

JOHN TOWLE: UNCENSORED! *continued from page 5*

thanks SEMA for their continued support with their sponsorship of this program. Maybe one of these days I will get to see it firsthand.

DVC; Speaking of room check-in, do you have many issues?

JT: One problem we have is when someone comes in and wants their room before 4:00pm. With any large hotel, many rooms are being cleaned but you just can't clean 300+ rooms in 2 hours so some rooms run a bit late. The pre-assigned meeting rooms are the toughest challenge because we can't put someone in another room because of the printed schedules. Another problem comes when someone shows up on Sunday and their room reservations say they will arrive on Saturday and then they want PWA to pay for the day they didn't show up. And the biggest problem is coming in a day early when the hotel is sold out. Now we are talking some fun conversations. We have a room change deadline for all the right reasons and our members need to follow all of the deadline dates.

DVC; With the check-in problem out of the way, then the check-out must be smoother, right?

JT: Like they say "not exactly". We send printed meeting schedules to all of our Conference participants with a reminder to change their room requirements NOW. But some folks don't take the time to review their room dates. Then when they are on property, they want to checkout a day or two earlier and this causes much grief. PWA commits to "X" amount of room nights. The property takes these rooms out of their sellable inventory and all is good. Our 2008 rate was \$160.00 and the walk in rate was \$249.00 so you can see why they make PWA pay for any rooms that "drop off" at the close of the Conference. This is why everyone must order the correct amount of rooms and the correct nights. This is also why we had to go to the "prepaid" room program. If only 50% of the attendees left one night early, PWA would need to pay \$160.00 plus tax for 100 rooms or somewhere in the neighborhood of \$18,000.00. We simply can't pay this, so each member must pay for the nights they request.

DVC; I attended the Monday night pool party and everything seemed to work well. But do you have any comments?

JT: I agree, most everything did run smoothly. The MRC/YEN silent auction looked like another winner and the LED FOOT band rocked all night. One area that needs to be addressed is the security wristbands and meal / drink tickets. Most everyone remembered to put their security wristbands on and we thank them. Drinks were sponsored by DealerTrack Accessories and everyone appreciates their support. But I think we can do a better job next year when it comes to the drink tickets. I'm working on this issue right now. The

dinner ticket was used because we pay for dinners out of registration fees and when we have 50 or 60 "guest" coming for dinner, we needed a way to keep your registration fee low so we made available a guest meal ticket for a small fee. When all was said and done, we only had 5 guests so we refunded their money. This needs to be reviewed for next year.

DVC: As you know, I did not eat but I heard good reports about the breakfast and lunch meals. Do you have anything to add?

JT: Each Company has a "survey" in their packet and I would ask all to complete it and send it to us for a final answer. I heard two sides on this issue. Side one "the meals are great," side two "the meals are crap" so I guess I just need to review the surveys before I can answer this question. Personally, I didn't have breakfast but I found the lunches to be very good. We have a "Menu Review Committee" and they selected our meals this year and I think they did a great job. They will review the survey and make adjustments where needed for 2009. Someone said the Chef must be new, but the Chef is the same Chef as last year so that's not the answer.

DVC: What other changes did you see which were different than in years past?

JT: Well, the MRC held their meeting on Tuesday night. They've held it on Thursday the day after the Conference in the past and by Thursday I'm driving. 7 days in Phoenix is enough for me. So the change to Tuesday allowed me, and I would guess many others, time to attend their meeting. It was a very well attended meeting (standing room only) and I hope they hold it on Tuesday next year.

DVC: Any other interesting issues?

JT: The only thing I can think of is every time I was able to visit the Rep Lounge, they were all talking about one WD who did not attend... A new rumor was started every five minutes. I guess I would have liked to hear more conversations about how we can all survive and what each of us can do to make this a stronger industry. You know, something constructive. If you haven't seen the NEW Painless Performance Enterprise Fund program, you should take a few minutes to contact Adrian Murray and get involved. I tip my hat to Mr. Murray.

DVC: Did we miss anything?

JT: Yes, I missed my good friends Phil Braybrooks and David Bissett. GOD Bless them both.