

PIPELINE

The Official Publication of the National Association of Steel Pipe Distributors, Inc. • Sept/Oct 2002

Vancouver, BC

NASPD Fall Conference
Sept. 26 - 28



National Association
of Steel Pipe Distributors, Inc.
14760 Memorial Dr., Suite 302
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I N S I D E

An Activity for a Lifetime, part II

ASTM Notes

Positioning your Business

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President's Message

NASPD news and an activity for a lifetime, part II

Although some of you may be looking only for the continuation of my prior article entitled, "An activity for a lifetime" (*Pipeline*, July/August 2002), I must first discharge my responsibilities as NASPD President before continuing the story. This year the NASPD has undertaken a couple of projects to help make our association the "place to be" for steel pipe distributors.

First is the Pipe Listing Website. With the help of Don Porr, our volunteer e-commerce guru, we launched our Pipe Listing Website in late May with a minimum of delays and almost no software glitches to overcome. We now need your participation. If you interested, call Susannah Porr at NASPD headquarters (281-531-7473) for more information. We hope that you'll soon be utilizing this new source for locating hard-to-find or out-of-stock products for your customers. You'll also have the opportunity to let others in the industry know what you have for sale.

The second project is our training manual, which is progressing wonderfully. The Education Committee will have a full update of our progress at the Vancouver meeting. Soon we will have a wonderful new tool available for our members to use in maximizing the value of their sales staffs. Robert Griggs has been ably staffing this project. More details will be provided in Vancouver.

Now on to part two of "an activity for a lifetime." You may recall from the last installment that I had decided to train for a two-day, 180-mile



by Gerald Merfish
NASPD President

charity bike ride from Houston to Austin, TX in April 2000.

Well, when the day of the 2000 MS 150 ride arrived, frankly, I was nervous. I wondered how I would fair among the more than 7,000 riders entered that year. Was I ready? How would the weather conditions impact my ride? What would I do if it rained? The course was crowded. Would I collide with one of the other riders? Could I hold up the commitment I had made to the donors who sponsored me? Was my bicycle tuned up and ready? Would it break down during the ride? Being a "what if" kind of guy, many such questions went through my mind.

Anadarko Petroleum had extended an invitation to me to join their team of approximately 190 riders. Most of the team riders are not Anadarko employees; rather, Anadarko supports the team as one of its community service projects. Team members receive royal treatment, all generously donated by Anadarko. The team has a group start

on Saturday morning near the front of the pack. We're given a special lunch both days of the ride, matching jerseys and pants, and the most gracious of gifts, a massage at the end of day one.

We were scheduled to depart from the western edge of Houston at 7 a.m. shortly after dawn. I recall the night before looking at the weather on the Internet and realizing the wind would not pose a problem as it would be partially at our backs. I consider the worst part of cycling to be riding into a wind, so things were looking up. Other conditions I can handle, but a head-on wind can burn you out very quickly! The temperature was balmy and warm. Humidity is always a challenge in Houston.

Saturday morning arrived and we were off! The course was filled with bicycles and riders in fancy jerseys and coordinated gear. The start of a big ride is an incredibly colorful sea of jerseys, shoes, helmets and bikes. Wendy Gramm, the wife of Texas Senator Phil Gramm, planned to skate the 180 miles with the help of an assistant. Talk about being humbled. Although the start was crowded, the ride thinned out quickly as the skills of the individual riders became apparent. My plan was to stop at the 20-mile break point and each successive break point thereafter.

Around 11 a.m. we pulled into Bellville for lunch. No sooner had I dismounted when an attractive, small in stature, red-faced woman came up to me and said "Hi." I was shocked to turn around and see NASPD's Executive Director Susannah Porr. She was

on the ride as well as her husband Don. It was one of many surprises I had on the ride.

Following lunch and a quick break we continued our journey. A mere seven miles later I witnessed an ugly crash, which required a Life Flight helicopter to transport the injured rider back to Houston. The day's ride finally ended around 4 p.m. when I arrived in the small town of LaGrange. I was exhausted yet invigorated, over-heated and speechless as my speedometer read more than 100 miles. The worst was behind me—or so I thought. After getting the massage and the feast provided by Anadarko, I ventured to my hotel room where the cool shower and air-conditioning felt like heaven.

There was little time to rest because the second-day ride of 80 miles loomed ahead. On Sunday at 7 a.m. I headed out again with a goal to ride to Austin. West of LaGrange the terrain got hilly and consumed much more energy. A ride through Bastrop State Park proved scary, as the park is comprised of winding, short, yet very steep hills in a narrow one-lane road. For some reason the people in the wild crowd started going into the bush and then out onto the road at 90 degrees. I vowed that the harrowing ride through Bastrop Park would be a one-time experience. In subsequent years the MS Society has provided a by-pass around the park for us older folks.

I had lunch in Bastrop and then set off for Austin. Now it started getting tougher. I had ridden some 140 miles and still had 40 miles remaining. The heat index was soaring and my stamina was plummeting. I just could not make myself drink the liquid in my water bottle. The rule of thumb in

order to remain hydrated is that one must consume one bottle of water/sports drink every 10 miles. However, within five minutes of leaving a rest stop the liquid in my water bottle became hot and undrinkable. Yet if I did not re-hydrate then I would bonk (the

dehydrated and exhausted. All in all things went well. My bike was perfect, I averaged about 17 miles per hour, and I was alive and healthy.

Upon boarding the bus to return to Houston, I sat down and thought to myself, "Done that. No need to return next year." But then my mind wandered to the more than \$9,000 I had raised for MS research and I knew that "Done that" would not be enough. I now had a responsibility and commitment. Through my business relationships I tap into funds that I doubt any other rider would get if I was to stop

this ride. After raising more than \$9,000 and placing 18th in fundraising among all riders in 2000, I raised over \$17,000 in 2001, becoming the 14th highest fundraiser in Houston and 53rd nationally. Then in 2002, I raised around \$14,000 to place 10th among Houston fundraisers. So now I am a regular.

Many times when one trains for such an endeavor as a long bike race, after the ride the bike is put away forever. In my case, I continue to ride for pleasure and to help raise money for a worthy cause. In 2001 and 2002, the weather conditions were similar to 2000 with decent wind direction and lots of heat. However, unlike year one, I was afflicted with a common cold when the race started and it showed, as my average speed has never been as good as 2000.

I continue to ride recreationally, amassing more than 4,500 miles in the last 2 and 1/2 years. My goal is to ride in the MS 150 for the next 20 years. I may not accomplish this but I will enjoy trying—after all, cycling is an activity for a lifetime.

*In the process, I found
new inner strength that
I never knew I had.*

biking expression for hitting the wall and stopping the ride). Re-hydrating on a bike is critical and yet hard to understand when you don't feel like you are perspiring because the wind is whisking the moisture away from your skin.

The heat was oppressive. At every rest stop I drenched myself with water to cool down. Yet one mile out of the rest stop I would feel overheated again. Just west of Austin is a plateau that proved to be my real test. Heat and crosswinds almost did me in and maybe should have. But as everyone in the NASPD knows, I can be stubborn to a fault. My energy returned as I saw the silhouette of the Austin skyline. My will to finish was restored.

The invigoration I felt crossing the finish line was incredible. The crowds cheering on each and every finisher were exhilarating! In the process, I found new inner strength that I never knew I had. I can ride 180 miles in two days! With the generosity of my sponsors, I can make a difference for the victims of MS. Having set and achieved an endurance athletic goal was a first for me. I was exhilarated but

From the Executive Director

Use Pipe Listing Website to locate products

My column begins with a couple of personal notes. I am happy to report that NASPD's Administrative Manager Nancy Strickland is back in the office and healthy as ever. She came through a one-day surgery on her carotid artery like a champ and is looking forward to seeing everyone in Vancouver. Those who are in Vancouver will have no problem noticing that I am well on my way to baby number three. We are expecting a girl on Nov. 2.

Now on to business. There have been a lot of exciting things going on at the NASPD these days. We are working diligently on perfecting our Pipe Listing Website. While creating this Website was quite an endeavor, the hard part has just begun. We are attempting to get our members to change a behavior. For this Website to be successful we need a "critical mass" not only subscribing to the site but also using it regularly. We need to persuade our



by Susannah Feux Porr
NASPD Executive Director

member subscribers to use our Website as a regular tool of business to both market the products they are selling and locate products they are looking for. I have conducted a phone survey with our subscribers who have inventory listed, to find out what they perceive as the site's strengths and weaknesses. I am simultaneously keeping on top of those subscribers who have not yet listed their inventories in an effort to "hold their hand" through the process. The survey has helped develop some great ideas about how to improve and market the site. The E-Communications Committee, lead by Janel Ramsey and Yves Pognonec, will look at the data I have gathered and finalize a plan on how

to proceed. We encourage any and all feedback.

The Education Committee is hard at work developing a training manual. We will have a good portion of the manual available for viewing in Vancouver. We have a list of volunteers to proof specific sections of the manual. If you have not volunteered and would like to participate in the development of the manual, contact me as soon as possible.

As you can see, we are working harder than ever to bring even greater value to your membership. In today's economy, we understand clearly the need to give you value for every dollar you invest. We are here to support you and your business.

IN MEMORIAM

Annette Bergfeld

Annette Bergfeld, mother of NASPD Past President Joe Bergfeld, passed away on July 21. Many NASPD members have been the lucky recipients of Mrs. Bergfeld's cookies during the holiday season. Annette Bergfeld was preceded in death by her husband George. She is survived by daughter Marie Scaccianoce (Salvatore), son Joe and Jeanne Bergfeld, daughter Joanne and Dave Mahler, and daughter Deborah Bergfeld. She has nine grandchildren, was founder of "Joe's Mom's almost Famous Cookie Co.," and one of the seven "Fabulous Fiorees."

Bobby E. Jones Sr.

Bobby E. Jones Sr. of Valiant Steel & Equipment, Inc. (Regular member, Concord, NC) passed away on August 20 after a short illness. He is survived by Carol Jones, Bobby Jones Jr., Breanne Jones, and their families.

NASPD awards
scholarship

Joseph Zeig is the 2002-2003 recipient of the National Association of Steel Pipe Distributors Scholarship for Industrial Distribution. Zeig is a sophomore attending Texas A&M University. He has experience in the steel fabrication industry and is interested in industries related to building materials. Zeig wrote the following letter to NASPD in response to learning that he received the scholarship.

...

I received notification today that I have been selected to receive the National Association of Steel Pipe Distributors Scholarship in Industrial Distribution for the 2002c - 2003a semesters. I cannot express enough the heartfelt thanks I feel in having been selected to receive your scholarship. Scholarships help to offer students a chance to attend Texas A&M University and earn a degree. I plan on using this opportunity to the fullest and in turn hope that I, too, can one day help college students fulfill their dreams.

I come from a family of five siblings, an older sister who is already through college, a brother who is a junior/senior this year at TAMU studying mechanical engineering, another brother who is a freshman this year at TAMU studying civil engineering, and a sister who will enter Texas A&M in the fall of 2003. Therefore, scholarships are of a tremendous help to my family.

I have such pride and feel so fortunate in having the opportunity to attend Texas A&M University. Your scholarship will help me, as well as my brothers and sister, achieve my goal. Thank you again for setting up a scholarship that helps young Aggies achieve their dreams.

Sincerely,
Joseph Leo Zeig, Class of 2004



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ASTM Notes

Report from the Committee A1 meeting in May



by Robert N. Rau
NASPD Past President
and ASTM Fellow

The following is a report on items of interest to NASPD members from the semi-annual Committee A1 held in Pittsburgh, PA on May 8, 2002.

Item 951-8 Proposed new specification HDG-ERW (hot dipped galvanized and electric resistance welded).

Item passed on Sub-Committee (SC) ballot 02.01 item #1 and will move to A01 Main Committee ballot.

Item 981-22 (A513) Addition of high-strength low alloy (HSLA).

Changes were discussed at the meeting. A new proposal will be prepared for the November meeting.

Item 981-23 (A513) Proposed revisions of wall tolerance tables.

A proposal was submitted for this meeting. After discussion it was decided that the proposal needed more work. A new proposal will be presented at the November meeting.

Item 982-8 New specification for Seamless Line Pipe.

Item was on A-1 Ballot as item #27 and received one negative, which was withdrawn. Item moves to Society review with editorial changes.

Item 991-1 (A53) Proposed revisions to flattening test requirements. This item is now in print.

Item 991-7 (New standard) Pipe dimensions and weights.

A proposal was presented and will be on the next SC A01.09 letter ballot.

Item 992-5 (A787) Length tolerances. Item is now in print.

Item 992-6 (A513) Straightness measurement.

A proposal is expected for the November meeting.

Item 001-2 (A53/A53M) Replacement of E59 to E1806 (NDE testing specifications). This item now in print.

Item 001-3 (A618) Phosphorus content. Item now in print.

Item 001-4 (A501) Elongation. Item now in print.

Item 001-5 (A500) Elongation. Item now in print.

Item 001-6 (A500 and A847) Mass tolerance.

This item was on SC A01.09 letter ballot #02.01 Item 2 letter ballot, and received negatives that were addressed by editorial changes. Item moves to A01 main ballot.

Item 001-7 (A513) Square tube thickness tolerances.

An expected proposal was not received. Item will be held open until the November meeting.

Item 001-8 (A984) Various revisions.

Item was on A1 main ballot 02-01 Item 30. Item received several negatives which were addressed as editorial. Item moves to Society review.

Item 001-10 (New specification) for Fusion Welded Tubing, carbon steel, carbon manganese, boiler, superheater, heat exchanges and condensers applicatins. Item is now in print.



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60'	48"	1.25	Used, Bare	SRL
93'	36"	1.50	Used	DRL
240'	30"	1.25	Surplus & Used	DRL
138'	30"	1.00	Surplus & Used, Bare	SRL/DRL
60'	30"	.750	Surplus	DRL
525'	26"	.750	Used, Bare	DRL
145'	24"	.750	Surplus, FB	SRL/DRL
564'	24"	.625	Used, Bare	DRL
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Item 002-1 (A500) Flattening test

This item is waiting for a proposal at the November meeting.

Item 002-2 (New specification) Type F Line Pipe, similar to A984.

Item will move to A1 main ballot with editorial changes.

Item 002-3 (A53) NDE at producers' option.

This item was on SC ballot 02.01 Item 2, and received negatives. Will move to A1 main ballot with editorial changes.

Item 002-4 (A106) NDE at producers' option.

This item was on SC letter ballot 02.01 item 4, and received a negative. Item will go to A1 main ballot with editorial changes.

Item 002-5 (A500) Length tolerances
This item is now in print.

Item 011-4 (A733) NDE

This item will be held until November. A proposal is expected.

Item 012-1 (A53) Galvanizing requirements

Item will be held for the November meeting. A report is expected.

Item 012-2a (A106) Withdrawal of A520 from A106. Item moves to A1 main ballot.

Item 012-2b (A178) Withdrawal of A520. Item moves to A1 main ballot.

Item 012-2c (A192) Withdrawal of A520. Item moves to A1 main ballot.

Item 012-2d (A210) Withdrawal of A520. Item moves to A1 main ballot.

Item 021-2a (A450) Remove reference to A941

A proposal will be prepared for the November meeting.

Item 021-2b (A530) Remove reference to A941

A proposal will be prepared for the November meeting.

Item 021-3 Line Pipe specifications—Titanium content

A proposal is expected for the November meeting.

Item 021-4 (A984) 70 ksi minimum yield strength grade

A report is expected for the November meeting.

Item 021-5 (A53) Copper Content

A proposal was received and will move to SC A01.09 ballot.

This concludes the ASTM Notes. I will prepare a report after the November meeting.



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Positioning Your Business

Business
Business

by Ed Rigsbee, CSP

Vendors are a dime a dozen but partners are hard to find. This statement is continually in the minds of your customers. If you would like to develop a business strategy based on quality relationships, take a look at how your customers currently perceive your business. Ask your customers what they think of you through surveys or simply by word-of-mouth. The conversation they have with themselves about you is their reality.

You can greatly influence your chances of success in an uncertain economy if you position yourself as a partner to your customers. Learn to get on their side of the table. Learn what they perceive as valuable to them and what is not. When you are clear about how you want the market to perceive you, you can then drive this positioning strategy throughout the many silos of your business. As all the areas of your business drive the same consistent message in both word and deed, you will own that position in your marketplace.

Before I consult with an organization, I generally ask the management team to answer the following positioning questions. Answer them for yourself. Do this and your chances for success will dramatically increase.

1. Who are my customers?

This question sounds quite simple but this is a critical first step. To better understand the question, explore these sub-questions:

- Who do I want them to be?
- What must I do to get them?
- Who has chosen me?
- What are their demographics?

2. Where are my customers?

- Geographically?
- Industry segments?
- Social/economically?
- What publications do my target customers read?

3. How do my customers find me?

- Word-of-mouth, drive-by or walk-by traffic, snail mailings, e-mailings, phone solicitations, yellow pages advertising, local cable station/national networks, radio, newspapers, specialty magazines and cross promotions are possibilities.
- Maybe they've heard of you through a media interview or article?
- How about the Internet? By now, your organization should be somewhat Web-centric.

4. How do my customers perceive value (benefits) when selecting a supplier/vendor with which to partner?

Technological capability, knowledge, overall service/unbundling of services, integrity, selection, price, geography and a cadre of other factors will affect their selection process. Additionally, there are the supply/procurement considerations:

- Traditional brick and mortar.
- Mail order/catalog.
- Click and brick.
- Click only.

5. How do my customers prefer to do business?

- Do they walk the partnering talk or just talk it?
- Can I live with their reputation?
- Can my company survive the potential pitfalls?
- Ethics is a big consideration. Additionally, ethnic and cultural concerns are critical factors in today's diverse society. Are you willing to "walk the extra

mile" to understand and fulfill your diverse customers' desires and needs?

6. Who is my competition?

Generally, any business that can pluck dollars from the pockets of your potential customers is absolutely your competition! Specific to your situation, who has similar products and/or service capabilities? Who is willing to make a stronger commitment to offering the greatest total value package?

7. What are the benefits that my competitors' customers believe they are receiving from my competition?

Spending time thinking about solutions to customers' problems and challenges from your competitors' point of view will serve you well. Know how your competition thinks and acts. You can learn from them! To win customers, you must know your competition better than they know themselves. That is how Pepsi gained shelf space from Coke in grocery stores in the 1960s. Pepsi changed the rules by offering 8-packs and one-liter bottles. Be careful not to select copycat positioning—rarely is it successful. Adapt rather than adopt.

8. What is it about my company that really gets me excited?

Find your company's uniqueness and passionately sell through that window with all your energy. Those with purchasing power will seek out specialists who can solve their customers' problems by fulfilling their customers' needs, wants and desires—physically and mentally. Decide to position your company in this select group and then make the necessary commitment to get there.

9. What is my personal uniqueness?

- a. What do you bring to the table?
- b. Is it your personality, the area in which you excel, or the one way you do business for which customers always compliment you?
- c. People prefer an original whenever possible—can it be you?

The answers to the above nine questions will assist you in defining a positioning strategy upon which you can successfully increase sales and build your business. This may well be a new strategic direction or simply an adjustment to your current sales and marketing strategy.

Entire industries are giving way to new technologies resulting in a new or dramatically changed paradigm for their industry. Where fragmented industries once existed in comfort, consolidators and roll-ups are devastating the playing field. As an example, you will not find the number of local independent stationary stores, bookstores and drug stores that once spotted your city streets—just big boxes that look, smell and feel all the same. Regardless of your specific industry, it's changing whether you like it or not.

Ed Rigsbee, CSP is the author of *PartnerShift, Developing Strategic Alliances* and *The Art of Partnering*. He can be reached at 800-839-1520 or EdRigsbee@aol.com. Visit his Partnering University Web Site at www.rigsbee.com.



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101 promotes Dustin Nabor

Dustin J. Nabor was promoted to President, 101 Vertical Fabrication, Incorporated, (Regular member), of Agoura Hills, CA, replacing Fidel J. Nabor in that capacity. Dustin joined the company in 1991. He has mastered a variety of challenging assignments in sales, finance, marketing and computer operations. In his new position as President, Dustin Nabor will concentrate on service, quality, harmony and customer satisfaction.

Davila named Sales Manager of Tex-Tube

J. Raymond Davila was promoted to Sales Manager of Tex-Tube Company (Regular member), a Houston-based steel pipe mill. Davila has more than 20 years marketing experience with international companies, primarily handling products between the US and Latin America where he has acted in marketing and sales capacities.

Vallourec completes acquisition

Vallourec completed its previously announced acquisition of North Star Tubes on July 1 for the sum of \$380 million. North Star Tubes ("V & M Star"), was formerly the seamless steel tubular division of North Star Steel Company (Associate member). It has locations in Youngstown, OH and Houston.

In other news, Vallourec appointed Claire Giraut to Chief Financial and Legal Officer of the Executive Board.

Tubacero awarded major contracts

Tubacero, S.A. de C.V. (Associate member) of Monterrey, Mexico was recently awarded several orders to supply 201 kilometers of large diameter pipe with high API grades. The Line Pipe will transport gas from the US to Mexico and also serve important co-generation power plants in Northern Mexico. Tubacero will manufacture and supply the gas service Line Pipe from September to November under stringent quality requirements.

The projects awarded are: Kinder Morgan for 76 kilometers of 30" OD, 0.344" WT, API-5L-X70 Line Pipe, FBE coated; El Paso (in a joint venture with Pemex G y PB) for 70 kilometers of 36" OD, 0.469" to 0.750" WT, API-5L-X65 Line Pipe FBE coated; and Electricité de France for 55 kilometers of 30", 20" and 16" OD, 0.250" to 0.312 WT, API-5L-X70 Line Pipe, FBE plus non-slip coated.

Hobbs in rope competition

Cliff Hobbs, President of Liberty & Rocky Mountain Pipe (Regular member), of Great Falls, MT, place third in a team roping competition held in June. Hobbs and his partner competed against 250 teams from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, North and South Dakota and Canada. In addition to winning a cash prize and silver buckle trophy, Hobbs qualified to participate in the national championships that will be held in Oklahoma City in October.

Of special interest to NASPD members is that fact that Liberty & Rocky Mountain Pipe supplied 95 percent of

the pipe and tubing, corrals, stalls, fencing and gates in the newly constructed horse facility and arena where the competition took place.

Birth Announcements



Emma Kathryn and "Nana"

Emma Kathryn Johnson

Emma Kathryn Johnson was born July 2 to Jeff and Kimberly Johnson. Kimberly is the daughter of Cathy "Nana" Williams of Hamilton Metals, Inc.

Kaitlyn Shea Walker

Kaitlyn Shea Walker was born February 13 to Jennifer and Kurt Walker. Proud grandparents are Bobby and Michelee Kanz of Cierra Pipe, Inc.

Under the Weather

NASPD has learned that former member Seigo Arai is undergoing treatment for a serious illness. Friends may send letters of encouragement to:

Seigo Arai
Kameda Medical Center
A416
929 Higashi-Cho
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