

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an introduction to Spring we had! I wasn't sure that the snow would melt in time for spring- we just made it!

Thanks to Harry Gould (ABC Rental), who hosted our 3/26 meeting, and Joe Mihalko Jr., and Steve Kohn (who arranged the programs), we were treated to some relevant financial perspectives. We talked about *401 K's, the stock market, and financial planning needs*- who among us doesn't need these?

Rentech has come and gone. ARA of New Jersey co-hosted the program with PERA. Joe Mihalko Jr., chaired a very active committee that included Brian Dugan (Adams Rentals), Craig Fisher (Taylor Rentals- Mt Laurel), and Milt Hutchinson (Modern Equipment Rentals- Hightstown & PERA President). PERA members Verne Hoffman, Nancy Marshall Vokorokos (Region 2 Director), Delbert Beiler also actively contributed and shared responsibilities. We even had Bill Brown (VA) on the committee! This was our first RenTech program- we had help from Annette Meyer and Craig Weiss from ARA national- and it was a success! We had 43 attendees for two full days of classroom and hands-on lawn and garden equipment training.

Greg Smith joined us for a very interesting seminar about how we can increase our exposure with free publicity, more effective use of the internet, and making better use of our time. We had 24 participants for the 3/11 seminar- a lively group with lots of participation!

Our next program, ***Stress Management*** (being put together by Megan Jones) will be held at United Rent-All, Hillsborough. This is a subject that is dear to our hearts- be there! In addition, our host, Kristen Redmond, says the food will be fantastic and you can tour the new addition!

Craig Fisher (Taylor Rentals, Mt Laurel) will be attending the National Legislative Caucus on behalf of ARA of NJ. The caucus is scheduled for 4/7-4/11 in Washington DC.

Now we have the spring to face! Some have noted a sharp increase in activity. Are we ready for it? If the activity is not there, what are we doing about it? If the activity is not there, come to our next meeting and start asking questions.

Congratulations to Joe Mihalko for receiving the Region 2 "**Rental Person of the Year**" award- well deserved!

And Congratulations to Richard Wycoff (Atlantic Rentals who is busy keeping up with his new baby Rachel)!

Have a great Spring!

..... Howard Heller

A GREAT SEMINAR!

It is with great pleasure I report we are not only getting older, but better as well. In March ARA of NJ hosted the seminar "Businesses Don't Die, They Commit Suicide!" I credit the vision of our current president Howard Heller for this ground

breaking event.

As an association for the benefit of its members, we have the opportunity to choose programs we feel will help us the most. This meeting featured Gregory Smith, a professional speaker, something we have not had at our state association meetings.

As with any event, it is hard to be "on target" for all attendees, but it shows the quality of event we can achieve. Your involvement as an active participating member can influence both meeting topics and content. If you attended the meeting you probably benefited. If you didn't benefit, or didn't attend, consider getting more involved in the operations of the association to change topics or content in future meetings.

Greg Smith suggested some common managerial "suicidal tendencies" include:

- Resistance to change
- Reaction to crisis, rather than avoidance
- Micro-managing
- Failure to keep up with current technology
- Not developing employees or next generation's management
- Failure to look outside the industry for inspiration

He suggested a variety of ways to readjust, redirect, reinvent, and recreate your business. Your managerial flexibility and energy is all that is needed to improve your business's results!..... Dave Hinck

A Party Center

A Quick Tip



Inspect new engines before use!

Occasionally during shipping a new engine may get turned upside down. Inspect the engine to see if oil has entered the cylinders or if the air cleaner paper element is contaminated with oil. New engines arriving in this condition require preliminary maintenance prior to operation. Drain the crankcase of any remaining oil. Remove the spark plugs and turn the engine upside down to empty the cylinders. Additionally the engine can be rotated to blow any remaining oil out of the cylinder. If the paper air filter element has any oil on it, replace it. Once a paper air filter is contaminated with oil, it restricts airflow and may cause a rich running condition. Squeeze excess oil from the pre-filter element. Left unchecked, these conditions may cause a new engine to foul spark plugs.

..... Joe Mihalko

Do It Yourself

A New Year:

Make Customer Satisfaction a Priority



Competition is tough these days. It's almost impossible to raise prices enough to compensate rising costs. The uncertain economy has resulted in fewer customers and new competition. OK, the rental business isn't all peaches and cream but whether it's a tent, a Thatcher or a floor sander, a successful rental transaction depends on the satisfaction of the person on the receiving end. What I have learned over the years is to listen to your customers-ask how the service was, did the equipment perform to his/her satisfaction. When you make a mistake, own up to it, view an error as a learning experience. Answer the phone promptly and identify yourself by name in a cheerful voice. Try not to leave them on hold too long if possible. But it's impossible to make everybody happy. Just this morning, we had a contractor wanting to rent a sheet rock lift with no license, registration, or even a major credit card. Edward Woznica, mgr. at Friendly Rental, said "Without proper identification, I can't rent you the equipment." The customer exclaimed that we were not friendly at Friendly Rental. He didn't understand that we had to protect our investment. It's up to you to make certain that all of your employees understand that the ultimate goal of your combined efforts is a satisfied customer.

..... Judy Boelhouwer, Friendly Rental

Can you find me?



This issues tech tip is going to be extremely beneficial for your company. When you first read this it might sound very technical and beyond normal comprehension, but stick with it. I will be straight forward, clear and concise.

By now you have all realized that the internet has become overloaded with thousands of rental sites that have to do with "Rental". Sometime today go to your browser and pick any search engine, my favorite is Google. Under search type "party rental" or "equipment rental", you will come up with thousands and thousands of sites that most likely will have nothing to do with what you do.

How do we get our sites to the top of the list is the question I get asked over and over again. There is no single simple solution, but this month's tip will surely help and you will be able to see the results quickly. The best bet about this tip is not only is it free, it will only cost you your time to implement

First step is we have to think like a consumer. If you are a consumer looking for something how would you search? Example: If I was having a party in Morristown NJ, I will search for something like this

"Party rentals in Morristown NJ" or if I was searching for a stump grinder I might start off with "Stump grinder rental in Morristown, NJ". Remember as more people become internet savvy they learn in order to save (which is what the internet is about in the first place) how to refine their searches to get just what they want. A search for "party rentals" only listed 844,000 links. Obviously, a consumer is not going to take the time to search through all those links. What they will do is learn to pinpoint what they want and where they want it.

Second step is to define key search words and phrases for your site. This list can be as detailed as you wish, but my suggestion is to get it under 75 words. Here is a sample list based on my example of a party rental store in Morristown:

1. party rentals Morristown
2. Party Rental Morristown
3. parties in Morristown, NJ
4. table rental Morristown
5. tables for rent Morristown
6. chair rental Morristown
7. chair renting in Morristown
8. tent renting Morristown
9. Morristown tent renting
10. renting tents in Morristown
11. tent rentals in Morristown
12. tents in Morristown

This list can go on and on and can be done for specific pages on your website to draw traffic to that particular page. Notice that I varied lower case and caps. Search engines are case sensitive and you have to consider this. Sometimes you might consider spelling a word incorrectly and see if this draws traffic

Third step is to add those key search words to your site and specific pages. If you publish your site locally this is simple process using basic free software on the web. If you pay someone to administer your site you can supply them with key words to embed in your site. Free software to do this can be found at <http://www.submission-spider.com> for one. There are many packages out there, but I'm particularly fond of this one.

If you monitor website traffic using reports such as webtrends, they will tell you how people are finding your site and which key words they used. This is one way I've learned this tech tip. I can be very technical at this point and explain the steps to create the tags in your site that contain the key words (these are called Metatags) but I'm afraid I will loose you at that point. But if you come to the next ARA of NJ meeting (Carrot and the horse approach) I will gladly explain the procedure to you.

Next issue I am going to take this one step further and explain the steps to promote your site use pay per click techniques.

..... Steve Kohn

Miller's Sales & Rentals

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

April 30th - Regular Meeting - Program "Stress Management "UnitedRent-All, Hillsborough See next page for details and directions.

May 14 - Night at the Races - Pegasus Restaurant at The Meadowlands Race Track. The registration form is in this issue.

July 16 - Board Meeting

August 20 - Seminar on phone skills (location to be advised)

September 24 - Board Meeting

October 8 - General Meeting - details in works

November 19 - Roundtable Discussions. Location to be announced.



Legislative report I

While our attention is focused on our troops in Iraq, both NJ Senate and the U.S. Congress continue to debate issues important to small business owners. Here in NJ the big news is Senate Bill 1489 (Sweeney). Our friends at the NFIB tell us "small business employers cannot afford to operate with employees absent for prolonged periods. This bill will encourage employees to reduce their work hours to as few as 15 hours per week in order to receive SIX MONTHS of paid leave benefits! Tens of thousands of workers will automatically get the maximum 26 weeks! Paid leave will disrupt all small businesses in the midst of a weak economy. Unlike the current state and federal unpaid leave laws, this bill provides no exemption for employers with less than 50 employees. Companies with as few as two employees are covered. Paid leave is a job killer.

After years of bipartisan effort to improve our business climate, S-1489 will undermine New Jersey's reputation as a business-friendly state." This provision (family leave) has, as of this writing, been taken out of S-1489 - proving the power of grassroots voices of groups like NFIB, ARANJ, and NJBIA. The bounce ride debate is still brewing. Paul Neuwirth of Taylor Rental is keeping an eye on it. Note that permits must be attached to rides. At a recent Amusement ride convention in Atlantic

City representatives for the CDA were asked if they we're trying to raise funds; the reply was, yes. The next meeting is on Thursday May 22nd, if you are interested contact Paul or me.

Nationally the biggest priorities are taxes and health insurance. President Bush is accelerating his 2001 tax-relief bill. Currently this would take several years, the new plan would make the reductions effective this year. The president's new plan would increase the section 179 equipment expense allowance from \$25,000. to \$75,000. The new plan would also return \$20 million to the economy by eliminating double taxation of dividends. On the health-care front congress is considering allowing AHP's - Association Health Plans. This will reduce health insurance costs by allowing small businesses say like a rental store to band together across state lines say like the ARA and purchase insurance in large pools.

This week April 7-10 is the ARA National Legislative Caucus in Washington DC. is taking place. Representing NJ is a new comer to the association seen with a familiar name. Craig Fisher of Taylor Rental/Fisherents has graciously volunteered to represent us in Washington. I'm sure he will represent us well and have a great report when he gets back.

..... Joe Mihalko

Do It Yourself

OUR NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, April 30th

"STRESS MANAGEMENT"

Presented by the

Health Awareness Foundation

Who among us doesn't need help with STRESS?

Come learn the causes and controls

Mike & Marie Avolio are our hosts at:

**United Rent-All, 230 Route 206 South, Hillsborough, NJ
(908) 359-3663**

Come at 6:30 PM for food, Meeting starts promptly at 7:30 PM

Directions:

Heading North on 287 *Take exit 14B (Rt. 22 West) on left

***Take 202/206 South ramp (Flemington/Princeton) Merge onto 202/206 South
and take ramp for 206 South- Princeton - this will lead you onto the Somerville Circle**

***At the Somerville Circle, continue following signs for 206 South- Princeton**

***From there, count 9 WORKING traffic lights and we are on the right side, just after
the 9th light.**

Heading South on 287

***Take exit 17 (202/206 South) Merge onto 202/206 South and take ramp for 206 South-
Princeton (this will lead you onto the Somerville Circle.)**

***At the Somerville Circle, continue following signs for 206 South- Princeton**

***From there, count 9 WORKING traffic lights and we'll be on the right side, just after
the 9th light.**

Life After Rental Day



**Life! Life! Who the heck had time for a life over the past
month?**

I don't know about you but most of my month was spent

digging out from under all that snow. (What a year to get rid of my Jeep!)

Now I'm not looking for a "pity party" but when I returned from the west coast in February, after the ARA Conference in Anaheim and the International Caterers Association Conference in San Francisco, I was greeted with two feet of snow in my driveway. Seems that the snowplow company I hired neglected to do their job. I was fuming then but can laugh now at the sight of me dragging my suitcase up the driveway in my loafers with no boots.

To make matters worse, when the warming trend began and the rains fell, all that snow and rain flooded my basement and family room. Now I don't want to complain but we had just refinished the family room with new carpeting last June when my oldest daughter got married. (You guys know what I mean; my wife wanted to know how could we have all of those guests over after the wedding without fixing up the house!!!!)

So don't event think of asking me about life after work. I'm too busy to answer.

..... Murray Vale

A-1 Tablecloth Co.

ARA-NEW JERSEY'S ANNUAL NIGHT AT THE RACES

Back by popular demand – our annual **Night at the Races will be run again on:**

May, 14th

At the New Jersey Meadowlands' Pegasus Restaurant

Tickets are \$48.00 per person

Includes Track admission & meal (Parking & Drinks Extra)

Track opens for dinner at 6 PM, Races begin at 7:30 PM

Tickets are limited – no reservations will be accepted after May 1st

This completed reservation form must be submitted with your check prior to the deadline
Reservations will be accepted by phone, FAX, or e-mail providing check to cover are mailed
immediately
Tickets will be mailed to your address – Arrangements cannot be made for pick-up at the track

Company Name: _____ **Your Name:**

Telephone No: _____ **Tickets required:** _____ **Total \$ -**

Mail this completed form to Carl Sparacio, 28 Refy Avenue, Ramsey, NJ 07446

Or Call 201-327-2495, or FAX 201-236-8934, or e-mail poppicarl@aol.com



ARA of NJ
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