

tmta talk

A Publication of the Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association

From Rob's Roost

by: Rob Dumont, President & CEO

Knowing Without Doing is Like Plowing Without Sowing!

We will shortly have a pretty good idea of the identities of the two combatants, also known as 'candidates', for the Presidency of the United States. While that contest will occupy center stage for much of the time between now and the elections in November 2008, do not overlook or minimize the importance of the Congressional races to be run simultaneously.

I must express my disappointment at the very limited response received to my request for your assistance in efforts to influence legislation as put out in the December 2007 issue of TMTA Talk.

To reiterate: "I would ask that by return fax to the TMTA (248-488-0500) or e-mail (ron@thetmta.com) you indicate your willingness and readiness to participate in a program whereby TMTA will by your choice of communication inform you of pending legislation and/or issues so that you can send a communication to your representative(s) involved with that issue in the House of Representatives or Senate and offer your view on the position to be taken."

The opportunities to influence legislation that present themselves currently will not be repeated until we find ourselves at the same point in the next election cycle and even then, we will not be electing a President. Let's not let apathy impact our chances!

For those who need current information on the state of manufacturing here are some sobering statistics that clearly form the basis for the effort we are engaged in:

Along with the loss of 3.3 million manufacturing jobs in the United States since 2000, a report just released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows average hourly compensation for U.S. manufacturing jobs fell from the world's 4th highest paid in 2000 to the world's 14th highest in 2006. Japan's manufacturing jobs were the 2nd highest paid in 2000 but plunged to rank only 16th in 2006. Germany, which had the world's highest-paid manufacturing workers in 2000 fell to second place behind Norway in 2006. Manufacturing jobs in the Euro-Area countries as a group paid far less than in the U.S. and Japan in 2000 but paid far more in 2006. The data is in U.S. dollars at exchange rates current for each year.

Our Trade Policies are slowly but surely crushing our manufacturing base in this country and frankly, we can not afford the luxury of sitting by and doing nothing about it!

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TMTA Events Calendar February 2008

*Remember to visit the TMTA website
Calendar at www.thetmta.com for detailed,
up-to-date information on all events.*

- 18** Presidents Day
Federal Holiday
TMTA/MTMIC are OPEN
- 20** TMTA Board of Directors
meets at TMTA offices
- 21** MTMIC Board of Directors
meets at TMTA offices



BCBSA Unveils Five-Point Health Plan for All Americans

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) is launching a national campaign that builds on the employer-based system of healthcare coverage to provide healthcare opportunities to all Americans. The BCBSA is made up of 39 independent, locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 98 million Americans.

Stating that “a system that is unaffordable for many today won’t work for even more people tomorrow,” Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association President and CEO Scott P. Serota, unveiled a comprehensive five-point plan, “The Pathway to Covering America”, for building on the employer-based system to improve quality, rein in costs and expand coverage to all Americans.

The “Pathway” plan lays out detailed recommendations to change the incentives in today’s delivery system to help assure high-quality, affordable healthcare and offers solutions to expand access to coverage. For each of the five action steps, the proposal outlines what BCBS Plans are doing in their local communities and necessary actions to be undertaken by government.

In announcing the new initiative, Serota was joined by CEOs from 2 BCBS Plans: Michael Unhjem, president and CEO of BCBS of North Dakota, and Daniel Loepp, president and CEO of BCBS of Michigan. Unhjem and Loepp serve as chairman and vice-chairman, respectively, of BCBSA’s Board Committee charged with developing BCBSA’s position on key public policy and legislative issues.

BCBSA’s five-point plan for comprehensive reform includes:

- 1. Encourage Research on What Works.** Today, an estimated 30% of healthcare spending goes toward care that is ineffective, redundant or inappropriate. America needs an independent institute to support research comparing the relative effectiveness of new and existing medical procedures, drugs, devices and biologics.
- 2. Change Incentives to Promote Better Care.** The incentives in our system must be changed to advance the best possible care instead of encouraging more services. Providers should be rewarded for delivering high-quality, coordinated care, especially for the increasing number of Americans with chronic illnesses.

- 3. Empower Consumers and Providers.** Consumers and providers must have access to the information and tools they need to make informed decisions. This starts with information systems to manage personal health records. In addition, consumers need to know how much they are paying for their healthcare and what they are getting in return.

- 4. Promote Health & Wellness.** The costs of treating chronic conditions are estimated to account for 75% of healthcare spending. As a nation, we must promote healthy lifestyles to help prevent chronic illness and work aggressively to help patients with chronic illnesses manage their own health.

- 5. Foster Public-Private Coverage Solutions.** Coverage plans need to be tailored to capture the diversity of the uninsured population so that no gets “squeezed out” by cost, “misses out” on available government assistance or “opts out” because they do not think they need health coverage.

(Health News continues on Page 8)

(Rob’s Roost continued from Page 1)

We now have a slate of six candidates for the three openings that will exist on the Board of Directors of your association, the TMTA. I am very pleased that two of the candidates are from out of state as the association, since going national, now has members in twenty-two states. We will be mailing information on the candidates for your consideration in making your choice(s) and I would urge you to vote as you like but please, do vote.

The candidates are:

- Bruce Cain, **XCEL Mold & Machine, Inc.;**
- John Ebbing, **Detroit Edge Tool Co.;**
- Dennis Haller, **Sunshine-Fifty, Inc.;**
- Joanne Hinds, **Diamond Die & Mold Co.;**
- Ed Siciliano, Jr., **Circle Mold & Machine Co., Inc.;** and
- Steve Thiele, **Bradhart Products, Inc.**

Work continues on our Annual Golf Outing, the one we promised would be exciting and different for our 75th anniversary as an association. We expect to name the venue shortly as well as provide more details.

Please consider taking an active role in our efforts to influence U.S. legislation and policy to ensure the survival and prosperity of manufacturing and your livelihood!

Get your non-member colleagues to visit our website and join the association and thus the effort we are undertaking.

No one ever climbed a hill by simply looking at it.

Members In The News

C & B Machinery, a Livonia, Michigan based builder of production grinding machines, is pleased to announce the arrival of its new Double Disc Grinder Model DG-2-H.

C & B is proud to be a domestic machine manufacturer developing new products in the U.S. market. Products that offers favorable technical and financial positions compared to the machine tools coming from Europe, Asia and the U.S.

C & B has been in business since 1980 and started out primarily as a machine remanufacturer/rebuilder, always specializing in grinders. Over their 27 years, C & B has performed services for the customer on all the named OEM grinding machines, which has proven beneficial in the design of their new product. The founder and owner of C & B Machinery, Joe Parker, says that “through the combined efforts and extensive input from everyone at C & B: the Service Technicians, Machine Builders, Controls Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Sales and Marketing, this new machine incorporates the best ideas of everyone. Also including lessons learned of every machine we have ever worked on over the years by using C & B Machinery’s collected R&M and FEMA data”.

C & B supplies machines for a global list of customers, with a majority of sales being in North America (NAFTA Region). C & B plans to increase their focus on overseas markets: broadening their customer base and bringing jobs back to Michigan. C & B, backed by several years of increased sales, anticipates continued growth with sales of their New Double Disc Grinder leading the way.

C & B provides complete turnkey grinding cells for all of the U.S. automotive companies and tier-one and two suppliers. Included in their customer base are the aerospace, motorcycle and bearing industries. They recently supplied all of the Double Disc Grinders used to produce the gears in General Motors’ new hybrid transmissions.

Over the last few years, C & B has recognized how the relationship with their automotive customers has truly become more of a partnership. With the lean and efficient staffing now going on in the U.S. auto industry, our automotive customers have to rely on C & B as a “preferred” supplier to understand their expectations and be self-driven. C & B believes that to be successful, today’s machine tool supplier has to be proactive and take on more of the responsibility that was once done in-house by the customer.

A good example: over recent years C & B has been required to also perform the “real life grinding operation” on all the pre-production and prototype parts that they are building grinders for. This requirement has proven to be very beneficial for everyone: C & B’s customers receive products that are processed the same way as planned for production; and C & B gains valuable experience on grinding the parts prior to building the machine. This has uncovered issues well in advance of the manufacturing launch, resulting in savings of time and money for both the customer and the manufacturer.

C & B Machinery is proud to remain a “preferred” supplier of disc grinders, projecting strong and steady growth.

Further information can be obtained by calling C & B Machinery at 734-462-0600 or visiting their website at www.cbmachinery.com.



Shown in the photo with the first casting are (from left to right):

Joe Parker,
Founder and Owner
(27 years seniority);

Tom Spedding,
Business and Development
(7 years seniority);

Dave Selewski,
Design Engineering
(12 years seniority);

Scott Sredzinski,
Service Technician
(4 years seniority); and

Jeff Allen,
President
(20 years seniority).



From the Desk of Gary Wood

MTMIC, Chief Operating Officer

MTMIC increases premium volume on renewal

I feel like we have come a long way in one year!

In 2006 the Board of the MTA WCF made the decision to make every attempt to keep the organization intact as we faced declining participation as more and more, there were less and less businesses which qualified under the strict interpretations of what constituted an acceptable member by the State regulators. The May meeting in 2006 was the beginning of a long year that culminated in the very late approval of the MTMIC as a Mutual Insurance Company.

On December 22, 2006 approval was granted to begin operations. We had already assumed that we were going to delay the renewal and had made other plans when the authorization was given.

An unfortunate result of the late approval was that no time was spent marketing the new company in early 2007 as there was a hundred things to get done just to remain in compliance with the State. By mid 2007 the tide was changing and we began to have some success in writing new business. By January 1, 2008 we have had the good fortune to develop over 6% growth in premium based on new business alone.

Board of Directors

The Directors met on January 17, 2008 to elect new officers and to welcome Mr. Joe Keppler of **Hi-Tech Tool Industries, Inc.** (Sterling Heights, MI) as the newest elected Board member. The Board unanimously elected the following Officers:

Richard Smith of **Wolverine Bronze** as President;
Bobby Cox of **Acorn Stamping** as Vice President;
Kurt Heuser of **Bokum Tool** as Treasurer; and
Gary Wood of **Manufacturing Technology Mutual Ins. Co.** as Secretary.

In addition to the above, the other Directors are:

Jack Accardo of **GHB, Inc.**;
Jerry Decker of **Precision Boring Company**;
Robert Easterbrook of **East-Lind Heat Treat**;
Bradley Lawton of **Star Cutter Company**; and
Doug Mack of **Grosse Tool & Machine Company**.

Staff

If any of you have questions about becoming a policyholder in the workers' compensation program offered by MTMIC, please contact Megan Brown, Director of Sales & Marketing at 248-444-9513 or 248-488-1172, ext 1006 (Megan.Brown@MTMIC.com).

You can always contact me, Gary Wood, at 248-488-1172, ext. 1316 (Gary.Wood@MTMIC.com) or the rest of the staff (according to their specific job assignments as follows):

- Chris Doebler, Controller, at ext. 1012
(Chris.Doebler@MTMIC.com)
- Glenda Moyle, Premium Accounting Mgr., at ext. 1315
(Glenda.Moyle@MTMIC.com)
- Donna Motley, Claim Manager, at ext. 1011
(Donna.Motley@MTMIC.com)
- Kimberly Davis, Medical Claim Adjuster, at ext. 1004
(Kimberly.Davis@MTMIC.com)
- Cindy Jackson, Indemnity Claim Adjuster, at ext. 1009
(Cindy.Jackson@MTMIC.com)
- Marci Merath, Claim Technician, at ext. 1005
(Marci.Merath@MTMIC.com)
- Linda Murphy, Indemnity Claim Adjuster, at ext. 1007
(Linda.Murphy@MTMIC.com)

- Ray Duff, Loss Control Manager
(Ray.Duff@MTMIC.com), 248-444-5398
- Chris Demeter, Loss Control Consultant
(Chris.Demeter@MTMIC.com), 517-230-0937
- Ruth Kiefer, Loss Control Consultant
(Ruth.Kiefer@MTMIC.com), 248-804-8434

Benefits of being insured by MTMIC

that you might not think of:

- ♦ Ten equal payments plan
- ♦ ACH premium payment availability
- ♦ On-Site Loss Control
- ♦ MiOSHA Alliance affiliation
- ♦ Federal & State Required Posters
- ♦ State compliant DVD training aides
- ♦ Exemplary claim management
- ♦ Personal contact

Prologue: HollowHuntThanksMasYear

So, did you make it through the gauntlet without going into debt? If you did—good work! If you did not—I hope you develop a plan for taking care of that soon because there are less than 250 days until it starts all over again! We won't even mention that you have to go on vacation and get ready for "back-to-school" in those 250 days as well.

Recently Andrews, Hooper & Pavlik, P.L.C. sent to me their newsletter that ran a heading “Where Does the Money Go?” Surprise, not everybody is going broke on the basics; food (12.8%), clothing (4.1%) and housing (32.7%) only accounted for 49.6% of the annual expenditures of the average household.

If you throw in health care (5.7%) and transportation (18.0%) you still have not accounted for 26.7% of the household income. So where is the rest of the money? Most of the working people between 35 and 54 have less than \$100,000 in savings and 25% of the total work force have no savings at all; so that rules out that most people are saving it.

After ciphering on this for some time, it seems that nearly 25% of what we as a society spend is spent on “stuff” that you cannot account for at the end of the year. So if you take home \$50,000 you can’t figure out where \$12,500 went. It must be the “New Math” that my kids were being taught when they were in school or “New Age” economics, either way the money is gone.

Have a great February:

Remember that driving particularly in winter is a defensive exercise.

Also guys, remember Valentine’s Day is February 14.
 (“If Mom’s Happy, Everyone’s Happy”)



Is Your Current 401(k) Provider Keeping Your Plan Participants Informed During These Turbulent Times?

In 2007, we experienced the fifth year in a row of world wide stock markets increasing in value. However, we also saw signs of the equity markets struggling during the course of the year, with significant declines in February, August, and November. Since 2008 began, we have seen the stock markets around the world decline in value, with the S&P 500 dropping 8%. If we look back to the market high in mid-October, 2007, the S&P 500 has decreased 15%. Clearly, investors have concerns about why the market is behaving like it is and what to do about it.

Why is the Market Down?

In January, we saw many companies report disappointing earnings, causing stock prices to drop. In addition, investor concerns have been sparked by a financial crisis resulting from the combination of defaults on subprime mortgage loans and

the decline in values in the housing market. This had an immediate impact on banks and other lending institutions. As they saw the value of their assets dramatically decline in value, they were either unable or unwilling to continue to make loans—not only to individuals but to corporations as well. This shortage of accessible money meant less spending and therefore a slow-down in the economy. This has led to predictions of a U.S. recession, with the potential to spread worldwide.

We may be in a recession, may be entering a recession, or maybe we will miss a recession, but for the time being, as far as the mood of the stock market is concerned, a U.S. recession is a reality and the market has already reacted to this by dropping in value. If companies and consumers continue to curtail their spending, it could lead to further declines in corporate earnings and a gloomy outlook for stocks for the rest of the year. However, all is not bad news when compared to previous recessions and market downturns. Consider:

- ♦ Interest rates are low allowing consumers to refinance their homes at more reasonable rates and buy more affordable big ticket items like new cars;
- ♦ Unemployment is low nationally;
- ♦ Stock prices are attractive compared to other investment alternatives;
- ♦ Companies are making adjustments to improve future earnings;
- ♦ The price of commodities, like gas, have dropped significantly, which gives consumers more money to spend on other items; and
- ♦ The Federal Reserve is dramatically reducing interest rates.

Note that in ten out of the last eleven times that the Federal Reserve has reduced rates (regardless of whether there was a recession); the stock market (S&P 500) has raised an average of 17% in the 12 months after the first rate cut. This round of rate cuts began on September 18, 2007.

What Should Investors Do Now?

It is important to recognize that recessions happen and sometimes, but not all the time, the market reacts negatively. In addition, we must recognize the stock market will fluctuate and that as investors we will be challenged emotionally when this happens. As a general statement though, stock markets have always recovered and, over the long term, investing in the stock market will continue to be a critical factor in meeting our retirement and other financial goals.

If you feel you do not currently have a long term investment strategy, we suggest you talk to Lesley Goodwin at Freedom One and put a plan in place. Lesley can be reached at 248-620-8100.

Letter To The Editor: Reflections On GE's Global Strategy

by: *Nelson Hoffman, retired CEO of Brice Manufacturing*

The lead line in the Nov. 30, 2007, Manufacturing & Technology News article about General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt—"A downturn in the U.S. economy shouldn't hurt General Electric"—raises questions about the destruction of the United States economy and the dark side of globalization. It suggests that the decades-old concept of what is good for the country's leading companies is good for the nation is dead. The mutually beneficial relationship between companies and the American society is gone.

If one accepts the notion that the sole criteria for success of a corporation is to increase shareholder value, then all of the perspectives presented by Mr. Immelt are consistent. But over the past decade, an increasing number of Americans are contesting this premise and believe that a co-equal objective of corporations is to return benefits to the nation that makes their existence possible. Of all the issues raised by Mr. Immelt's remarks, his failure to recognize a responsibility to the nation and its citizens is the most disturbing.

Mr. Immelt says the U.S. economy is still important, "but not like it was five, 10, or 15 years ago." In the global context, he is correct. But the U.S. economy is the economy in which I live, work and save. It is the economy I hope to pass to my children in healthy condition. Mr. Immelt implies that the welfare of GE is more important than the welfare of the nation.

Mr. Immelt's predecessor's goal was to make GE the highest valued corporation in the world. The strategy required GE to sell off divisions that were experiencing aggressive price competition and move into high-margin businesses. GE has thus morphed from one of the world's great manufacturing companies into a hybrid banking, entertainment, leasing and specialty high-margin products company. It moved out of television, automation and engineered plastics, where I once worked. It is remarkable how Asian companies have successfully moved into those product categories and achieved unprecedented growth.

The second conclusion from the article is that GE and all other companies are penalized by Wall Street if they elect to compete in fast growing, highly price-competitive product sectors. The strategies adopted by many multinational corporations to manufacture abroad, pay low wages and accept subsidies from foreign governments are the consequence of this system, which, along with illegal immigration, keeps a constant, powerful pressure on the wages and salaries of every U.S. worker from Ph.D. to field laborer. It also makes every CEO subject to the allure of foreign nations providing them with capital. Most

significantly, these companies are led to abandon the enduring cost advantage of high-volume production.

The statistics say the financial sector is now equal in size to the manufacturing sector. It is hard to believe that the manipulation of money has replaced the creation of old-fashioned profits through hard work and investment in plants and equipment. In previous decades, high consumption combined with high-volume production provided a perfect match for the world's exemplary democracy—a match that distributed the benefits of industry to all "stakeholders." False trade and economic theories of recent times have destroyed that balance. I would ask Mr. Immelt if that same balance—the same wealth distribution—exists today.

It is incontrovertible that no U.S. corporation can compete against Asian governments whose basic purpose is to create industries and jobs in their nations. It is beyond rational thought that a country with wages and salaries that are two orders of magnitude higher can compete.

It is incongruous for a leader of a major American company to work with a totalitarian regime that has an organized industrial strategy aimed at achieving industrial dominance over that company's home nation, which has no industrial plan whatsoever. Where is the State Department in this equation? Who rules the stage? The Commerce Department is the lackey, while it negotiates with nations that have well organized industrial policies, such as Japan, Korea and China.

Why are Mr. Immelt and the Walton family, the owners of Wal-Mart, involved in foreign negotiations that are detrimental to the interests of America and Americans? The nation rises in anger when Jesse Jackson negotiates with the Palestinians. Why does it not do so when unelected corporate leaders negotiate with foreign nations for parochial interests at the expense of American workers? Mr. Immelt is doing a great job working the system. In going to China, he is filling a void created by our inept trade representatives.

When it comes to national strategy, I have observed the 30-year, continuous success of Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry. Mr. Immelt says we have learned all that we can from the Japanese, but he is mistaken. Japan holds \$1.1 trillion of our national debt. I think we have a helluva lot more to learn!

After 25 years of intense involvement in globalization I have concluded that if the United States continues to offer 100 percent open markets to all comers, then the wages and salaries in America must be lowered to those of Asia. When the labor content of a semiconductor was significant, it was understandable to put foundries in Asia. Intel's acceptance of a \$1-billion subsidy to locate a new foundry in China clearly illustrates the new competitive landscape: other nations are willing to buy

industries and companies pirated from the United States. The result: The benefits offered by companies to their American workers in the form of health care costs and retirement are being dumped.

Past efforts to improve the competitiveness of the United States have been, at best, a partial success, bordering on failure. The notion that the government and our corporate entities are enemies is sad. Their lack of cooperation, compared to the intimate relationships that exist between the private and public sectors of export-based nations, is one of the principle causes of America's \$15-trillion debt "hole."

Mr. Immelt mentions that there is a "backlash" to globalization. "Backlash" is a sound bite intended to demean the 30 million Americans who have lost their livelihood—to speak nothing of the towns, cities and counties devastated to rust belt status. This is a very legitimate constituency. Its voice has as much right in the marketplace as his. These millions of Americans haven't bought into the theory of "creative destruction" that underpins the globalists' philosophy. They don't accept "Create in China / Destroy in the United States."

Let us also discard other empty sound bites like, "The nation that governs least governs best," and replace it with, "A nation that governs best wins." Or "it is not the job of government to pick winners and losers." Rather, the lack of a coordinated industrial policy has made for many losers and a few winners. Without an industrial policy, economic development has been dumped on state governments that are ill-equipped to compete on a global stage.

When Jack Welch decided GE couldn't be competitive in TV sets; when the president of Ampex decided it didn't want to make VCRs; and when IBM ceded laptops to Lenovo, we created the self-fulfilling prophesy: that the United States would not make things electronic—the hardware of the information age. That decision is typical of the decisions that underlie the ever-growing trade deficit.

Having abandoned these lucrative fields the United States MUST get back into the ball game and return to the common sense notion that a nation must make what it consumes. Hopefully, our country will realize this before economic disaster—that we must initiate an era of re-industrialization centered on the creation of a new generation of energy efficient, environmentally compatible products. If not, then the United States will continue its slide into the status of a Third World country; a colony of the Asian powers.

— *Nelson Hoffman is the retired chairman of Brice Manufacturing Co.; chairman of "Summit 1992—Making it in America"; author of "Virtue and Values for the Twenty First Century—Renewing America's Character and Spirit" and a board member of the recently created Coalition for a Prosperous America. He can be reached at nhoffman1@dc.rr.com.*

Legislative Update

by: *Judy Augenstein,*
Legislative Consultant, Lansing

The Michigan January 15 primary election is over and the victors are Hillary Clinton and Mitt Romney. Last session the legislature passed a bill to move Michigan's presidential primary to January 15 in a bid to increase the state's influence on the major party nominations. The Republican and Democratic National parties did not sanction the new law and have retaliated against the parties. The National Democratic Party pressured candidates to avoid Michigan and said the state primary would not seat any delegates to the convention that officially nominates candidates. Michigan Republicans had a full ballot to consider, but also were stripped of some delegate strength as punishment. The cost of the exercise is estimated at \$20 million. Voters were required to declare a party before voting and a list of their names and addresses will be given to the Republican and Democratic parties for them to use as they wish.

Alternative fuels legislation, specifically legislation to require a mandatory portfolio standard, has been reported out of the House Energy and Technology Committee. Governor Jennifer Granholm commended the House for their effort at her State of the State Address on January 29. The Governor touted alternative energy as a cornerstone of her overall efforts to revitalize Michigan's economy.

Senate Energy Policy and Public Utilities Committee Chair, Senator Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, has indicated that March would be the soonest his committee could move the complicated package of alternative energy bills out of his committee. Senate Republicans favor a volunteer RPS where House Democrats prefer mandatory Renewable Portfolio Standards. Senate Bill 100, sponsored by Senator Patricia Birkholz, R-Saugatuck, requires the state to go first on RPS standards as not to burden business. The mandates were "hard for some of us to swallow," she said.

TMTA continues to move SB 680 forward—legislation to amend the Tool and Die Renaissance/Recovery Zone Act. The measure was introduced at the request of TMTA by Senator Randy Richardville, R-Monroe. The bill allows companies with 75 or more employees to participate in the Act as long as they negotiate a portion of their special services tax with local government.

