

The Pathway to Success



Join us in Phoenix, Arizona
OPEESA Annual Meeting
 February 26-February 29, 2012



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Pathway to Success!

Enough with the uncertainty of the past few years; let's strap on our boots and get on the pathway to success. Our speakers for the Annual Meeting will provide lots of new ideas to get you on the right path.

Jean Hlay, President and Chief Operating Officer, MTD Products, will provide our Industry Overview. Jade West, Senior Vice President - Government Relations for NAW will be talking to us about the regulatory climate under the Obama administration as that has been more onerous and limiting than legislation.

Troy Landoch, Vice President Human Resources, GE Capital, will discuss succession planning for businesses and why it's crucial for business owners to select the right people to lead the company and prepare for the future. If something unexpected happened to you, would your company survive?

Michael Marks, Founder, Indian River Consulting, will discuss "Leveraging Manufacturer/Distributor Alignment to Gain Marketshare". He is also conducting a special Sunday session regarding "New Pathways to Growth" as part of OPEESA's commitment to industry training for members.

Due to positive feedback from our surveys, we are welcoming back economist Brian Beaulieu of the Institute for Trends Research. Brian discusses the economy in easy-to-understand language. More importantly, he shows you how to use this information to improve your business.

Finally, Hunter Lott discusses HR Myths, Madness and Mayhem. His amusing and fast-paced presentation is designed to help keep your company "out of trouble" when making human resources decisions.

Let our Annual Meeting be your compass and lead you in the right direction.

Save the Dates for 2013!

Join OPEESA members at the Don CeSar, St. Pete Beach, March 3-6, 2013.



Annual Meeting Agenda - Tentative

Saturday, February 25, 2012

10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Registration Desk/Information
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM Board Dinner

Sunday, February 26, 2012

8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon Board of Directors' Meeting
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Registration/Information
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM **New Pathways to Growth** with Michael Marks, *Indian River Consulting*
4:00 PM to 5:00 PM **Feedback/QA Session** - Michael Marks
5:00 PM to 6:00 PM First Timers' Reception (Invitation Only)
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM **Welcome Reception** - Manufacturer/Affiliate Showcase
7:30 PM to 9:00 PM **Dinner**

Monday, February 27, 2012

7:00 AM to 1:00 PM Registration/Information
7:00 AM to 7:45 AM Continental Breakfast
9:30 AM to 11:00 AM Spouse Breakfast
7:45 AM to 12:30 PM **General Session**
7:45 AM to 7:55 AM **President's Report** - Robert Graham, *Engine Warehouse*
7:55 AM to 8:05 AM **Treasurer's Report** - Todd Winstead, *Tidewater Power Equipment*
8:05 AM to 8:10 AM **Election of Directors** - Mark Vining, *Roberts Supply*
8:10 AM to 8:20 AM **Sponsors Update** - *Sheffield Financial* and *GE*
8:20 AM to 8:45 AM **Benchmarking Update** - Scott Hackworth, *Industry Insights*
8:45 AM to 9:15 AM **Industry Overview** - Jean Hlay, President and Chief Operating Officer, *MTD Products*
9:15 AM to 10:00 AM **What We Can Expect in DC** - Jade West, Senior Vice President - Government Relations for *National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors*
10:00 AM to 10:15 AM Break
10:15 AM to 12:00 Noon **Succession Planning** - Troy Landoch, Vice President Human Resources, *GE Capital*
12:00 Noon **Announcements**
1:00 PM **Golf - Shotgun Start & Tours**
Evening on your own

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

7:00 AM to 2:00 PM Registration/Information
7:00 AM to 8:00 AM Continental Breakfast with **Roundtable Discussion 1**
8:15 AM to 9:15 AM **Roundtable Discussion 2**
9:30 AM to 12:00 Noon **Leveraging Manufacturer/Distributor Alignment to Gain Marketshare** - Michael Marks, *Indian River Consulting*
12:00 Noon to 12:45 PM Lunch for Break Out Sessions
1:00 PM to 3:00 PM **Leveraging Breakout Sessions - continued** - Michael Marks, *Indian River Consulting*
5:30 PM to 6:30 PM Past President's Reception (Invitation Only)
6:30 PM to 7:30 PM **Closing Reception at Squaw Peak Terrace**
7:30 PM to 10:00 PM **Final Night Dinner - Grand Ballroom**

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

7:00 AM to 8:00 AM Continental Breakfast
8:00 AM to 8:10 AM **President's Remarks** - Pete Yunker, *Power Equipment Systems*
8:10 AM to 8:15 AM **Benchmarking Update II** - Ron Monroe, *Hayward Distributing*
8:15 AM to 9:45 AM **Economic Update** - Brian Beaulieu, Economist, *Institute for Trends Research*
10:00 AM to 11:30 AM **HR Myths, Madness and Mayhem**, Hunter Lott, *PleaseSueMe.com*
11:30 A.M. to 11:45 AM **2013 Meeting Preview & Closing Remarks**
12 Noon to 2:30 PM Board Meeting



State of the Industry

Monday - 8:45 a.m.

by **Jean Hlay, President and Chief Operating Officer, MTD Products**

Jean H. Hlay, President and Chief Operating Officer of MTD Products, Inc. will be providing our Industry Overview. Hlay recently became the first woman to serve as the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's chair of the board.

Hlay joined MTD in 1994 and was previously the senior executive vice president of sales, marketing and service. In her 14 years with MTD, Hlay has also served as vice president of corporate development and finance, as well as controller. Before joining MTD, Hlay was vice president and CFO for Crossville Rubber Products, Inc., and spent 10 years with PriceWaterhouseCoopers, where she was the senior audit manager. She obtained her bachelor's degree in business administration from Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, and is a certified public accountant.

MTD is a worldwide leader of outdoor power equipment with facilities in Europe, North America, Asia, Australia and South America producing equipment for both residential and commercial markets.

Visit the website at mtdproducts.com

Leveraging Manufacturer/Distributor Alignment to Gain Marketshare

Tuesday - 9:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m Breakout Session

by **Michael Marks, Indian River Consulting**

Mike Marks co-founded the Indian River Consulting Group in 1987. Marks began his consulting practice after working in distribution management for more than 20 years. He has written extensively and is quoted on many industry issues.

His presentation and optional breakout session will focus on:

- Understanding market coverage: do your customers see you the way you want to be seen?
- Using distributors as "market makers" instead of "market servers".
- Creating and leveraging brand power.
- Making sure the economics are right: how much margin does a distributor need?

Marks is recognized for his expertise in one- and two-step distribution channel strategies, supply chain management, and the practical application of real world technology. In addition to consulting, his experience includes sitting on the Boards of several public and private distribution firms, being an expert witness, and being an Arbitrator.

Visit the website at ircg.com

Government Forecast: 2012

Monday - 9:15 a.m.

by **Jade West, Senior Vice President - Government Relations for NAW**

The real threat facing business in the last two years has not been legislation, but regulation. The Obama Administration's executive departments and agencies have moved aggressively to reverse the free market policies of the previous Administration and to impose burdensome, costly and time-consuming regulations on business at all levels and in all industries. Virtually all of the Federal Departments and agencies are promulgating new rules and regulations, many of them spawned by the banking reform and health care reform bills passed by Congress last year.

This regulatory climate extends to labor issues, taxes and LIFO as well as OSHA requirements.

Jade West will be discussing these regulations and how the NAW is working to prevent even more onerous regulations from taking effect.

In addition to her position as Senior Vice President, West is Executive Director of NAW's Wholesaler-Distributor Political Action Committee, and works to keep key issues affecting the distribution industry in front of our political leaders.

Visit the website at naw.org.

Economic Update

Wednesday - 8:15 a.m.

by **Brian Beaulieu, Institute for Trends Research**

Brian Beaulieu is always one of our highest rated speakers. That's because he finds economics exciting (really!), relevant and vitally important.

As past attendees know, one word of insight can mean a world of difference to your business. Beaulieu's presentation includes easy-to-apply solutions, audience-specific strategies, and insightful suggestions that can change the course of a business or give attendees the kind of take-away value that produces timely results.

Economists from the Trends Institute (ITR) have appeared on Fox Business Morning, CNN, CNBC and Canadian television. You've heard their forecasts on CBS Radio, CNN Radio, Sirius talk radio, and NPR affiliates.

ITR's analysts have been quoted in the Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Business Week, USA Today, by the Knight Ridder News Service and the Associated Press.

Beaulieu and his associates are in demand because their record for trend forecasting is unmatched by any other economics research firm and because the presenters explain economics in a clear, friendly and accessible style.

Visit the website at ecotrends.org.

Succession Planning

Monday - 10:15 a.m.

by **Troy Landoch, Vice President Human Resources, GE Capital**

Whether the timing is planned or unplanned, proper succession planning is the key to a smooth transition of business leadership.

At GE we believe identifying the right leaders for key roles is an important element in driving sustainable growth and the success of an organization through generations of leadership.

Succession planning is a strategy that identifies candidates for key positions in advance of the actual need. Linking strategy, performance management and leadership development begins with creating a foundation on which to build.

In this session GE Capital shares:

- Insight and tools for establishing a succession plan.
- A framework to facilitate a repeatable planning process.
- Suggestions for how to create and manage a performance driven culture.

GE is a diversified infrastructure, finance and media company founded on the ingenuity of Thomas Edison more than 130 years ago.

Visit the website at ge.com.

HR Myths, Madness and Mayhem

Wednesday - 10:00 a.m.

by **Hunter Lott, President, PleaseSueMe.Com**

Myth: Probationary periods make it easier to fire new employees!

Madness: Spending more time in an exit interview, than you spent talking to that employee in the last year!

Mayhem: Thinking that a \$50 gift card for ten years of service is motivational!

Uncover HR policies and practices that can cause more problems than they solve in 2012. Terms like attitude, permanent, layoff and unauthorized overtime can add to your legal exposure. Cut through the myth and mayhem and get practical steps to harmony, productivity and staying out of court.

- Discover why "probationary periods" can negate your "at-will" relationship.
- Just putting someone on a salary does not eliminate the right to overtime pay.
- Learn why a "use it or lose it" vacation policy is obsolete.
- Update your "no dating policy" and stay out of the "baby-sitting" business.
- Yes you can document and fire for "attitude" Overcome the madness... Visit the website at pleasesueme.com.

Roundtable Discussions

Tuesday - 7:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m.

by **OPEESA Members**

Networking among members is always one of the highlights of the Annual Meeting. We are presenting you with another opportunity to "pick the brains" of your colleagues and friends. You will pick up your continental breakfast as usual; however, when you head into the meeting room, each table will feature a different topic, suggested by members.

Topics are:

- The Economy
- Structuring Benefit Packages
- Distribution Software
- Technology Integration
- Benchmarking/Performance Metrics
- Health Insurance Costs and Coverages
- Sales Compensation/Coverage
- Young Pros Group

A second roundtable discussion will follow the first one. You will be asked to select two topics on the registration form, so we can have the proper amount of tables prepared. There will also be a Table Captain to keep the conversation flowing.

This will be an excellent opportunity for our members and we encourage everyone to attend.

Welcome to Phoenix - Reception and Dinner Sunday, February 26

Reception-6:00 p.m. • Dinner-7:30 p.m.
Free Product Showcase

Reunite with old friends during the Product Showcase and dinner. The dress is Business Casual.

Spouse Breakfast/Program Monday, February 27 - 9:30 a.m.

Join us for breakfast and an informative look into The Arizona Biltmore Hotel. The "Jewel of the Desert" covers 39 acres and has been a favorite of celebrities and U.S. presidents throughout its colorful history.

Let a historian take you on a journey into a past full of famous architecture, music, prohibition and celebrity life. Cost for the tour is \$15.00 and can be prepaid with your registration or on site. The tour is 1.25 hours immediately following breakfast. Breakfast is free.

Closing Reception Two Heads Are Better Than One Tuesday, February 28

Reception-6:30 p.m. • Dinner-7:30 p.m.

Two Heads Are Better Than One – or so they say. Join us this evening for dinner in the Grand Ballroom and see why...

Activities

Monday, February 27, 2012

Golf — Adobe Course 1 p.m.

The Adobe course is considered stately and grand, a forefather of modern design. The Adobe offers a simplistic beauty hard to find in an era when trickery is a goal in golf course architecture. When you long for a relaxing yet challenging round, there are few equal. The lush, 50 year-old fairways and spacious layout are a reminder of the game the way it was meant to be - a time when graphite was for pencil lead and golf balls only came in one color. Like the great players of its day, the Adobe can tell you some stories.

Golf Tournament - \$195.00 per player

Monday, February 27, 2012 - Tour Options

Desert Horseback Ride with Skeet Shooting - 1 - 5 p.m.

Experience the desert the way authentic cowboys did it... from the back of a trusty steed. See what nature has to offer in the American Southwest as you ride through scenic desert and pristine mountain terrain. Experienced and novice riders alike marvel at this opportunity to explore the wide-open spaces under the expert guidance of seasoned wranglers.

Upon arrival the group will be split in half. Half will go on the trail ride and the other half will climb aboard pinzgauers (German Military ATV's), and be taken up to the skeet shooting deck. Very few people in today's world have actually handled a shotgun and shot it at a moving target. This is your chance to experience what it's like when you yell PULL!! Each group will have 45 minutes at each station and then rotate.

Cost \$135.00 per person (min. 10 - max. 40)

PLEASE NOTE:

This activity has a weight limit of 250 lbs. MUST be 6 years of age and older to ride - need child count 72 hours prior to tour date
Long pants, sunscreen, and sunglasses are recommended
Closed toed shoes required

Includes:

Charter transfer via deluxe vehicle
Professional trail guides and wranglers
All applicable insurance and gratuities

Desert Botanical Garden Tour

1 - 5 p.m.

The Desert Botanical Garden was founded in 1939 as an experimental research and educational facility and contains over 15,000 desert plants in its living collection presenting over 3500 different species. You will enjoy a private tour on the Desert Discovery Trail with one of the garden's trained horticultural guides. The tour is on the main trail, which displays arid region plants from around the world.

Includes:

Roundtrip transportation
Admission to the Desert Botanical Garden
Desert Discovery Guided tour by professional docent
Souvenir Garden Trail Book
Bottled Water

Cost \$105.00 per person

All Days

Phoenix has a variety of activities to offer – from Jeep tours to spa treatments – the sky is the limit, especially with hot air balloon rides.

The Biltmore features a full service spa that specializes in natural and organic products. Visit their website at www.arizonabiltmore.com/Spa/Treatments.aspx to view their treatment options and schedule an appointment.

Take the shuttle to the Biltmore Fashion Park. The original luxury shopping destination in Phoenix is a newly polished classic. Lush lawns and shaded, flower-filled walkways lead to wonderful shops — think Saks, Ralph Lauren, Escada, Apple and more. A delicious collection of restaurants, including True Food Kitchen and The Capitol Grille, let you order up levels of flavorful virtue. Relaxing and inviting, it's all tucked into a historic neighborhood of luxury homes, famous resorts and glittering high-rises.

There are also great tours, golf, restaurants and countless other opportunities. Please go to www.visitphoenix.com for a complete list of options.

Welcome to the Arizona Biltmore

Known as “The Jewel of the Desert” The Arizona Biltmore is the only hotel in the world with a Frank Lloyd Wright influenced design.

Built as one of Phoenix's first resorts in 1929, the Arizona Biltmore was constructed in grand form by brothers Albert, Charles and Warren McArthur. Frank Lloyd Wright served as the consulting architect, and the Arizona Biltmore remains one of the only existing hotels in the world to benefit from his influence.

Average High in February 75 degrees

Average Low in February 50 degrees

The basic room rate is \$229.00. Applicable state and local tax is 13.27%. This rate is for 2 adults in the room and up to 2 children under age 18.

Rooms must be booked by January 20, 2012.

Also, you must cancel your room reservations at least 72 hours in advance or you will be charged one night stay plus tax. There are three suite options offered by the Biltmore: the Biltmore Suite for \$359/night, the Grand Suite at \$359/night or the Villa Suite at \$409/night. Visit the web site at www.arizonabiltmore.com for more information.

Fees, Fees, Fees – and Some Good News

The resort fee of \$28.00 has been waived!! This includes guest room high speed internet, Biltmore Spa and Fitness admission, unlimited local telephone calls, long distance access fees – no charge for credit card, toll free and collect calls, use of the putting course and the Biltmore Fashion Park shuttle.

Please note – There is a \$27.00 per day fee for valet parking – but self parking is complimentary.

We hope you have a wonderful time at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix.

Before Leaving Home

1. Please visit www.tsa.gov to obtain up-to-the-minute updates about the items that can be packed in carry-on luggage. This will help you avoid needless delays.
2. Your room charges will be your responsibility, therefore, you will need to complete the enclosed Credit Card Authorization Form and fax it back. This will serve as a credit card guarantee for your hotel room. If we do not receive this form, we cannot confirm your hotel room.
3. While you are away you may be reached at:

The Arizona Biltmore
2400 East Missouri Boulevard
Phoenix, Arizona 85016
phone: 602.955.6600

When You Arrive

1. When you arrive into the Phoenix International Airport, you can take a cab or rent a car. The Arizona Biltmore is located 6 miles from the airport. Cab fare to the resort will be approximately \$30.00 one way or a town car with Execucar is \$33.00 one way. You can make reservations on line and if you have a AAA number you can enter promotion code H98QQ for a discount. www.execucar.com
2. When you arrive at the hotel, you can store your bags with bell services if your room is not ready. Look for the signs to OPEESA Registration.
3. At the end of your stay, you can check out using the in room service and leave your keys in the room, or you may check out at the front desk. Please note – early check out fees apply.
4. While staying at The Arizona Biltmore, Jackie Rummage of Travel Plus will be your onsite coordinator. If you have any questions please feel free to contact her room at the hotel, or, at the meeting registration area.

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During the trip, the participant(s) may have the opportunity to participate in various optional activities, such as contests, excursions, or shows. Their respective parent subsidiary and affiliated companies and organizations shall not be liable for any injury, damage, loss, expense, accident, delay, inconvenience, or irregularity arising out of or relating to said participation.

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GE Commercial Finance and GE Money

GE provides financing programs for the lawn and garden and agricultural industries. From wholesale programs designed to improve cash flow to retail programs that facilitate end-user financing, our programs are designed to help businesses grow.

Sheffield Financial

We offer the simplest, quickest, and easiest retail finance program in the industry. You will find that our financing promotions, 10 minute credit decisions and our prompt payment to you is unmatched.

Gold Sponsors

Briggs & Stratton

Briggs & Stratton® Commercial Power manufactures robust, high-performance engines, including Premium-grade Vanguard™ engines for commercial equipment.

TD Retail Card Services

TD Retail Card Services has more than 65 years in the business and has the expertise to start and administer your private label credit card program.

TCF Inventory Finance

We are the inventory finance specialists, focused on serving the lawn and garden industry. We offer innovative, flexible programs and unparalleled industry expertise.

Silver Sponsors

Blount International

Blount International, Inc. is a leading manufacturer of equipment, accessories and replacement parts for the global forestry, garden and construction industries.

Efco Power

Our chainsaws are designed for a wide range of projects. From home use to professional grade, we have the right saw for you.

Honda Engines

When you choose a Honda engine, or a product powered by Honda, you know what you're getting. An engine you can count on, now and in the future.

Husqvarna

The world's largest producer of outdoor power products including chainsaws, trimmers, lawn mowers and garden tractors.

Meyer

Meyer Products is dedicated to providing innovative and highly reliable snow and ice control systems to our customers at competitive prices.

MTD

MTD designs and builds innovative outdoor power equipment, including Cub Cadet, Troy-Bilt, Bolens, Yardman, Yard Machines, White Outdoor and GardenWay.

Schiller Grounds Care

Our mission is to make it easier for grounds care professionals and serious do-it-yourselfers to care for their landscapes and achieve the superior results they demand.

Wright Manufacturing

An innovative leader in commercial lawn maintenance technology, dedicated to manufacturing the safest and highest quality lawn equipment in the world.

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ARI is a provider of electronic parts catalogs and related technology and services to increase sales and profits for dealers in the manufactured equipment markets.

Country Clipper

Our residential and commercial mowers offer you a professional performance every-time. Country Clipper is proudly designed and manufactured in the U.S.A.

Kohler

Kohler is a global manufacturer of small gasoline, diesel and petrol engines, serving the lawn & garden, industrial, transportation, agriculture, and construction markets.

Maruyama

Maruyama is a leading manufacturer of commercial-grade power equipment for agriculture, landscape maintenance, disaster control and industry.



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Stens is a leader in its industry, priding itself on innovative products, fast service and great customer support. Stens is committed to helping your business run better.



SP Systems LLC

SP Systems manufactures top of the line application and agricultural equipment, including backpack sprayers, compression sprayers, spot sprayers, and utility sprayers.

We thank our sponsors for their substantial contributions which ensure that we can provide outstanding speakers and an informative program at a reasonable cost to our members.

Registration Information

Register your delegates by December 21, 2011, and save on early bird registration fees. Rooms must be booked by January 20, 2012. **NOTE: This hotel has a 72 hour cancellation policy or you will be charged a one night stay.** Return the enclosed sheets to OPEESA:

- Registration Form
- Product Showcase Form (if applicable)
- Golf Tournament Form (if applicable)

Return the following forms to Travel Plus:

- Credit Card Authorization/Hotel Form

Your meeting registrations must be received no later than January 20, 2012, to be included in the official printed program for the meeting.

Member registration fees include:

- two receptions (open bar)
- round table discussions
- the opening and closing nights meals and activities
- continental breakfasts,
- coffee/soda breaks,

Spouse's registration fees (any guest 18 or over) include:

- two receptions (open bar),
- attendance at the Brian Beaulieu and Hunter Lott seminars
- the opening and closing nights meals and activities

Note: The spouse breakfast is free, there is a \$15 charge for the tour of the Biltmore.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Because the association incurs certain expenses prior to the conference, it is necessary for us to have the following cancellation policy: **ALL CANCELLATIONS MUST BE IN WRITING AND BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 PM EST, February 6, 2012.**

(Please either mail or fax your cancellation to OPEESA Headquarters.)

1. Cancellations received prior to February 6, 2012, will be charged a \$50 for administrative handling.
2. Due to vendor commitments, no refunds can be issued after February 6, 2012.

Entertainment Policy

OPEESA recognizes that our Annual Meeting should provide distributors the opportunity to meet with manufacturers/affiliates in informal settings. We can assist you in planning your event should you wish to invite attendees to dinner, a reception or other program.

At the same time, we would request that you not schedule any formal company meetings or training sessions. Meetings or entertainment must not be scheduled at the same time as an official OPEESA business or social event. Except for the Opening Reception which is FREE for manufacturers and affiliates, please keep all meetings informal with no products, displays or official presentations.

If your company would like to plan some special entertainment, we request that you schedule it prior to or just after the official meeting events. Should you decide to schedule an event during one of the "free evenings," you are asked to keep any on-site entertainment to two hours in length, so members will have time for their own social activities with friends and family. If you would like assistance, please contact Jackie Rummage at (877) 644-5888. She will help you make the proper arrangements.