave you with the following guidelines to help you get over the bad times and enjoy the good days.

The next time you have a bad day at the office, get in your car and drive to one of your favorite rental associate's stores and take him to lunch. If it's cheap diner, you pay; if it's a nice restaurant, let him pay. Take the time to share war stories and the day's events. I guarantee that after a few drinks and good conversation your problems will seem minimal.

For no reason at all, pick up the phone and call your wife and tell her how much you love her and appreciate her. After she asks what you did wrong, just explain the you just really wanted to talk to her and to take her out that night - just the two of you.

Take the afternoon off and go home and see your kids. Toss a ball, go to a movie or just hang out. After they ask if you're not feeling good and what you're doing home before dark, explain that you just want to spend time with them and that they are very special to you. Remember, they grow up faster than you think.

Attend local rental meetings. There is nothing like the support and friendship of your partners in the rental game.

Don't take your work home. Let the workday end. Enjoy the family!

Re-acquaint yourself with your local church, temple, synagogue, mosque, etc. It will do wonders. You might gain a whole new perspective on life.

Take a walk with your wife, kids, dog or just yourself. Think about all the nice things life promises and be thankful for what you have. Most important of all: **STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES.**

I would like to hear your thoughts, comments or criticism to what I have written. You can reach me at: [TENT\\_MAN@MSN.COM](mailto:TENT_MAN@MSN.COM).

If you would like to hear a really great story, you're welcome to take me to lunch. Plan on paying.

Steve Kohn

## THE SAFETY CORNER

Though you cannot tell by the mild winter we've been having, winter is still with us and we cannot let our guard down. Winter driving conditions may soon come. Delivery and errands will be made in the cold, snow, and ice. Be thorough, check all vehicles now. Don't be caught with your anti-freeze down!

Your winter driving checklist should start with the following:

**Ice Scrapers**

**Sand**

**Shovels**

**Chains**

## **Blankets.**

But don't neglect a review of the entire vehicle to insure safe winter driving. Check::

**Tires** for pressure, sufficient tread (don't forget to look at the spare tire and tools).

## **Mirrors**

**Windshield Wipers** (along with Washer Fluid, Defrosters, and Heaters).

## **Horns, Steering**

## **Exhaust System**

**Lights** (head, tail, brake and turn signals).

## **Seat Belts**

**Fire Extinguishers** (safety triangles, Flares, etc.).

## **First Aid Kits.**

Conduct winter driving seminars for employees and review your expectations of them. Some drivers might feel they might be criticized for poor performance if they take longer by "giving in" to the weather by driving slowly.

Review safe driving habits for winter conditions:

More than ever drive defensively, anticipate problem situations, and allow more reaction time and distance for winter conditions.

It gets darker sooner. Don't over drive your headlights. Plan to be able to stop in the visible distance.

Keep the windshield clear for visibility.

Allow for icy patches.

Discuss best techniques for dealing with skids (not the least of which is to go slower).

Be exceptionally courteous in snowy weather, Good manners, being alert and aware of other drivers on the road can do much to reduce the chances of accidents in bad weather conditions.

Self righteousness (these days going by the name of "Road Rage") comes from frustrations, often made worse by bad weather and an "attitude" caused by all those poor

driverson the road that need to be given instruction. The righteous need to control themselves the road is no place for overreaction.

Dave Hinck

Safety Chairman

## YOUR ARA-NJ CALENDAR

**March 17th** - Regular Meeting, and a special Telephone Seminar earlier in the day. See meeting details below (Seminar information is on page 4.)

**April 14th** - Nite at the Races at Pegasus. Information to follow.

**June 16th** - Regular Meeting, will advise

## MARCH MEETING

The Date: March 17, 1999

The Place: Party Place Warehouse

The time: 8 PM meeting, 7 PM for Corned Beef & Cabbage dinner

Your Host: Curly Boelhouwer

Their Telephone: 732-238-2324

The meeting will feature a shortened version of the Telephone Seminar presented for ARA-NJ members by Bell Atlantic that afternoon.

## DIRECTIONS TO MARCH MEETING

From the New Jersey Turnpike:

Take Exit 9 to Route 18 South. On Route 18 get off at the Milltown Road exit (right after Village Green Plaza). At bottom of the hill make a quick right. You will see Maxson's Tile. Stay to the right and the warehouse will be on the right at the "Party Place" sign

From Route 18 North - get off at Milltown Road exit and foll directions above.

## DIRECTIONS TO THE SEMINAR

To be held at the Brunswick Hilton and Towers in East Brunswick right off the NJ Turnpike.

**From NJ Turnpike North or South:**

Exit 9 through Toll Plaza. Get on Route 18 North and take first right, then bear right onto Tower Center Boulevard and enter the hotel from the middle of the two towers.

**From Route 18 North:**

Turn right at first light after the NJ Turnpike entrance -Tower Center Blvd.

**From Route 18 South:**

Go to Route 1 North. Follow signs for Route 18 North and New Brunswick. there will also be signs for NJ Turnpike. At fork in road bear left following signs for Tunison Road, NJ Turnpike. Go through traffic light and follow signs for NJ Turnpike and "U" turn (right).

Proceed to traffic light and make left into hotel entrance.