

2008 PWA

As Good As

The Conference by Richard Bennett

Going into this year's PWA Conference, I just didn't know what to expect. The economy is down, gas prices are high and the attitudes of many people were at a low. So I was a little worried how our member's outlook would be. Well, that's not the way it was... far from it. Everyone I talked to told me "yes, business is off but we know we are going to make it through this soft market," Donnie Eatherly, PWA President-Elect said. I asked John Towle, Executive Director, what he saw. "This year's Conference was as good as any we have had in the past. Even though we know we are in a soft market, the attitude of our members is very positive," he exclaimed. (See Johns' interview on page 5.) "Every year most of us look forward to attending the Conference. And this year was no different. We know this will kick off the planning, buying and selling season for 2009," Anne Graves, President of PWA told us.

The weather was great. The attendees, manufacturers and warehouse distributors were well balanced and the meetings went smoothly. There was good balance of work and down time. What we heard from most of the meeting was a strong fact that everyone wants to work together to improve business in the coming year. What we also kept hearing from manufacturers and warehouses was they were going back to basics and working on a good balance of product and inventory. Coming away from this year's Conference and looking back on how all the events went from the Golf Outing, the opening SEMA reception, the Pool party and above all, the meetings, I felt 2009 is going to be a good year. One person we all missed was Don Smith, Director Emeritus. This was the first Conference Don has missed in 35 years. We look forward to seeing him at the PWA General Membership meeting at this year's SEMA show.



Even though it was a time to relax, there were many mini-meetings going on.



Les Rudd (right) pleads his case.



Nice weather, good for the PWA Pool Party.



Manufactures proudly display their banners.



Now there are two smiley faces. John Mathis & Ann Graves.



And the crowd came.



As always, the First Timers' room was



All the exhibitors used their time