

New Spring Meeting Format Hits the Mark!



President Beneteau w/First Time Attendees:
 (left to right): Pat Grimes, John Stanway,
 David Beneteau, Michael Graham, Tom Sparschu.

The RWMA Spring Meeting began on the last day of April and continued through May 2nd at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio. The Spring Meeting featured the new format with two technical presentations, four roundtables and one general session speaker. The speakers, roundtables and networking forums received high marks from attendees, who enjoyed the opportunity to learn about new technology and exchange views with industry colleagues. The response to the new format, which featured more speakers and round table discussions, was overwhelmingly positive.

"The new format with more speakers and technical information is excellent."



Speaker Kurt Hoffman

Session highlights included technical presentations by **Russ Butchko** of *Nutron Nameplate*, who spoke on *Elements of Product Safety Identification and Design* and **Kurt Hofman** of *RoMan Engineering Services*, who addressed *Dual Phase Material: A Discussion about Weldability*.

Thursday night featured a dinner with speaker **Brett Smith** of the **Automotive Research Center**. With an impressive resume and years of research experience in the automotive industry, Smith provided an enlightening presentation for meeting attendees.

Round table discussions, introduced this year, were interactive and energized. Delegates enjoyed the opportunity to exchange views with industry peers on such timely topics as *Dealing with Globalization*, *The Automotive Industry Squeeze*, *Doing Business in Mexico* with



Speaker Russ Butchko

"The technical presentations and roundtables are great additions."

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Spring Meeting

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Speaker Brett Smith

Luis Salazar of the Mexican Embassy, and *The Changing World of Human Resources* with **Lisa Segal**, a human resource specialist.

The Meeting closed out with a tour of *Watteredge-Uniflex, Inc.* Delegates were treated to a wonderful tour of the manufacturing floor and got a chance to see how resistance welding cables and secondary connectors are made. In addition, the staff showcased their unparalleled manner of manufacturing laminated shunts. There were three other unique applications shown to the visitors as well: the refurbished copper walls used for electric arc in steel mills; the large secondary power cables for current carrying applications and the highly technical vacuum switches for electrolytic processes. Members enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about this innovative company.

"We are going down the right path. The meeting is much more valuable."

Thank you to **Sandy Lee** and **Larry Moss** for all of their leadership in coordinating the program and to **Ed Langhenry, Jr.** for hosting the tour of Watteredge-Uniflex.

"The Spring Meeting is getting better every time."

The next Spring Meeting will be April 28-30, 2004 in Detroit, Michigan. RoMan Engineering Services will be the meeting host. The meeting hotel is still to be determined.

For more photos from the Spring Meeting, see page 7



Round Table discussions were a highlight of the meeting.

"The Spring Meeting was an excellent value and worthwhile."



Attendees enjoyed the new format and impressive speaker program.

RWMA
MEMBER

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President's Perspective

Changing Strategies for Challenging Times

By all accounts, the 2003 Spring Meeting was a successful trial of the new spring meeting format. At future meetings we will continue to experiment with the program so that we are making the most of the opportunity. Your suggestions and comments are certainly welcomed.

This effort started with a realization that the RWMA needed to change to remain relevant to its membership. It is paramount that we respond to the realities of our position in the industry and continue to adapt to the expectations of our members. While the transition requires work and planning, it is an investment in our future. If we don't try to change there will probably not be a future. Unfortunately, if we do make an effort, there are still no guarantees. Continued success requires a never-ending process of improvement.

This is not too unlike the situation that most of our members are faced with today. The rules of business have changed dramatically in a short span of time and companies are being forced to adapt very quickly in response. For many, it is a matter of survival.

Today's world marketplace forces everyone to compete with solutions that are the best-of-the-best. While exciting new technology promises to revolutionize our industry, low-cost manufactured imports threaten to displace significant portions of domestic capacity. Sadly, for companies who do not, or are not able to react to these changes, this one-two-punch might mean the end is near.

There are additional perils lurking for those who are working hard to respond to the new realities of the marketplace. Credit risk is immensely difficult to control. The validity of letters of intent, purchase orders, and payment agreements have been diminished by unilateral customer changes. Everyone is faced with pressure to get as much, or do as much, as possible with as little as possible. With so many companies extended to the limits, the risk of a cascade failure is very real.

It is very encouraging to hear that many companies are meeting these problems head-on with significant investment in product development. Tremendous pressure on sales and margins are resulting in business improvements that would probably not otherwise have received the attention. Production slow-downs have allowed time for modifying and tuning processes. New opportunities for collaboration are being explored to find value-added solutions to try and recover margins.

The cost, speed and reliability of the resistance welding process will ensure that it remains a preferred method of joining metals. The focus for industry improvement needs to be lead-time reduction, integration with customer processing and design activities, and effective capacity utilization. As painful as these improvements might be in the short terms, our industry will be stronger for it.

It is futile to wish for things to get back to the way they were. As a group, we can work within the RWMA to set a positive direction for the industry in the future. Along this line, there are several Work Group and Subcommittee projects that can use your input. The RWMA Annual Meeting in Palm Springs will be a great opportunity to network with peers and to guide the future direction of the RWMA to support the efforts of your company. As in many endeavors, the prospects are quite good that you will get out as much, or perhaps more than you put in.

Have a safe summer – hope to see you in the fall.

David Beneteau

Association News

RWMA Well Represented at AWS Show



Membership Coordinator **Robin Walker**

represented the RWMA in the association booth at the AWS Trade Show in Detroit. Despite overall attendance at the show being much lower than expected, RWMA made a strong showing with 13 exhibiting members.

Thank you to Trade Show Subcommittee Chair **Ron Leibovitz** for his work on this year's show. Also, thanks to *CenterLine* for arranging to ship in RWMA's materials and loaning a TV/VCR to the booth. Lastly, thanks to **Jim Dally, Preston Harris, Bob Hosa, Ron Liebovitz** and **Chris Vola**, who assisted at the RWMA booth.

RWMA honored **Tom Snow Sr.** as the *2003 Elihu Thomson Award* winner. We're pleased to report that Tom generously donated his honorarium back to the Association. Please find attached with this newsletter, the nomination form for the 2005 and 2006 Elihu Thomson Awards. Please complete by Friday, October 3rd.

The next AWS Show will be in Chicago, April 6-8, 2004.

Welding School Held in Conjunction with AWS

The Spring Welding School, held in conjunction with the AWS Show in Detroit, attracted 30 students. Despite the challenge of Instructors balancing their booth commitments with class time and student interaction, the program managed to provide valuable education for the participants. Attendee evaluations confirmed once again that the Instructors did a superior job in sharing their technical expertise through lectures and hands-on demonstrations. The evaluations also lauded the approachability of the Instructors.



"The (RWMA Welding School) class was great! I learned a lot about resistance welding. I'm happy to be a member of the RWMA." – **Tom Michalak**

The Welding School Subcommittee has agreed to hold only one welding school in 2003. The next welding school will be the 2004 Spring Welding School, to be held in conjunction with the AWS Show, April 5 - 6 at McCormick Place in Chicago, Illinois.

RWMA Calendar of Events

2003

October 23-25
RWMA Annual Convention
Palm Springs, California

November 16-19
FABTECH Show
Chicago, Illinois

2004

April 5 - 6
Spring Welding School
(in conjunction with AWS)
Chicago, Illinois

April 6 - 8
AWS Show
Chicago, Illinois

April 28 - 30
RWMA Spring Meeting
Detroit, Michigan

S2003 - Patent News

The following list includes a number of patents recently issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office that may be of interest to the membership of the RWMA. These patents have been identified by a general search of approximately 3,500 patents issued per week by the USPTO. This listing is for general information and is not intended to be an endorsement of the patentability of the claimed invention. Additional information on any of these patents, or a complete list of U.S. patents is available via the USPTO website at: www.uspto.gov.

- US6469272B1 (10/22/2002): WELD GUN WITH INVERTED ROLLER SCREW ACTUATOR - Progressive Tool
- US6499921B1 (10/31/2002): SPOT WELDER TIP SHARPENING AND DRESSING TOOL
- US6479783B2 (11/12/2002): ELECTRIC MOTOR DEVICE FOR POWERING A TOOL CLAMP - ARO
- US6479784B1 (11/12/2002): METHOD FOR QUALITY CONTROL OF SPOT WELDING IN WELDING MACHINES - ADA
- US6486629B1 (11/26/2002): METHOD FOR CONTROLLING FORCE APPLICATION WITH SERVO MOTOR AND APPARATUS THEREWITH - Fanuc Ltd.
- US6491210B1 (12/10/2002): METHOD AND APPARATUS OF BUTT WELDING - Nissan Motor Co. Ltd
- US6506998B2 (1/14/2003): PROJECTION WELDING OF AN ALUMINUM SHEET - Newcor, Inc.
- US6506997B2 (1/14/2003): SPOT WELDING SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SENSING WELDING CONDITIONS IN REAL TIME - Mass. Inst. of Tech.
- US6506996B2 (1/14/2003): SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PERFORMING PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE UPON SPOT WELDING GUNS - General Motors Corp
- US6512194B1 (1/28/2003): MULTI-ARM WELD GUN - DCT, Inc.
- US6512195B2 (1/28/2003): MODULAR WELDING MACHINE
- US6515251B1 (2/4/2003): WELDING SYSTEM AND METHOD - Steelcase Development
- US6518537B1 (2/11/2003): WELDING ELECTRODE TIP DRESSING APPARATUS - Kyokutoh Company
- US6518532B1 (2/11/2003): METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR JOINING PINS AND WIRES - Joyal Products, Inc.
- US6518535B2 (2/11/2003): DEVICE AND METHOD FOR SEAMING WELDING - Kikuchi Co. Ltd
- US6518536B2 (2/11/2003): JOINING EQUIPMENT - Matsushita Electric
- US6531674B2 (3/11/2003): WELDING GUN AND METHODS CONDUCTED USING THE SAME - Toyota
- US6538228B2 (3/25/2003): METHOD AND DEVICE FOR WELDING
- US6545244B1 (4/8/2003): CONDUCTIVE HEAT SEAM WELDING - Edison Welding Inst.
- US6543828B1 (4/8/2003): PROJECTION WELDED PANEL SPACER AND METHOD FOR MAKING THE SAME - Magna International
- US6548780B2 (4/15/2003): TECHNIQUES FOR RESISTANCE WELDING ATTACHMENTS TO SMALL PRESSURE VESSELS - Manchester Tank & Equipment
- US6552294B1 (4/22/2003): METHOD FOR METALLURGICALLY ATTACHING TOGETHER TWO MEMBERS - Delphi Technologies
- US6553827B2 (4/29/2003): COOLANT SAFETY METHOD FOR WELDING APPARATUS - EOA Systems Inc.
- US6559406B2 (5/6/2003): AIR FEED WELD GUN WITH RETRACTABLE PISTON - Newfrey LLC
- US6566624B2 (5/20/2003): WELDING ASSEMBLY WITH NESTABLE CONDUCTIVE ENDS - Magna International
- US6570120B2 (5/27/2003): APPARATUS FOR RESISTANCE WELDING - Matuschek Messtechnik

Wanted: Resistance Welding Photos

RWMA plans to start a photo library to update pictures in our bulletins and to fulfill the numerous requests that we receive for photos of the resistance welding process. Please send to Headquarters any photos of machinery, electrodes, controls, weld nuggets, projection welds, etc., of the resistance welding process in action.



What Does Your Dues Dollar Buy? Benefits of RWMA Membership

(Approved by the Strategic Planning Committee on October 20, 1998 and approved by the Board of Directors on October 21, 1998)

- Direct involvement with the creation of resistance welding standards
- Opportunities to stay current with new developments in resistance welding
- Opportunities to share experiences and solve problems
- A newsletter designed to keep members informed of the resistance welding industry and association events
- A comprehensive listing in the annual RWMA Membership Directory which includes the company name, address, phone and fax numbers, and company e-mail, as well as key personnel and a company description. This directory is a key tool for advertising and industry networking
- Periodic updates on a variety of information that impacts business operations
- Avenue to educational and marketing opportunities
- Networking opportunities at all RWMA sponsored functions
- International recognition by displaying the RWMA logo on company related materials

Unitech Miyachi Corporation

Miyachi is proud to announce the release of advanced feature sets for its STA Series AC weld controls which allow users to manage force: an electronic pressure regulator output, and pressure monitoring. Effective management of force during the welding process results in more consistent, robust welds.



The STA's electronic pressure regulator allows force to be programmed as part of a weld schedule; simple calibration makes it possible to program in lbs. The STA's output is standard 0-10VDC and is compatible with most manufacturers' regulators.

Pressure reading optimizes weld quality and throughput via programmable firing force. The STA's new differential pressure monitoring feature enables the control to measure pressure on the top and bottom of a pneumatic cylinder and fire when the desired welding force is reached. Like the pressure regulator, the differential pressure monitor is also calibrated and programmed in lbs. (Contact United Miyachi at (626) 303-5676, or by email at info@unitedmiyachi.com. Unitek Miyachi may be found on the internet at www.unitedmiyachi.com.)

RWC, Inc.

RWC, Inc. introduces PanelMax. This new standard panel line incorporates modular "lean thinking" concepts in its design. PanelMax has been developed to satisfy requirements for appliance side panels that can be produced from pre-paint steel, and allows for "just in time" manufacturing direct to the assembly line, with fast changeovers for model identification. With an 11 second machine cycle and 98% uptime, PanelMax can accommodate fast changeovers with wrench-less die changes. For more information on RWC or PanelMax, visit RWC's web site at www.rwcinc.com.



Spring Meeting Highlights



Brian Tobin, Harry Patton, Bob Roth, Chris Johnson, Ren Scodeller



John Stanway, Tom Sparschu, Kevin Gunning, David Darrah, Pat Grimes, Roger Hirsch



Patricia Adams, Bob Matteson, Dick Alley, Diana Darrah, Mike Simmons, Ron Leibovitz, Michael Graham, Ed Langhenry, Jr.



Larry Moss, Bill Brafford, David Beneteau, Mike Simmons, Joshua Waldorf



Networking at the RWMA Spring Meeting