



Network News

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Lowcountry Manufacturers Council

Summer 2003

Welcome to the *Network News*

To our valued members of the LMC, we would like to introduce you to the first edition of the **Network News**. Take a moment to review the information below which includes the LMC's mission statement, a look at the LMC's key initiatives for the upcoming year, and an overview of the LMC committees.

The Lowcountry Manufacturers Council is an organization focused on the unique issues and common goals of the manufacturing sector. The mission of the Lowcountry Manufacturers Council is to enhance the competitiveness, promote development and impact the manufacturing sector of the Lowcountry of South Carolina.

AFFINITY COMMITTEE

Mike Leatherwood, Chair

- Focuses on increasing the buying power of manufacturers. It serves as a group-buying consortium for the LMC.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Jim Meeks, Chair

- Identifies short-term and long-term training needs of the region's workforce with specific emphasis on manufacturing skills.

ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

- Monitors the regulatory environment, identifies proposed changes and their impact on operations.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- Works to identify labor trends and research unique ways to enhance the local labor market.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

- Monitors issues affecting manufacturers. It acts as a voice for the manufacturing community to state and local officials.

MANUFACTURERS ROUNDTABLE

Joe Schady, Chair

- The meetings are held every month and provide a forum to bring together professionals to share and exchange ideas and concerns. Plant tours are a highlight of this group's meeting schedule.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Diane Bagwell, Chair

- Responsible for effectively marketing the LMC's programs and events by building awareness of the LMC with its current and prospective members.

For information about these committees, please contact Jennifer Robson at 843-805-3010, or jrobson@charlestonchamber.org.

2003 – 2004 LMC Key Initiatives

- Track statewide plant closings and layoffs to assist local companies with their labor pool; researching unique ways to help strengthen the labor market
- Develop a certification program for recruiting, selecting and training a pool of potential entry-level production employees for area manufacturers
- Compiling wage and benefits information and publishing this information in the annual Wage and Benefits Survey
- Identify new cost-saving opportunities through the Affinity Program
- Establish the LMC web site, www.lmcsc.org, to better serve members and those interested in learning more about the LMC
- Increase, improve and expand membership development and recruitment

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Fellow LMC Members,

First let me say that I am honored to become your new LMC Chairman. Also I want to congratulate Mike Leatherwood, our outgoing Chairman, for doing an outstanding job during the last year. For the first time in our organization's history, we are in a financially sound position. Much of the credit for that outstanding accomplishment goes to Mike and his development of the LMC's Affinity Program.

I feel that we can better accomplish our organization's mission by increased participation by all of our members. One step in that direction is to encourage more of you to attend the monthly Manufacturers Roundtable. This forum, which was formerly called the Small Manufacturers Roundtable, is an excellent opportunity to network and to learn from the interesting presentations that are a part of these meetings.

It is my belief that our organization should exercise our political muscle with the Lowcountry members of the South Carolina General Assembly. Our local state senators and representatives need to know more about the LMC and the significant numbers of their constituents that we employ. Along this line I plan to organize one or more events where LMC members meet in an informal setting with the Lowcountry's General Assembly delegation and make our opinions known to them. The upcoming General Assembly session has several bills pending that can significantly impact the way we will be able to conduct our businesses.

In addition, I think that there is significant potential for mutually beneficial business relations between LMC members. This is an area that I will promote with our members.

I ask for your support in the coming year as we strengthen the LMC team.

Sincerely,



B. Herbert Ellis
President, Charleston Marine Containers Inc.
2003-2004 Chair, Lowcountry Manufacturers Council



Lowcountry Manufacturers Council
2003-2004 Board of Directors

Diane Bagwell, Briteline Extrusions
Larry Debevec, Corning
Herb Ellis, Charleston Marine Containers Inc.
Marv Ervin, Coburg Dairy
Kerry Farmer, Alcoa Mt. Holly
Bill Finn, AstenJohnson
Ladd Hall, Nucor Steel
Jack B. Hoey, Coastal Glass Distributors
John Irion, SCMEP
Don Kassing, JW Aluminum
Mike Leatherwood, Leatherwood Electronics
Ron Paquette, Hubner Manufacturing
Mark Richards, The Richards Group
Joe Schady, Alpha Sheet Metal
David Smith, Bayer
Pete Taylor, Cummins Marine
Gene Walls, The Post and Courier

The LMC Welcomes the Following New Members:

* Denotes Associate Member

Andron Stainless Corporation *
Chesterfield Yarn Mill *
Lauscha Fiber International Corp.
Stuckey Brothers Parts Company *

The LMC currently has 67 Tri-County members and 40 Associate Members. Our growth depends on your support and referrals. Thank you for your involvement in the LMC.

FACTS & FIGURES:

- ◆ Nationwide, manufacturing employment declined 17,000 in May 2003 to 14,731,000
- ◆ Manufacturing workers accounted for 11.3 percent of the national workforce in May 2003
- ◆ Between 1992-2000, the manufacturing sector contributed to 22 percent of the overall GDP growth
- ◆ Manufacturing GDP grew faster in the 1990s than the rest of the economy, and contracted faster during the last two recessions

Data Source: National Association of Manufacturers

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES: Would you like to promote your company or services to area manufacturers? Call or email Jennifer Robson at 843-805-3010 or jrobson@charlestonchamber.org to learn more.

ANNUAL INDUSTRY APPRECIATION WEEK DINNER

Thursday, October 2, 2003
6:00 p.m. - Midnight

CHARLESTON PLACE HOTEL

For ticket information contact
Jennifer Robson at 843-805-3010, or
jrobson@charlestonchamber.org.

**Sponsorship
Opportunities Available**

Member Spotlight: JW Aluminum

Founded in 1979, JW Aluminum is a supplier of specialty aluminum foil and sheet products to more than 100 customers worldwide. It is a leading producer of "fin stock" used in heat exchange equipment, including industrial coils in commercial and residential air conditioning applications. The company's aluminum sheet products are used primarily for general building applications, such as siding, gutters, downspouts, residential siding, awnings and window components.



In addition to "fin stock" and sheet products, JW Aluminum produces a number of other sheet and foil products. Cable wrap is used as shielding in the manufacturing of communications cable, automotive sheet is produced for heat shield and sound dampening application and lithoplate product is used for newspaper printing. Other foil products are used in a variety of converter applications, such as facers on foam insulation board.

In order to meet strong customer demand for its products, JW Aluminum has repeatedly expanded its operations in Mt. Holly. The company has grown from a small niche supplier producing 40 million pounds of aluminum per year to one of the largest independent flat-rolled aluminum producers in the country. During 2000 the company completed a two-year, \$31 million expansion project that increased the production capacity to 240 million pounds per year, a 60 percent increase over 1997 levels. JW Aluminum continues to invest in increased capacity and flexibility with new equipment coming on-line this month.

In 2001 the company began implementing Lean Manufacturing techniques and Six Sigma, a statistics based set of problem solving tools. These tools combined with traditional cost savings and productivity improvement efforts have resulted in industry leading profitability, inventory turns, and return on assets. In addition, over the past twenty years JW Aluminum has become an expert at refurbishing and installing used equipment, which will be the subject of an upcoming LMC best practice tour in November.

JW Aluminum president Don Kassing's vision for the company includes:

- Continuing to operate near capacity while maximizing profitability and improving productivity
- Looking for further opportunities to target higher margin business with additional new product development
- Generating additional cost savings and productivity through further implementation of Six Sigma and Lean Manufacturing

Kassing has served on the LMC Board of Directors since 2002 and is currently Vice Chair. Prior to joining JW Aluminum in January 2002, Kassing worked as director of financial planning and analysis for JW Aluminum's parent company, Walter Industries. Prior to that, he worked for Dura Automotive Systems Inc. and Honeywell Inc.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Center for Manufacturing & Technology

Helping South Carolina Manufacturers
Gain the Competitive Edge



CMAT's mission is to promote economic development in the state of South Carolina by providing valuable technological, workplace, business solutions, consultation and training to small S.C. manufacturers. CMAT utilizes the expertise of faculty, students, staff, and university facilities to increase efficiency and productivity at a cost savings to the manufacturer. The students also provide a valuable source of future employees to the manufacturer.

As a manufacturer what can CMAT do for me?

CMAT connects manufacturers with faculty and researchers who can: help solve difficult design problems, conduct product testing, assist with new product development, address business operations, provide training in international standards, perform market research, prepare financial analysis and more.

CMAT provided services to 46 small manufacturers during 2002 with a reported \$39 million of annual gain and savings to the companies.

CMAT's specialties include:

- **chemical, mechanical, electrical, civil and environmental engineering, computer science, and engineering departments at the College of Engineering and Information Technology**
- **business administration, operations management and information systems at the Moore School of Business**

For more information contact: Gail Shurling, Associate Director of Client Services, College of Engineering and Information Technology at 803-777-2527, or visit www.me.sc.edu/cmatt.

MANUFACTURERS ROUNDTABLE STRIVES TO ENTERTAIN AND EDUCATE AT MONTHLY MEETINGS

The roundtable dinners organized by the LMC are more than just a networking and social opportunity. Each meeting features a guest speaker who discusses topics relevant to manufacturers. Chaired by Joe Schady of Alpha Sheet Metal, the Manufacturers Roundtable is a great way for members to get involved in the LMC.

Roundtable speakers have included representatives from Robert Bosch Corporation discussing Lean Manufacturing; a safety group out of Wilmington, N.C., that is working on expanding their efforts to the Charleston area; an economic expert gave a forecast of the year to come; and a local lobbyist gave a legislative review of the 2002-2003 session. In addition, Kiawah Island Golf Resort offered a special presentation on the 2003 World Cup Golf Tournament, which included gifts and prizes for the attendees.

The next Manufacturers Roundtable dinner will be on Wednesday, July 30, to discuss the LMC Affinity Programs. Speakers will include representatives from the LMC's health insurance plan, workers' compensation program, and web site design service.

The Manufacturers Roundtable meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at Sunfire Grill on Sam Rittenberg Blvd. The cost is \$28 per person. Seating is limited, so please RSVP to Jennifer Robson at 843-805-3010, or jrobson@charlestonchamber.org, if you would like to attend an upcoming meeting.



P.O. Box 975
Charleston, SC 29402-0975
www.lmcsc.org

Serving Manufacturers in the Lowcountry and throughout South Carolina

Upcoming Events:

July 30, Wednesday
Manufacturers Roundtable Dinner
6:00 p.m., Sunfire Grill

August 21, Thursday
Education & Training Committee Meeting
8:30 a.m., Location TBA

August 27, Wednesday
Manufacturers Roundtable Dinner
6:00 p.m., Sunfire Grill

September 11, Thursday
Board of Directors Meeting
7:30 a.m., AstenJohnson

September 18, Thursday
Education & Training Committee Meeting
8:30 a.m., Location TBA

September 24, Wednesday
Manufacturers Roundtable Dinner
6:00 p.m., Sunfire Grill

October 2, Thursday
Industry Appreciation Week Dinner
6:00 p.m., Charleston Place Hotel

The LMC is now online.
Log on to stay updated,
informed and involved...



www.lmcsc.org

The Lowcountry Manufacturers Council is a local nonprofit organization, comprised of and representing the needs of the greater Charleston manufacturing community, as well as members throughout South Carolina. In each issue of *Network News*, we will print announcements about LMC member companies. Advertising opportunities are also available. To include your news, learn more about the LMC, or inquire about advertising, contact Jennifer Robson at (843) 805-3010, email contactus@lmcsc.org, or visit the LMC online at www.lmcsc.org.

THE NETWORK NEWS STAFF:

Publishers: Jennifer Robson, Philip Owens
Contributors: Mandy Denaux, LMC Marketing Committee
Graphic Designer: Jonathan Ady